

# Ruth Reader's Theater & Choral Reading

CHARACTERS: Naomi, Elimelech, Narrator, Mahlon, Chilion, Orpah, Ruth, Boaz, Servant 1 & 1, All

SETTING: Moab and Bethlehem

RUN TIME: 18 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Ruth

FK reading level: 5.0

## Naomi's Family in Moab

NAOMI: The famine threatens us and our sons, Mahlon and Chilion.

ELIMELECH: We will leave Bethlehem and move to Moab

NARRATOR: But Elimelech died.

NAOMI: Woe is me. I live in a strange land, without a husband, and my sons without a father.

MAHLON: Our father has died and we have lived here for 10 years now. Let us marry and carry on the family name.

CHILION: It will have to be Moabite women.

NAOMI: That is against the Law of Moses.

NARRATOR: They married Orpah and Ruth but then both passed away.

NAOMI: I will leave the land of Moab, because the Lord had paid attention to His people's need by providing them food.

ORPAH: We will travel along the road leading back to the land of Judah with you.

NAOMI: Each of you goes back to your mother's home.

ALL: May the Lord show faithful love to you as you have shown to the dead and to me.

NAOMI: May the Lord enable each of you to find security in the house of your new husband.

ALL: She kissed them, and they wept loudly.

ORPAH: No, we will go with you to your people.

NAOMI: Return home, my daughters. Why do you want to go with me? Am I able to have any more sons who could become your husbands?

ALL: Return home, my daughters for I am too old to have another husband.

NAOMI: Even if I thought there was still hope for me to have a husband tonight and to bear sons

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ALL: would you be willing to wait for them to grow up? Would you restrain yourselves from remarrying?

NAOMI: No, my daughters, my life is much too bitter for you to share, because the Lord's hand has turned against me.

ALL: Again they wept loudly

NARRATOR: Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

NN: Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her god. Follow your sister-in-law.

RUTH: Do not persuade me to leave you or go back and not follow you.

ALL: For wherever you go

RUTH: I will go

ALL: and wherever you live

RUTH: I will live

ALL: your people will be my people,

RUTH: and your God will be my God.

ALL: Where you die

RUTH: I will die, and there I will be buried. May Yahweh punish me,

ALL: and do so severely,

RUTH: if anything but death separates you and me.

NARRATOR: When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her

ALL: she stopped trying to persuade her.

NARRATOR: The two of them traveled

NAOMI: We have arrived in Bethlehem at the start of the barley harvest.

NARRATOR: The whole town was excited about their arrival

ALL FEMALES: Can this be Naomi?

NAOMI: Don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara

ALL: for the Almighty has made me very bitter.

NAOMI: I went away full

ALL: but the Lord has brought me back empty.

NAOMI: Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has pronounced judgment on me

ALL: and the Almighty has afflicted me?

#### Ruth and Boaz Meet

NARRATOR: Naomi had a relative on her husband's side named Boaz.

ALL: He was a prominent man of noble character from Elimelech's family.

RUTH: Will you let me go into the fields and gather fallen grain behind someone who allows me to?

NAOMI: Go ahead, my daughter.

NARRATOR: Ruth entered the field to gather grain behind those harvesting land belonging to Boaz

ALL: who was from Elimelech's family.

NAOMI: Please let me gather fallen grain among the bundles behind the harvesters.

BOAZ: *(to the harvesters)* The Lord be with you.

ALL MALES: The Lord bless you.

BOAZ: *(pointing to Ruth)* Whose young woman is this?

SERVANT 1: She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab.

SERVANT 2: She has worked from early morning until now, except that she rested a little in the shelter.

BOAZ: *(to Ruth)* Listen, my daughter. Don't go and gather grain in another field, and don't leave this one

ALL: but stay here close to my female servants.

BOAZ: See which field they are harvesting

ALL: and follow them.

BOAZ: Haven't I ordered the young men not to touch you?

ALL: When you are thirsty, go and drink from the jars the young men have filled.

NARRATOR: Ruth bowed with her face to the ground

RUTH: Why are you so kind to notice me, although I am a foreigner?

BOAZ: Everything you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband's death has been fully reported to me:

ALL: how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth

BOAZ: and how you came to a people you didn't previously know.

ALL: May the Lord reward you for what you have done

BOAZ: May you receive a full reward from the Lord God of Israel

ALL: under whose wings you have come for refuge.

RUTH: My lord, you have been so kind to me, for you have comforted and encouraged your slave, although I am not like one of your female servants.

NARRATOR: At mealtime Boaz spoke to her again.

BOAZ: Come over here and have some bread and dip it in the vinegar sauce.

ALL: Boaz offered her roasted grain.

NARRATOR: She ate and was satisfied and had some left over.

BOAZ: (*to harvesters*) Let her even gather grain among the bundles

ALL: and don't humiliate her.

BOAZ: Pull out some stalks from the bundles for her and leave them for her to gather.

ALL: Don't rebuke her.

SERVANT 1: Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening.

SERVANT 2: She beat out what she had gathered, about 26 quarts of barley.

SERVANT 1: Enough to feed Naomi and herself for five days.

NAOMI: Where did you gather barley today, and where did you work?

ALL: May the Lord bless the man who noticed you.

RUTH: The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz.

NAOMI: May he be blessed by the Lord

ALL: who has not forsaken his kindness to the living or the dead.

NAOMI: The man is a close relative.

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ALL: He is one of our family redeemers.

RUTH: He also told me to stay with his young men until they have finished the harvest.

NAOMI: My daughter, it is good for you to work with his female servants, so that nothing will happen to you in another field.

