

Winter Lesson 5

Bible Passage: Ruth 1—4
(Ruth and Naomi)

God Is Redeemer Remember Verse

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.
Luke 1:68

LESSON OVERVIEW

EXPLORE//
10 minutes



Option 1: Gleaning (for younger kids)

SUPPLIES

- Small pieces of wrapped candy or coins

Option 2: Threshing (for older kids)

SUPPLIES

- Large fan
- Paper (1–2 sheets)
- Small pebbles (2 cups)
- Large bowl or box

DISCOVER//
30 minutes



Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse image*
- Remember Verse animation*
- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)

Connect

Activity: Buying Back

SUPPLIES

- Connect Question image*
- Connect Activity image*
- Marbles, dried beans, candy, or other small objects

*see Resources

The Big God Story

SUPPLIES

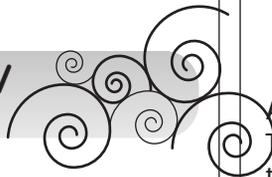
- Timeline image*
- Timeline animation*
- Husband cutouts*
- Images: Moab, King Eglon, Naomi's house, Field, Threshing floor, Grain, Sheaves, Oxen, Gates*
- Sound effects: Crickets, Elders with congratulations and prayers*
- Props: black clothes (for Naomi, Ruth, and sister-in-law), bread, vinegar, table and 2 chairs, burlap sack stuffed with wadded newspaper, bright pink blush, headdress, sheaf of grain (real or fake), veil
- Bibles
- Glue
- Craft sticks
- Poster board
- Tape
- Marker
- Scissors

Worship as Response

SUPPLIES

- Poster boards (1 sheet for every 5–10 children)
- Tape
- Markers

RESPOND//
15 minutes



Reflect

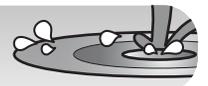
God as Redeemer in

My Life

SUPPLIES

- Storytelling template*
- Storytelling images*
- Storytelling answer key*
- Bibles
- Scissors
- Tape or glue

BLESS//
5 minutes



SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards*
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 6*
- Bible

Further Resources

To help you plan and lead:

**Customizable copy of Lesson 5
2018–19 Scope and Sequence
TruStory How It Works
Small Group Enhancement**

At Home Weekly: Lesson 5

The weekly for the next lesson—to be sent home for preteaching by parents—is found in BLESS.

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find a list of resources along with encouraging articles that help you prepare your heart to present the lesson.

Inspire *Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

Fatigue followed fever as my entire family succumbed to a terrible bout of the flu. One of us would muster up enough energy to boil some tea and then shuffle back to bed. The other one would give our prickly hot baby a bath and then fall asleep, holding her wrapped in a towel. Emotionally drained from the fever and lack of appetite, we started to feel quarantined from the world around us. This flu came at a time when we were already stretching to pay our monthly bills, even though my husband held three hourly wage jobs. Without a paycheck, we wondered how we would meet all of our financial obligations.

Humbly, I picked up the phone to call our landlord and let her know our rent would be late. I will never forget her reply: "Your rent has already been paid."

"Paid? Our rent?" I was shocked. It wasn't a small amount of money, and I couldn't get my head around the idea that someone had paid our rent. I asked the landlord some probing questions, and she told me the person didn't want to be known. To this day I don't know the identity of the person who rescued us from trouble.

I choose to see this act of grace as one of the many ways God has been my Redeemer. God uses people and circumstances to reach into our desperate places and pull us back to safety. This is proof of the continuing work of our redemptive God.

Ashley Anderson
Harbor Trinity Baptist Church

Equip *Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

God is our Redeemer. He's demonstrated this through the biblical role of the kinsman-redeemer. In the book of Ruth, Boaz showed himself as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer and gave Ruth favor and abundant blessing. He met all her needs, and she flourished in his care. As best illustrated in Ruth, a male relative had the privilege and responsibility to act sacrificially for any relative who was in trouble, danger, or in need of vindication.

Although the term "kinsman-redeemer" is used only eight times in the 1984 New International Version of the Bible—solely in the book of Ruth—the Hebrew word *ga'al* (from which both of these terms are translated) is used over 100 times and is interchangeable with both "redeemer" or "near relative." In Ruth 2:19–20, "Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. 'The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,' she said. 'The

LORD bless him!' Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. 'He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.' She added, 'That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers.'"

