

Then Ruth bowed to Boaz, and thanked him for his kindness, all the more kind because she was a stranger in Israel. Boaz said: "I have heard how true you have been to your mother-in-law Naomi, in leaving your own land and coming with her to this land. May the Lord, under whose wings you have come, give you a reward!"

And at noon, when they sat down to rest and to eat, Boaz gave her some of the food. And he said to the reapers:

"When you are reaping, leave some of the sheaves for her; and drop out some sheaves from the bundles, where she may gather them."

That evening, Ruth showed Naomi how much she had gleaned, and told her of the rich man Boaz, who had been so kind to her. And Naomi said:

"This man is a near relation of ours. Stay in his fields, as long as the harvest lasts." And so Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz until the harvest had been gathered.

At the end of the harvest, Boaz held a feast on the threshing-floor. And after the feast, by the advice of Naomi, Ruth went to him, and said to him:

"You are a near relation of my husband and of his father, Elimelech. Now will you not do good to us for his sake?"

And when Boaz saw Ruth, he loved her; and soon after this he took her as his wife. And Naomi and Ruth went to live in his home; so that Naomi's life was no more bitter, but pleasant. And Boaz and Ruth had a son, whom they named Obed; and later Obed had a son named Jesse; and Jesse was the father of David, the shepherd boy who became king. So Ruth, the young woman of Moab, who chose the people and the God of Israel, became the mother of kings.

(END OF STORY)

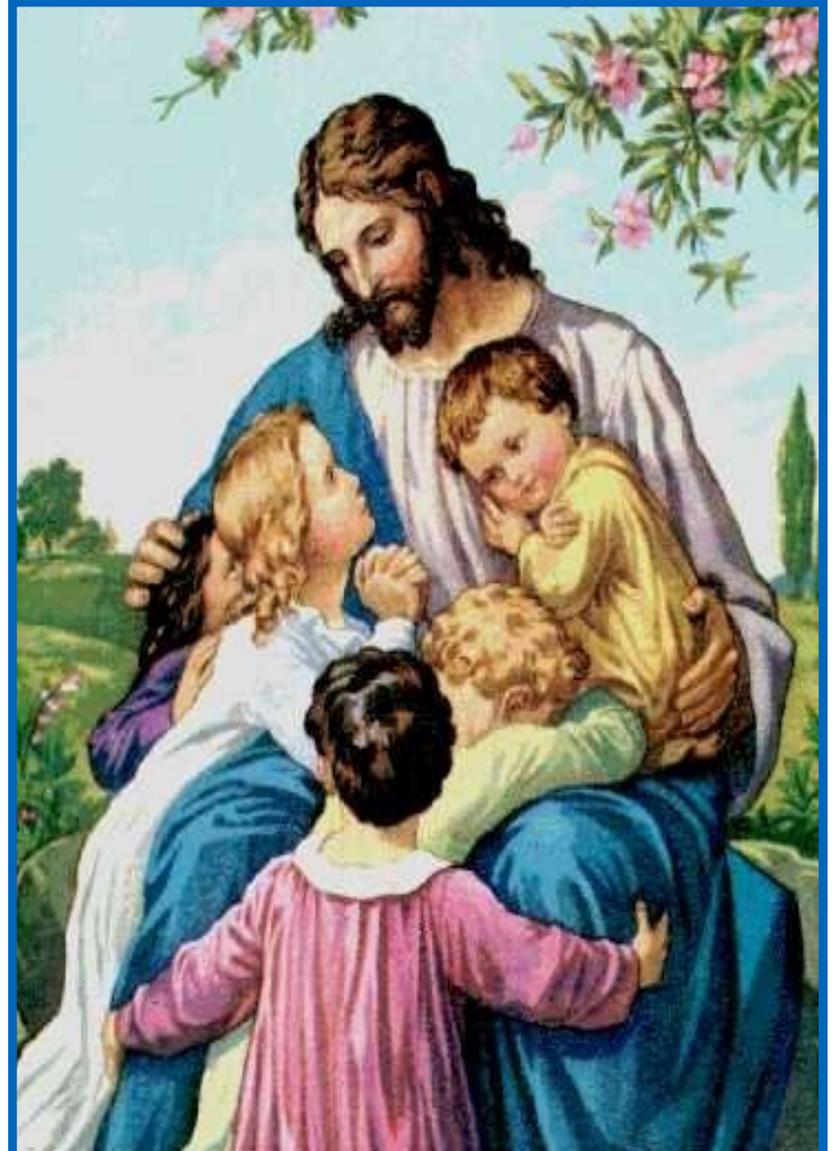
**WHO WENT OUT INTO THE FIELDS TO
GLEAN THE GRAIN?**