SERVANT 2: Ruth stayed close to Boaz's female servants and gathered grain until the barley and the wheat harvests were finished.

SERVANT 1: She lived with her mother-in-law.

### Ruth's Appeal to Boaz

NAOMI: My daughter, shouldn't I find security for you

ALL: so that you will be taken care of?

NAOMI: Now isn't Boaz our relative?

ALL: Haven't you been working with his female servants?

NAOMI: This evening he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor.

ALL: Wash, put on perfumed oil, and wear your best clothes.

NAOMI: Go down to the threshing floor, but don't let the man know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking.

ALL: When he lies down, notice the place where he's lying

NAOMI: go in and uncover his feet, and lie down.

ALL: Then he will explain to you what you should do.

RUTH: I will do everything you say.

SERVANT 1: Ruth went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law had instructed her.

SERVANT 2: After Boaz ate, drank, and was in good spirits, he went to lie down at the end of the pile of barley.

SERVANT 1: Ruth went in secretly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

SERVANT 2: At midnight, Boaz was startled, turned over,

SERVANT 1: and there lying at his feet was a woman!

BOAZ: Who are you?

RUTH: I am Ruth, your slave. Spread your cloak over me, for you are a family redeemer.

BOAZ: May the Lord bless you, my daughter. You have shown more kindness now than before, because you have not pursued younger men, whether rich or poor.

ALL: Now don't be afraid, my daughter.

BOAZ: I will do for you whatever you say,

ALL: since all the people in my town know that you are a woman of noble character.

BOAZ: Yes, it is true that I am a family redeemer but there is a redeemer closer than I am.

ALL: If he wants to redeem you, that's good. Let him redeem you.

BOAZ: But if he doesn't want to redeem you, as the Lord lives, I will.

ALL: Don't let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor.

BOAZ: Bring the shawl you're wearing and hold it out.

ALL: Boaz shoveled six measures of barley into her shawl, and she went into the town.

NAOMI: How did it go, my daughter?

ALL: Ruth told her everything Boaz had done for her.

RUTH: He gave me these six measures of barley, because he said

BOAZ: Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.

NAOMI: My daughter, wait until you find out how things go, for he won't rest unless he resolves this today.

SERVANT 2: Boaz went to the gate of the town and sat down there.

SERVANT 1: Soon the family redeemer Boaz had spoken about came by

BOAZ: Come and sit down with me and 10 of the town's elders.

ALL: They all sat.

BOAZ: Naomi, who has returned from the land of Moab, is selling a piece of land

ALL: that belonged to our brother Elimelech.

BOAZ: I thought I should inform you: so you could buy it back

ALL: in the presence of those seated here and in the presence of the elders.

BOAZ: If you want to redeem it

ALL: do so.

BOAZ: But if you do not want to redeem it, tell me so that I will know

ALL: because there isn't anyone other than you to redeem it

BOAZ: and I am next after you.

MAN: I want to redeem it.

BOAZ: On the day you buy the land from Naomi

ALL: you will also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the deceased man

BOAZ: to perpetuate the man's name on his property.

MAN: I can't redeem it myself, or I will ruin my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption, because I can't redeem it.

SERVANT 1: An Israelite would remove his sandal and give it to the other party

SERVANT 2: in order to make any matter legally binding concerning the right of redemption or the exchange of property.

SERVANT 1: This was the method of legally binding a transaction in Israel.

MAN: Buy back the property yourself.

SERVANT 2: He removed his sandal and gave it to Boaz.

BOAZ: You are witnesses today that I am buying from Naomi everything

ALL: that belonged to Elimelech, Chilion, and Mahlon.

BOAZ: I will also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon's widow, as my wife

NAOMI: to perpetuate the deceased man's name on his property

ALL: so that his name will not disappear among his relatives or from the gate of his home.

BOAZ: You are witnesses today.

ALL: We are witnesses.

ALL FEMALES: May the Lord make the woman who is entering your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built the house of Israel.

ALL MALES: May you be powerful in Ephrathah and famous in Bethlehem.

ALL FEMALES: May your house become like the house of Perez, the son Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring the Lord will give you by this young woman.

NAOMI: Ruth became Boaz's wife and the Lord enabled her to conceive

ALL: and she gave birth to a son.

ALL FEMALES: Praise the Lord, who has not left you without a family redeemer today.

ALL: May his name become well known in Israel.

ALL FEMALES: He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age.

ALL: Indeed, your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.

NAOMI: Place the child on my lap, and I will take care of him.

ALL FEMALES: A son has been born to Naomi!

BOAZ: His name is Obed.

ALL: Obed was the father of Jesse

BOAZ: and Jesse the father of David.

ALL: The king of Israel and Judah.

RUTH: A man after God's own heart.

AFTER READING: Find specific examples of these traits or actions: bearing afflictions patiently, industry, courteousness, kindness to strangers.

Boaz' mother was Rahab, the prostitute in Joshua who saved the spies. How might Boaz having a foreign mother influenced him in regards to marrying a foreign woman? Read Hebrews 11:31 and James 2: 24-26 to know more about her.

(By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. AND You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.)



Ruth 3:11 says that Ruth was a woman of noble character. Her great-great grandson Solomon wrote a chapter in Proverbs (31: 10-31) about the wife of noble character. Compare what Solomon wrote with what Ruth did or might have done. How many possible parallels can you find?

Online review games

### **Ruth Jeopardy**

<http://www.quia.com/cb/450955.html>

### **Ruth Jeopardy 2**

<http://www.quia.com/cb/811560.html>