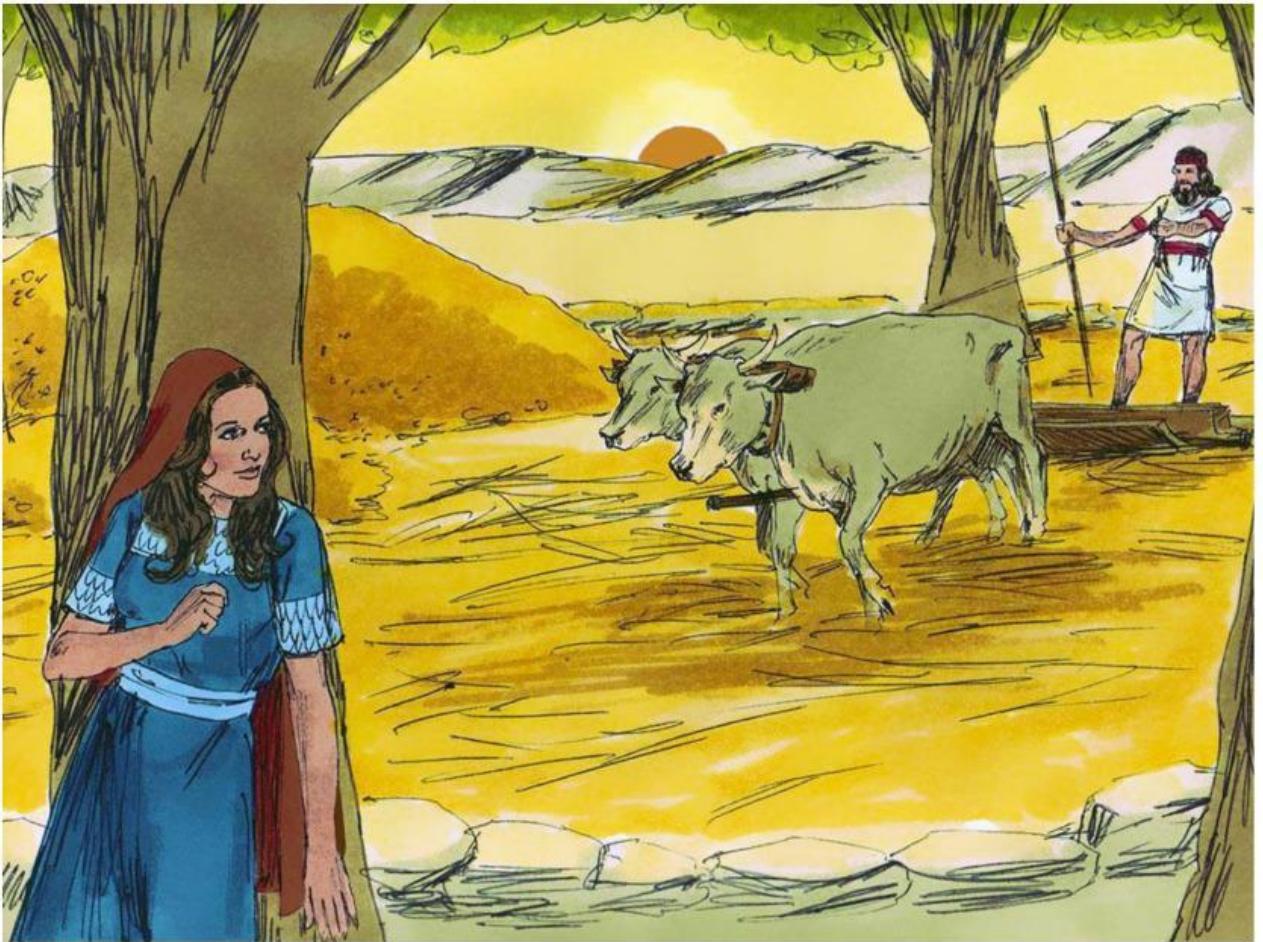


The story of Ruth – part 3

Ruth 3 – 4



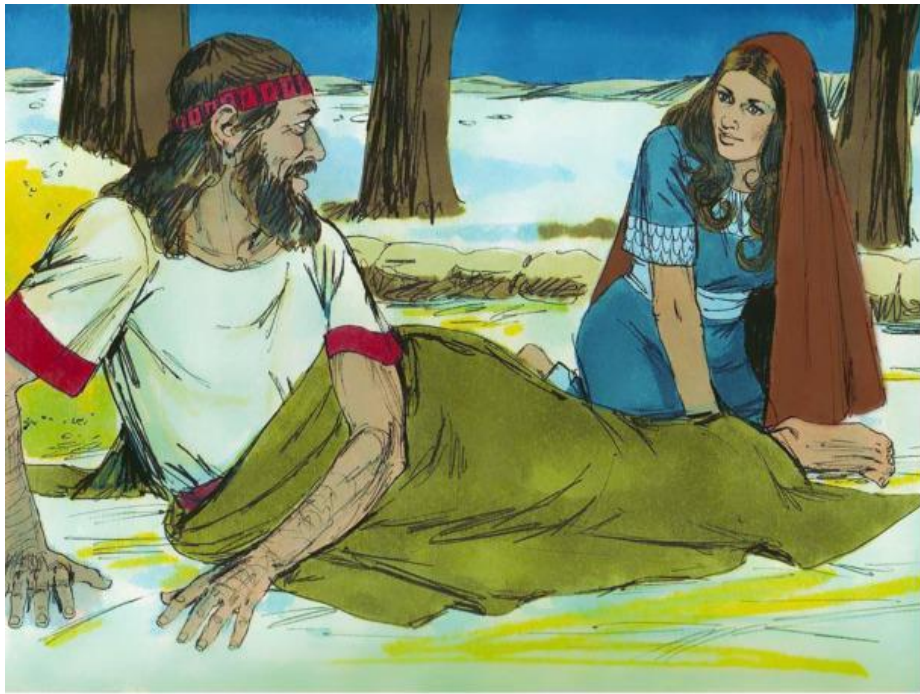
One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, 'My daughter you must have a future where you will be provided for. Tonight Boaz