

RUTH AND NAOMI RETURN TO BETHLEHEM

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

CARE LOVE SUSTAIN WIDOW DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

BIBLE REFERENCE

Ruth 1:1-19

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help preschoolers learn that God cares for them.

MEMORY VERSE

“Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you” (Psalm 55:22b, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Naomi was a Hebrew widow who lived in a country called Moab. After losing her husband and two sons, she was alone, with two foreign daughters-in-law and no help or protection. It was then that Naomi decided to take a risk and return to Bethlehem, her hometown.

This city was on the other side of the Dead Sea, many miles from Moab. Naomi would have to make the trip walking, trusting that she would find kind people on the path to offer her food, water and a place to rest.

At Naomi’s insistence, one of her daughters-in-law decided to stay in Moab and start a new life. However, Ruth, the other daughter-in-law, chose to leave everything behind to follow Naomi and thus serve God with all her heart. This was not an easy decision for Ruth. Since she was still young she could have married again and had a family.

Her mother-in-law Naomi had no more children. Going with her to Bethlehem could involve hard work, and she might even lose the opportunity to have a husband and children.

Ruth’s unconditional love for God and Naomi led to the story of God’s care for these two women who believed, depended and trusted in him. In the midst of poverty and the pain of life, they had the courage to embark on the journey. God rewarded that courage by giving them a safe trip, full of provisions and a peaceful arrival to the city of Bethlehem.

As you prepare this lesson, think about the people who have shown you unconditional love. How did you feel about that love? Pray for God to allow your children to see themselves as he sees them. Pray that each child will be touched with God's unconditional love. While you allow God to use you to touch the lives of your children, he will teach you even more about his unconditional love and care.

ADAPTATION

It is important that preschoolers learn what it means to love others unconditionally. As they put this into practice, they will understand the unconditional love that God has for them. The lessons of the book of Ruth provide opportunities for children to hear about God's love and care for Ruth's family and Naomi. Point out that just as God kept them safe, he also cares about us and our needs.

Maybe some of your children have not experienced that unconditional love. You can be the first person to give them such love. Through your actions, they may begin to believe that God loves and cares for them. Show them your love in various ways like: praying for them, sending them a card, listening to them and showing interest in their lives.

As you show God's love to your children, you will notice how trust and friendship grows between you. In this way your lessons will be more effective, and not only will they hear the message of God's love but they will be the object of it.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

This is how Ruth is written

On a card or sheet of paper, write the name of Ruth in large letters. Then ask the children to stick colored pieces of paper following the outline of the letters. While they are doing so, help them identify the shape and sound of each letter. This will help them know them easily when they see them on the activity sheet.

TEACH THE LESSON

Use these activities to help the children have a better understanding of the Bible lesson.

Ruth and Naomi

Ask the children to form a line. Tell them that when they hear the name "Naomi," they should bend over; and when they hear the name "Ruth," they have to jump. Repeat the game a few times before starting the Bible class.

To illustrate this story we suggest you look for two women from your congregation to represent Naomi and Ruth. While you tell the story, they will demonstrate the Bible story. You could also use puppets or projections. Show a Bible to your children and tell them: "Ruth is the name of a book in the Bible. Ruth was a woman who decided to love and follow God. In today's story we will learn how God cared for Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, during a long journey.

Back to Bethlehem

Naomi and Ruth lived in Moab, a land far away from Bethlehem, the place where Naomi was born. Naomi, her husband Elimelech, and their two sons moved to Moab to live because there was not enough food in their land at that time. However, shortly after they arrived, Elimelech died, so Naomi was left alone with her two sons.

Naomi's sons married women from Moab. One of them was Ruth. Ruth loved her mother-in-law very much and cared for her affectionately. The years passed and Naomi's sons died, leaving her without grandchildren, and she felt helpless. One day Naomi heard that God had blessed her country and that there was plenty of food there. Then she packed all her things and prepared to return alone to Bethlehem. But Ruth said, "I do not want you to go alone; I am going with you."

Naomi answered, "Ruth, it will be a very long trip. Also, I do not have money, neither husband, nor children. I cannot take care of you! You must stay in Moab and go back to your family."

Then Ruth said, "Do not ask me to leave you; wherever you go, I will go with you and serve God like you." Naomi knew that Ruth loved her very much, so she did not insist anymore. They walked and walked for many days.

God took care of them while traveling and provided them with food and safe places to rest.

Finally when they arrived in Bethlehem, Ruth was happy to see her new home. Ruth and Naomi arrived safely in Bethlehem because God took care of them during the long journey.

CONNECT THE LESSON

God cares for us

Prepare Student Activity Sheet #97-A and #97-B in advance. Cut out the two pictures corresponding to this lesson from Student Activity Sheet #97-B. At the appropriate time give a set to each child, along with Student Activity Sheet #97-A and #97-B.

Allow time for the children to write their name and trace the word of faith on Student Activity Sheet #97-A. As they do, tell them: "God loves us and cares for us. We can feel His care through the blessings we receive and the way he provides for our needs." Glue the pictures in the place they correspond to and color the activity sheet. Then turn to Student Activity Sheet #97-B and ask the children make a drawing of their family.

Encourage the children to take home their activities and share the lesson with their families and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

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For this activity you will need long strips of paper and tape.

Form a path before class by fastening the strips of paper on the floor. Encourage your children to follow the path while repeating the memory verse. Repeat the exercise several times with different variations such as jumping, walking backwards, etc.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Gather together to pray and give thanks for God's care. Choose some children to pray for requests and others to give thanks.

Encourage

Encourage the children to also thank their parents and other caregivers this week for taking care of them.

Invite

Before saying goodbye, sing a song that speaks of God's love or care. Be sure to invite the children to return for the next session and come with some friends.