As a kinsman-redeemer, Boaz offered Ruth protection and gave her an abundance of exactly what she needed. Eventually, Ruth, the Moabite, and Boaz, the Jew, formerly sworn enemies by birth, became one in marriage and had a son they named Obed. He became the father of Jesse, who was the father of King David, from whose family line came the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

God continues to exhibit His character as our own Redeemer. He chose to restore us to Himself, showing unending love and kindness, while we were still foreigners. As He sanctifies and redeems us, we grow closer to our heavenly Father and reap the rewards of His holy kinship.

Support *Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

Hebrews 2:11 says, "Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters." As this verse points out, Jesus both redeems us and calls us His "kinsmen." And He understands our struggles. That makes Him uniquely able to help us in our times of need.

Take a moment to reflect on the ways God has drawn you to Himself and redeemed your personal story. For example,

has God taken an area of brokenness and pain and given you relief and blessing that could only come from Him? Using the Scripture below, set aside some time to meditate and give thanks for how He has graciously intervened and met even your unspoken needs. Before you pray, may the prayers of Naomi's friends be your prayer too: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer" (Ruth 4:14).

EXPLORE//10 minutes



Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

When Ruth followed her mother-in-law, Naomi, to her homeland, the two women were widows and had no money. To find food, Ruth gleaned in a nearby field. Help your kids get thinking about the idea of gleaning and threshing through these EXPLORE activities.

Option 1: Gleaning (for younger kids)

SUPPLIES

- Small pieces of wrapped candy or coins 

SET UP

Toss the small pieces of candy or coins around the room (especially in the corners).

RELATE

During Bible times, poor people would glean, or collect, leftover crops from farmers' fields. God instructed the Israelites to not harvest the corners of their fields to leave those areas for the poor. Have the kids "glean" the candy

and coins from around the room. Encourage them to act like Israelite farmers, who left grain for the poor, by leaving some pieces for the rest of the kids to collect.

Option 2: Threshing (for older kids)

SUPPLIES

- Large fan
- Paper (1–2 sheets)
- Small pebbles (2 cups)
- Large bowl or box

PREPARE AHEAD

Rip the paper into about one-inch squares.

SET UP

Place the pieces of paper and pebbles into a large bowl or box.

RELATE

Ancient farmers would "thresh" their crops to separate the grain, the part people eat, from the straw. To do this, they would bring sheaves of their crops to a big stone floor and let their animals stomp on it. This would break up the chaff, or unusable part. Then the farmers would throw the chaff and grain into the air with a big "winnowing fork" so the wind could blow the chaff away. The heavier grain then fell to the floor so the farmer could collect only the

grain. With this activity, let your kids get a taste of what threshing was like. Turn on the fan and point out the bowl or box of paper and pebbles. Have the kids lightly toss a handful of pebbles and paper directly in front of the fan. The paper will blow away while the pebbles fall back into the bowl. Note: Make sure you have plenty of supervision for this activity, which may get a little messy.

DISCOVER// 30 minutes

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse image (see Resources)
- Remember Verse animation (see Resources)
- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)

RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them. Luke 1:68

Connect

QUESTION

If you could live in a foreign country, which one would it be and why?

Activity: Buying Back

SUPPLIES

- Connect Question image (see Resources)
- Connect Activity image (see Resources)
- Marbles, dried beans, candy, or other small objects 

RELATE

Give every child in the room two to five objects (same number of objects per child). Have the kids play "Rock, Paper, Scissors," "Thumb Wars," or other short, one-on-one competitions. Whoever wins each competition gets one object from her opponent. When the kids run out of objects to wager, have them sit in the "broke" zone. Tell them they can't get out of the "broke" zone unless they can come up

with another set of objects. Keep playing until a large group of children form in the "broke" zone, or until one child holds all of the objects. Then have one leader "buy back" the kids in the "broke" zone by giving each of them another five objects and setting them free—illustrating what it means to be redeemed, or "bought back."

The Big God Story

Ruth 1—4

Storytelling: Actors and Props
God Is Redeemer

SUPPLIES

- Timeline image (see Resources)
- Timeline animation (see Resources)
- Husband cutouts (see Resources)
- Images: Moab, King Eglon, Naomi's house, Field, Threshing floor, Grain, Sheaves, Oxen, Gates (see Resources)
- Sound effects: Crickets, Elders with congratulations and prayers (see Resources)

- Props: black clothes (for Naomi, Ruth, and sister-in-law), bread, vinegar, table and 2 chairs, burlap sack stuffed with wadded newspaper, bright pink blush, headdress, sheaf of grain (real or fake), veil
- Bible
- Glue
- Craft sticks
- Poster board
- Tape
- Marker
- Scissors

SET UP

Find volunteers to act out the following roles: Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, other man. Print the four Husband cutouts, cut them out, and glue each one to a craft stick. Give two Husband cutouts to the volunteer playing Naomi and one cutout each to Ruth and Ruth's sister-in-law. Cue the images and sound effects. On the poster board, draw a house, money, a ring, an RIP sign, and stick figures connected by arrows, and place it in the storytelling area.