**WHO WAS THE RICH MAN THAT
THIS FIELD BELONGED TO ?**



**Thirteenth in the series of Old Testament
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The Story of Ruth



**Jesus teaches the Children
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THE STORY OF RUTH, THE GLEANER

In the time of the Judges in Israel, a man named Elimelech was living in the town of Bethlehem, in the tribe of Judah, about six miles south of Jerusalem. His wife's name was Naomi, and his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. For some years the crops were poor, and food was scarce in Judah; and Elimelech with his family went to live in the land of Moab, which was on the east of the Dead Sea, as Judah was on the west.

There they stayed ten years, and in that time Elimelech died. His two sons married women of the country of Moab, one named Orpah, the other named Ruth. But the two young men also died in the land of Moab; so that Naomi and her two daughters-in-law were all left widows.

Naomi heard that God had again given good harvests and bread to the land of Judah, and she rose up to go from Moab back to her own land and her own town of Bethlehem. The two daughters-in-law loved her, and both would have gone with her, though the land of Judah was a strange land to them, for they were of the Moabite people.

Naomi said to them: "Go back, my daughters, to your own mothers' homes. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have been kind to your husbands and to me. May the Lord grant that each of you may yet find another husband and a happy home."

Then Naomi kissed them in farewell, and the three women all wept together. The two young widows said to her: "You have been a good mother to us, and we will go with you, and live among your people."

"No, no," said Naomi. "You are young, and I am old. Go back and be happy among your own people."

The Orpah kissed Naomi, and went back to her people; but Ruth would not leave her. She said: "Do not ask me to leave you, for I never will. Where you go, I will go; where you live, I will live; your people shall be my people; and your God shall be my God. Where you die, I will die, and be buried. Nothing but death itself shall part you and me."

When Naomi saw that Ruth was firm in her purpose, she ceased trying to persuade her; so the two women went on together. They walked around the Dead Sea, and crossed the river Jordan, and climbed the mountains of Judah, and came to Bethlehem.

Naomi had been absent from Bethlehem for ten years, but her friends were all glad to see her again. They said: "Is this Naomi, whom we knew years ago?"

Now the name Naomi means "pleasant." And Naomi said:

"Call me not Naomi; call me Mara, for the Lord has made my life bitter. I went out full, with my husband and two sons; now I come home empty, without them. Do not call me 'Pleasant,' call me 'Bitter.'"

The name "Mara," by which Naomi wished to be called means "bitter." But Naomi learned later that "Pleasant" was the right name after all.

There was living in Bethlehem at that time a very rich man named Boaz. He owned large fields that were abundant in their harvests; and he was related to the family of Elimelech, Naomi's husband, who had died.

It was the custom in Israel when they reaped the grain not to gather all the stalks, but to leave some for the poor people, who followed after the reapers with their sickles, and gathered what was left. When Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem, it was the time of the barley harvest; and Ruth went out into the fields to glean the grain which the reapers had left. It so happened that she was gleaning in the field that belonged to Boaz, this rich man.

Boaz came out from the town to see his men reaping, and he said to them, "The Lord be with you"; and they answered him, "The Lord bless you."

And Boaz said to his master of the reapers: "Who is this young woman that I see gleaning in the field?"

The man answered: "It is the young woman from the land of Moab, who came with Naomi. She asked leave to glean after the reapers, and has been here gathering grain since yesterday."

Then Boaz said to Ruth: "Listen to me, my daughter. Do not go to any other field, but stay here with my young women. No one shall harm you; and when you are thirsty, go and drink at our vessels of water."