will be winnowing barley. Wash, put on perfume and dress in your best clothes.' Then she told Ruth what to do next.



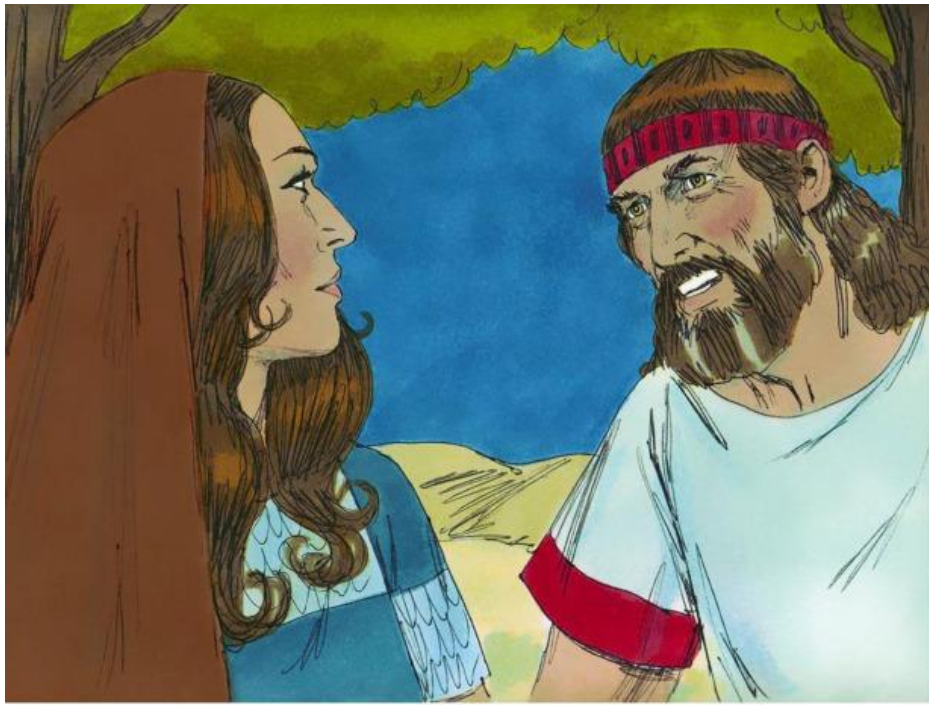
Ruth made her way down to the threshing floor where Boaz was working making sure she was not seen.



