

Ruth's Selfless Love

Ruth 1



The people in the town of Bethlehem did not have any food—no bread, no fruit, and no vegetables.

Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, decided to take their two sons and move to a place called Moab, where there was plenty of food to eat.

The family lived in Moab for many years. Elimelech worked hard. The sons grew up and each of them married a wife. The wives were named Ruth and Orpah.

Many years passed. Elimelech got sick and died. Then the two sons died. Now there were just

Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah.

Naomi missed her friends and home in Bethlehem. She heard there was food in Israel again. One day she decided to move back to Bethlehem.

Naomi told Ruth and Orpah to stay

in Moab with their mothers.

"There is no reason for you to go with me," Naomi told the women. Orpah decided to stay in Moab and go back to her own family.

"You must go back home too," Naomi told Ruth.

"No," said Ruth, "you are my family now. Where you go, I will go. I will love your people. I will love your God too."

Naomi was glad to have Ruth go to Bethlehem with her. Ruth showed that she loved Naomi, even when it was hard to leave home. God helped Ruth choose to be loving and kind. 🍂

Theme

God wants us to think of others above ourselves.

Measurable Response

My child will look for ways to put others first.

Memory Verse

"A friend loves at all times"
(Proverbs 17:17).

Bible Story Questions

Ask your child these review questions.

- What sad thing happened to Naomi's family?
- How did Ruth show love and kindness?
- What does Proverbs 17:17 say a friend should do?
- Tell how to be a friend to someone who is sad or who doesn't like you.



Jaden's Family Goes Home



Jaden pulled on his hat and coat and turned the doorknob to go play outside.

"Wait," Mommy called. She reached for her coat.

Then Jaden remembered. He wasn't supposed to play alone outdoors. There might be a wolf or something more dangerous nearby.

Just then the phone rang. "I'd better get that," Mommy said.

Jaden sat by the door, sweating in his coat as Mommy chatted. He could tell she was talking to Grandpa. Finally, she put down the phone and smiled. "Grandpa wants to talk to you a minute," she said.

Jaden talked to Grandpa for a few minutes about playing in the snow. Then Grandpa said something strange. "I'll see you soon, Jaden. Bye."

"What did that mean?" thought Jaden. Grandpa lives far away.

Mommy put on her gloves and led the way outside. She grabbed a shovel for herself and a small one for Jaden. They started to shovel the snow from the lodge's deck.

"Mom? What did Grandpa mean when he said he would see me soon?" asked Jaden. "Is he coming to visit?"

Mommy stopped shoveling. "No," she said carefully. "In the spring, Grandpa wants us to move back to Iowa and live on his farm. He needs help with the work. Daddy and I both lived there on farms when we were growing up. Then we got married and moved to the mountains. Now we are going back. Daddy is excited to go home."

Jaden frowned. "But Iowa doesn't have any mountains."

Mommy sat down on a step, and Jaden sat down beside her. "Let me explain why we need to go back," she said. "When Daddy and I were young, we wanted to live and work in the forestry department of a big national park. That's why we came here to Colorado. We have loved it here. But when you and your sister were born, we knew we needed to move back to a place with schools, a church with kids your age, and emergency services nearby. The nearest hospital is an hour away."

Jaden kicked at the snow. "Won't God protect us from dangers?" he asked.

Mommy nodded. "God has done that. Remember the forest fire and the bear banging on our door?"

Jaden remembered. He nodded. "God was good to us," he said.

"Most importantly, Jaden," Mommy said, "Grandpa is getting older. He needs our help. We want to go back to Grandpa's farm and help him do the work and take care of himself. Do you understand?"

Jaden nodded and looked at the tall, green trees. He looked up at the high mountains, sparkling with snow.

"I'll sure miss it here," he whispered. "God just feels very close."

Jaden's voice shook. "I think I should talk to Grandpa again and tell him I'll be back soon to help him out."

At lunch Jaden thanked God for the food and added, "God, thanks for keeping us safe here. Help us have a good trip back home to Grandpa's farm. And thanks for giving me the chance to live with him and take care of his needs." ■

Life Application

- Where did Jaden's Grandpa live?
- Where was Jaden's family moving?
- Tell some reasons why Jaden's Mommy and Daddy wanted to move.
- What verse about loving others could you tell Jaden?



Catching Kindness

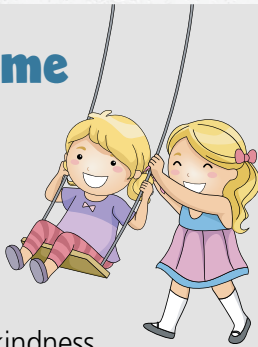
Play a kindness game with family, friends, or a team you are part of. Stand in a circle and toss a beanbag or ball to one another. When someone catches the bag, he or she shares a way to show kindness. He or she then throws the beanbag to someone else who does the same. Make sure every one has a chance to catch the bag. Make a point of mentioning those who toss kindly so others can catch easily. Also point out those who pick up the bag or ball for someone who misses it: "Thank you, Kerry. That was kind of you."



Growing at Home

Point It Out

Make a point to look for and mention the kindness you see in your family. Sharing and helping are also forms of kindness. Even something as spontaneous as holding a dish for someone to spoon something out at dinner or buttering a roll for a younger child is worthy of verbal notice. Commend the child who invites another sibling to play a game instead of doing something by him- or herself. Especially take note of the quiet child who just does a kind thing without asking (e.g., carrying small bags of groceries, entertaining a fussy baby). Don't be so busy that you let these things go unnoticed.



Measurables

Look for the following indications that your child is understanding the importance of considering others above him- or herself.

1. My child recognizes times when he or she can be kind and acts on those moments.
2. My child takes notice of those who are not kind.
3. My child thanks others who show kindness to him or her.



A Loving Friend Poem

Directions: Learn the poem about being a friend. Practice the motions. Color the picture and make up a story about how the girl will be a friend to the boy.

I want to be a loving friend

(Fold arms across chest.)

To everyone I know.

(Open arms wide.)

I'll say "hello" and smile real big,

(Wave, smile, and point to mouth.)

And shake a hand just so.

(Shake own hand.)

It doesn't matter if a friend

(Smile and shake finger back and forth.)

Is kind or mean to me.

(Shrug shoulders.)

I'll think of Jesus and His love,

(Point to head and then up.)

And loving I will be.

(Make heart with thumbs and index fingers.)

