

# Ruth

Many years ago, Naomi lived in Israel with her husband and two sons. The harvest had failed so they travelled across the river and mountains to a country called Moab, where there was still food to eat.

Sadly, while in Moab, Naomi's husband and sons died! Naomi was very sad and extremely cross.

"There's only one thing to do," Naomi said. "I'll go back to my family."

She said to her sons wives "I can't take care of you - go to your parents!"

One girl returned to her parents. However, Ruth said "I'm sticking with you! And I'm not changing my mind!"

Together Naomi and Ruth crossed the mountains and the river back to Israel. They received a great welcome by Naomi's family.

Of course they needed food. Ruth went into a field and gathered sheaves of wheat for Naomi to make bread.

Naomi asked "Where did you go?"

"To a field where a man called Boaz welcomed me and let me eat and rest with the other women." Ruth replied.

Naomi was excited to hear about Boaz. "Good!" She exclaimed. "He is a relative of my husband. You are safe in his fields. Stay there."

Boaz thought about Ruth. "What a wonderful girl, she's so kind to stay with Ruth."

Boaz thought Ruth very beautiful. He was falling in love.

Meanwhile, Naomi hatched a plan.

"Go to the barn tonight," she told Ruth. "Lie at Boaz's feet and pull his blanket over yourself."

What a strange thing! But it worked. Boaz was startled to find her there. He gave her an extra load of grain and proposed marriage!

There was problem. There was a man who was closer family than Boaz who should take care of Naomi and Ruth. Boaz talked to the man who said "I'm already happily married, thank you. One wife is enough!"

As was the custom of the day the two men pulled off their shoes as a sign of agreement!

What a celebration— the marriage of Boaz and Ruth was enjoyed by everyone.

Happier still when the newlyweds had a baby boy. Naomi was thrilled and praised God. They called him Obed. The women blessed Obed saying "He will be known throughout the world!"

A very special child indeed. Granddaddy to King David, one of the most famous kings of all time. God, you see, always has a plan!