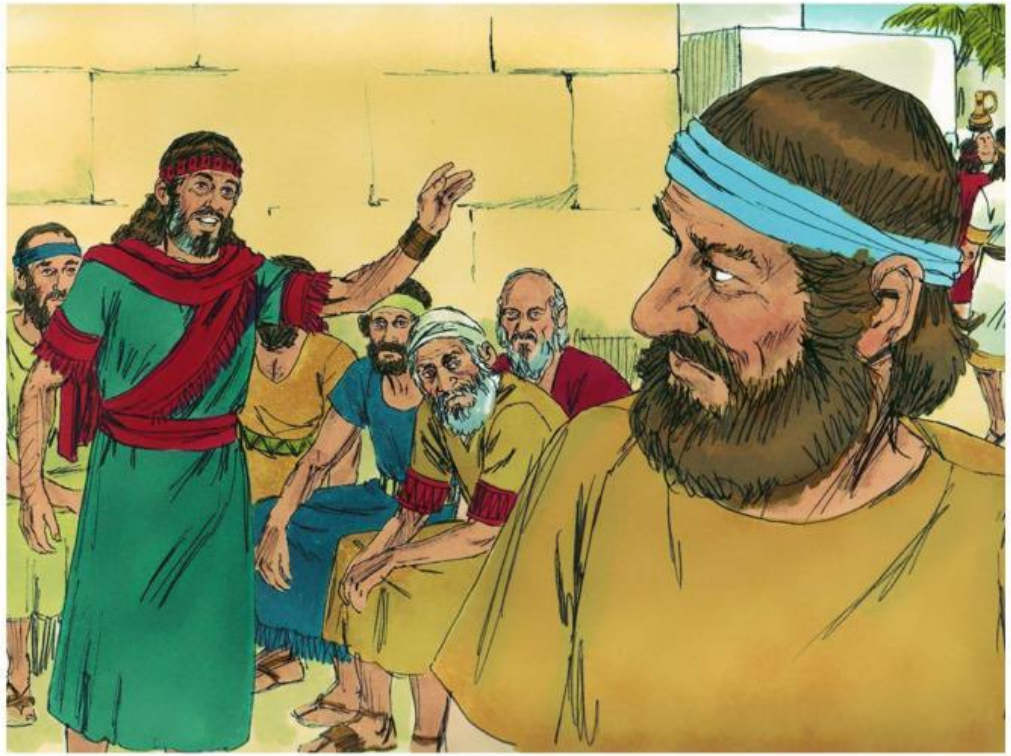
When Boaz had finished eating and drinking he lay down at the far end of a grain pile. Ruth crept up to him, uncovered his feet and lay down.



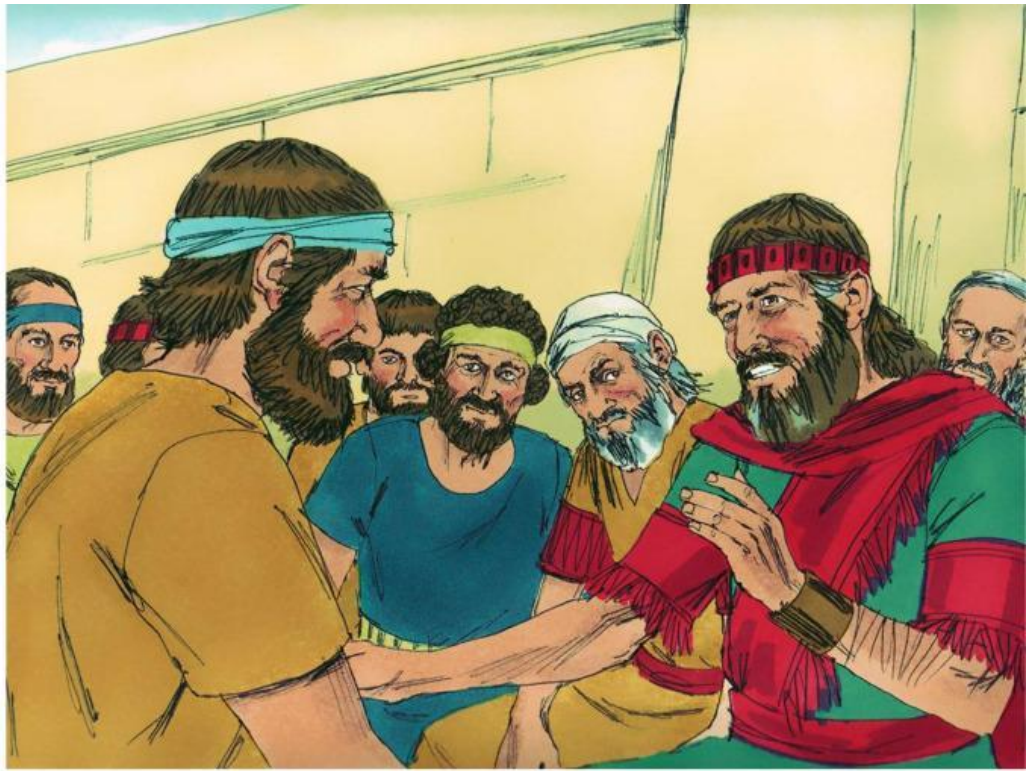
During the night Boaz woke up to find a woman asleep at his feet. 'Who are you?' he asked. 'I am your servant Ruth,' she replied. 'Spread the corner of your garment over me as you are a guardian-redeemer of my family.' A guardian redeemer was someone obliged to look after a relative in need. Boaz was related to Naomi's dead husband Elimelek.