RELATE

Today we're going to look at the time of the judges and hear how God redeemed Ruth to play an important part in The Big God Story. Before we go any further, let's ask God to teach us. Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

Invite Ruth to enter, along with her sister-in-law and her and mother-in-law, Naomi—all three dressed in black, each holding a Husband cutout (it doesn't matter which cutout each woman holds). *Tech: Cue Moab image.* **Now, these three women lived with their husbands in a place called Moab. Have the women point to their husband cutouts. One was Naomi (Naomi waves), one was Ruth (Ruth waves), and the other was Ruth's sister-in-law she waves. Though Naomi was an Israelite, she was living with her family in Moab because Israel was going through a famine, or a time when there wasn't enough food for everyone. Back then, Moabites and Israelites didn't get along. Remember King Eglon? *Tech: Cue King Eglon image.* Yeah, he was a Moabite.**

After a while, Naomi's husband died (Naomi tosses husband cutout behind her and begins to weep); then Ruth's husband died (Ruth tosses her husband cutout behind her and begins to weep); then the sister-in-law's husband died (she tosses her husband cutout behind her and begins to weep). Not a good situation for these women (all three look up and shake their heads, as if to say, "No"). Women back then couldn't provide for themselves without husbands.

So when Naomi heard there was food again in her homeland of Judah, she wanted to go back. She told Ruth and her other daughter-in-law to go live with their families in Moab. Naomi points behind them. Ruth's sister-in-law left. Sister-in-law gives peace sign and walks out. But Ruth stayed. "Go home," Naomi said to Ruth, "and find another husband." Naomi shoves another husband cutout into Ruth's hands, but Ruth shakes her head. Invite the kids to open their Bibles to Ruth 1:16 and read along. "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay," Ruth said. "Your people will be my people and your God my God."

Naomi and Ruth hug, then walk in place. *Tech: Cue Naomi's house image.* **After some time, the two women arrived in Judah. Invite the kids to open their Bibles to Ruth 2:2 and read along. Because Naomi and Ruth had no money (Ruth and Naomi show empty hands), Ruth said, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain." Naomi nods her head,**

as if to say, "Yes." Ruth walks in place. *Tech: Cue Field image.* So Ruth went to a field and started gleaning, or picking up leftover grain. While Ruth gathers grain, Boaz enters and watches, hands on hips. Little did Ruth know the field belonged to a man named Boaz, and it was part of God's plan for her to be there because God had chosen Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer. What's a kinsman-redeemer? Don't worry, you'll hear about that soon. Ruth nods to the group.

Boaz's servant stands next to him now, and Ruth still gathers grain. **"Who's that girl?" Boaz asked. "She's a foreigner who came back with her mother-in-law Naomi. She's a pretty cool lady," said the servant.** Servant nudges Boaz with his elbow and winks. **"She works hard and has a good reputation."** Boaz strokes his chin and nods, then walks up to Ruth. **"Keep collecting from my field," Boaz said. "You work hard and have a good reputation."** Ruth thanks Boaz. The servant brings out the table and two chairs, and bread and vinegar. Boaz pulls out Ruth's chair. **"Here," Boaz said, "have some of this bread. Dip it in the vinegar. Then have some roasted grain."** Boaz hands Ruth the burlap sack. **"Thank you!" Ruth said.** Ruth drags the burlap bag away while Boaz watches. **"Take good care of that one," Boaz said to his servant. "Give her whatever she needs—extra, in fact."** Servant salutes.

Tech: Cue Naomi's house image. **"I gathered a sack of barley!" Ruth said to Naomi.** She drags in the sack. Naomi's eyes widen. Invite the kids to open their Bibles to Ruth 2:19 and read along. **"Blessed be the man who took notice of you!" Naomi said.** Ruth blushes. **"His name is Boaz."** Naomi gasps. **"That man is our close relative; he's one of our kinsman-redeemers."** Invite the kids to read Ruth 2:20. **Freeze! Naomi and Ruth freeze. Storyteller points to the poster board.**

A kinsman-redeemer was someone in ancient Israel who "redeemed" or "bought back" the property (point to house) of a family member who lost their money (point to money). They also sometimes married point to ring the daughter, sister, or widow of the man who died (point to RIP sign) to carry on the family line (point to stick figures connected by arrows). Okay, moving on! Unfreeze!