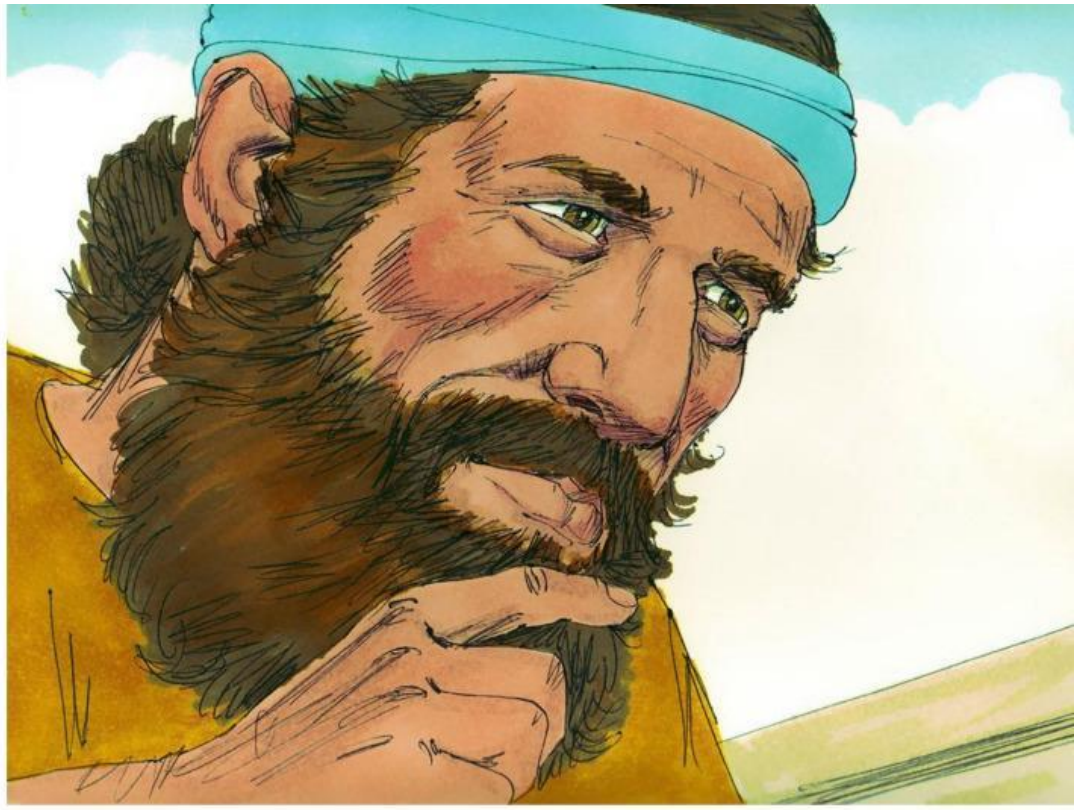
'The Lord bless you.' replied Boaz. 'You have not run after younger men and people know you are a woman of good character. I am your guardian redeemer but there is another person more closely related than I am. If he is not willing to redeem you then I will.' Ruth lay at his feet until morning. Boaz filled the shawl she was wearing with grain to take back to Naomi.