Ruth walks in place. *Tech: Cue Field image, then Naomi's house image.* **For a while, Ruth gleaned from Boaz's field and gathered lots of sacks of grain (Ruth holds up her sack), but Naomi wanted Ruth to have a husband (hold up one of the husband cutouts) more than she wanted grain. "Wash**

yourself, put on some perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes," Naomi said. "Then go down to the threshing floor where Boaz will be—but make sure no one sees you." Ruth nods and puts on bright pink blush and a headdress. She walks in place. *Tech: Cue Threshing floor image. Freeze!* Ruth freezes.

Tech: Continue to show Threshing floor image. A threshing floor is a big rock slab where all of the bundles of grain go after they're collected. Tech: Cue Grain and then Sheaves images. There, big oxen (Tech: Cue Oxen image) stepped on them to break the grain free from the straw. When there was wind, the farmer would throw the straw and grain into the air. The heavier grain fell to the ground, and the straw, or "chaff," blew away. Unfreeze! Ruth unfreezes and hides behind a sheaf of grain.

Boaz comes in, patting his belly and smiling. He lies down near Ruth and starts snoring. Ruth peeks around the sheaf, tiptoes over, and lies down at his feet. *Tech: Cue Crickets sound effect.* Boaz jerks awake. "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant, Ruth," she said. "Boaz, will you be my kinsman-redeemer?" Boaz smiles at Ruth. "Sounds great!" Boaz said. Ruth blushes. "The only problem is, another guy is first in line," he said. "So I have to talk to him before I can become your kinsman-redeemer." Ruth nods. Boaz exits. *Tech: Cue Naomi's house image.* Ruth walks to Naomi. They squeal, hug, and wait.

Tech: Cue Gates image. Boaz and other man sit on optional prop chairs. "Let's talk about whether you would like to 'buy back' Naomi's land," Boaz said. The man crosses his arms. "Sure—why not?" Boaz crosses his arms too. "Would you still want it if you had to marry one of the women in the family?" Boaz asked. The man shrugs. "I don't want to do that," he said. "So I guess you can have it." Boaz pumps his fist and

jumps up in excitement, then stops, clears his throat, and smooths his clothes. "I mean, if you insist," Boaz said. The man shrugs. Boaz takes off one shoe and gives it to the other man. The other man takes off one of his shoes, gives it to Boaz, and leaves. **Freeze!** Boaz and the man freeze. **People did this with their shoes when they were finalizing an agreement. Unfreeze!** Boaz and the man unfreeze.

"I am going to redeem Naomi by marrying Ruth!" Boaz said. *Tech: Cue Elder sound effect, then Naomi's house image.* Ruth puts on veil. "Thanks for becoming my wife," Boaz said. "Thanks for redeeming my mother-in-law and me," Ruth said. "For buying the land that we could no longer pay for and keeping our family line alive." They hug.

Ruth pretends to hold a baby. In the end, the prayers of the townspeople were answered, and Ruth and Boaz had a baby they named Obed. He was the grandfather of King David, from whose line the promised Redeemer—Jesus—would eventually be born. Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi exit.

Through this part of The Big God Story, God showed that, even when things were hard for Ruth and Naomi, He was weaving everything together to not only redeem them—buy them back from their helpless situation—but use them in His big story. Ruth was blessed with the privilege of having a child who would continue the family line of Jesus Christ.

God made Jesus our Kinsman-Redeemer when He died for us and rose again. He redeemed us back from a life of sin and gave us new life ... forever with Him. Because of His great love for us, He chooses to use us, just like He used Ruth, to be a part of His big story. Today let's spend some time praising God, the Redeemer, who is the only One with the power to save us from our sin. Consider sharing a personal story of a time when God was Redeemer in your life.

Worship as Response

This time allows kids to respond to God through worship. Make plans for your worship time, but prepare yourself and your team to hold them loosely if the Holy Spirit leads the group in a different direction.

SUPPLIES

- Poster boards (1 sheet for every 5–10 children)
- Markers
- Tape

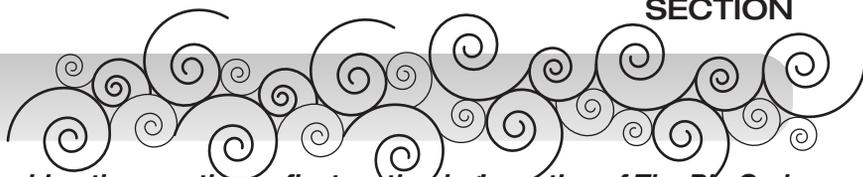
PREPARE AHEAD

Tape the sheets of poster board around the room. Place markers under each station.

RELATE

The word *redeem* means "to buy back." In The Big God Story, Ruth and Naomi were left without husbands to take care of them, which, in biblical times, was a very scary situation. They barely had any money and gleaned in the fields for food. They needed someone to take care of them—to buy them back from their debt and redeem their situation. God led them to Boaz, who became their kinsman-redeemer and took care of them. God is Redeemer and He sent Jesus, who died and rose again, to

pay the debt of our sin. Today we can praise God together by writing poems of praise. Point to the pieces of poster board around the room. At each poster board in the room, you will find markers. You can use the letters in the word Redeemer to share your words of praise or write a prayer to God. More than one person can use a letter on a poster board. Write all around the posters too, if you like.

RESPOND//15 minutes

Children respond to what the Holy Spirit is teaching them as they reflect on the day's portion of *The Big God Story*, engage in relationship, and create meaningful pieces of art individually or together.

Reflect: God Is Redeemer

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER KIDS

- Why was Naomi so upset? How do you think Ruth's actions helped to ease her pain? Ruth 1:3–5, 16–17
- What does the word *redeem* mean?
- In what ways do we see God working through Ruth's life? Ruth 1:16; 2:2, 17–18
- What was one important way God used Ruth in *The Big God Story*? Ruth 4:17
- How does Ruth's life show us that God can use us in His big story?
- How do you think God might want you to play a part in His big story?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER KIDS

- Why was Naomi so upset? How do you think Ruth's actions helped to ease her pain? Ruth 1:3–5, 16–17
- What does *gleaning* mean? How did God take care of Ruth while she was gleaning in the fields? Ruth 2:8–9, 16
- What does the word *redeem* mean?
- In Ruth's day, what was a kinsman-redeemer?
- How do you think Boaz, as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer, symbolizes how Jesus is our Redeemer?
- In what ways do we see God working through Ruth's life? Ruth 1:16; 2:2, 17–18
- What was one important way God used Ruth in *The Big God Story*? Ruth 4:17
- How does Ruth's life show us that God can use us in His big story?
- How do you think God might want you to play a part in His big story?

God as Redeemer in My Life

Students are invited to consider how God is Redeemer in their own lives.

SUPPLIES

- Storytelling template (see Resources)
- Storytelling images (see Resources)
- Storytelling answer key (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Scissors
- Tape or glue

SET UP

Print the Storytelling template and images—either one set for the whole group or one set per child.

RELATE

Let's think about what this part of The Big God Story means for us. Though Ruth was just one woman, God worked through her to play an important part in His big story. Since the very beginning, God has been bringing everyday people like Ruth into His story. God also calls each one of us to play a part in The Big God Story—His story of redemption, salvation, and hope. He can use every person's life to create a unique story that can be told for His glory.

Point out the Storytelling template and Storytelling images (or pass them out, if you made a set for each child). Explain that the sheet tells the story of Ruth's life—but it has a few blanks. Their job is to fill in the blanks with the images provided. To do this, help them cut the images out

(if you didn't cut them out earlier). As a group or individually, have them glue or tape the images in the correct places on the sheet. Encourage them to open their Bibles so they can reread this part of The Big God Story if they need help.

When the kids finish, have them retell today's part of The Big God Story. At the end, ask them to talk about how they're all a part of God's big story too! Ask them to reflect on how Jesus is the Redeemer of their lives. When the kids finish, read through the storyboard together, or have each group share their creation with the rest of the group. Then ask the kids to add to the storyboard how they're also a part of The Big God Story. Ask them to reflect on how Jesus is their Redeemer.

BLESS//5 minutes



Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Bible
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 6 (see Resources)

RELATE

Invite the kids to stand in a straight line, with everyone facing you. Then open a Bible and read Luke 1:68:

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

Invite the first child in line to turn to the next child, place a hand on her shoulder, and say, "Praise God! He is our Redeemer!" Then that child will turn to the next child and repeat, moving down the entire line. After the last child shares, say:

May you know how much God cares for you. May you experience Him as your Redeemer this week.

Send home Remember Verse cards and the At Home Weekly with your kids.