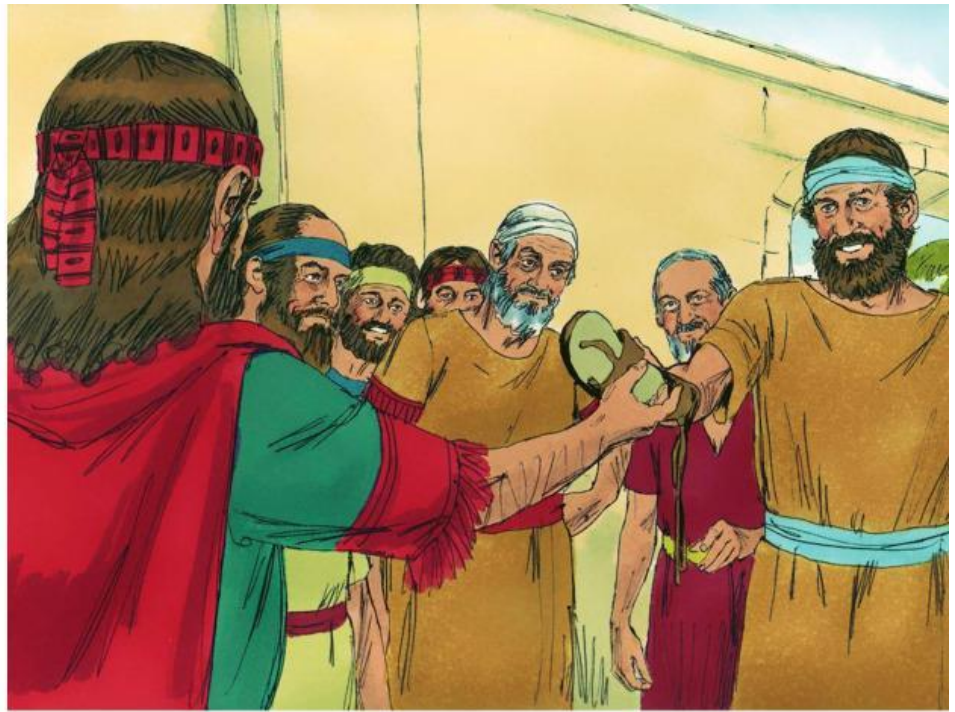
Boaz went to the town gate where business deals were done. When he saw the guardian-redeemer who was more closely related to Naomi's former husband, he asked him to sit down with ten elders gathered as witnesses.



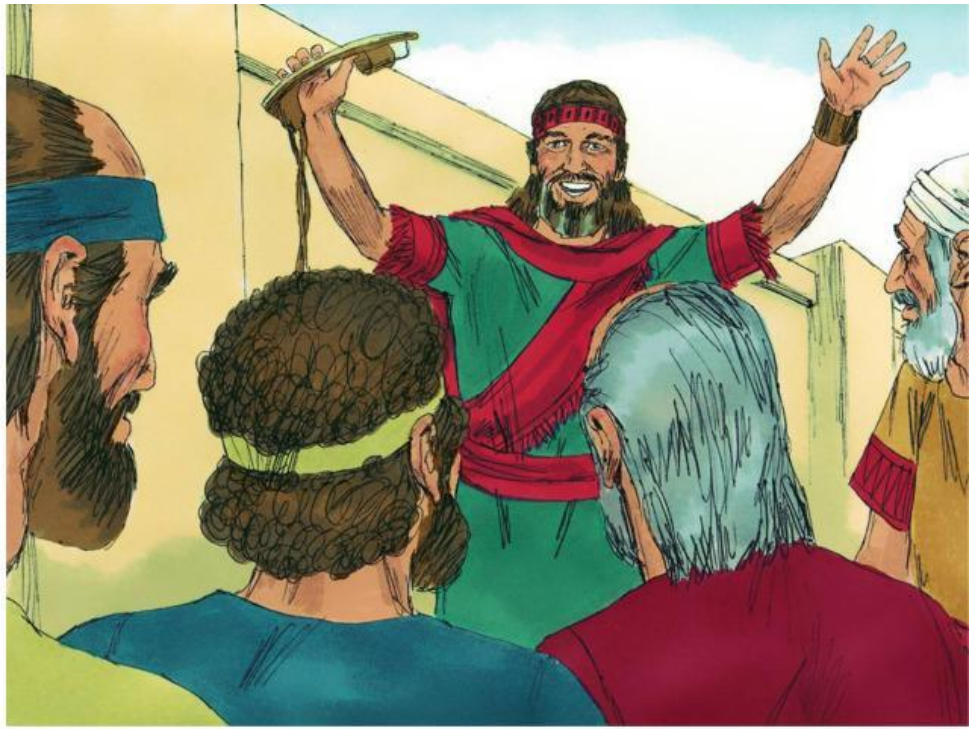
'Naomi is selling the land that belonged to our relative Elimelek,' Boaz explained. 'You have the first right to buy it but if you do not want to then I will.'



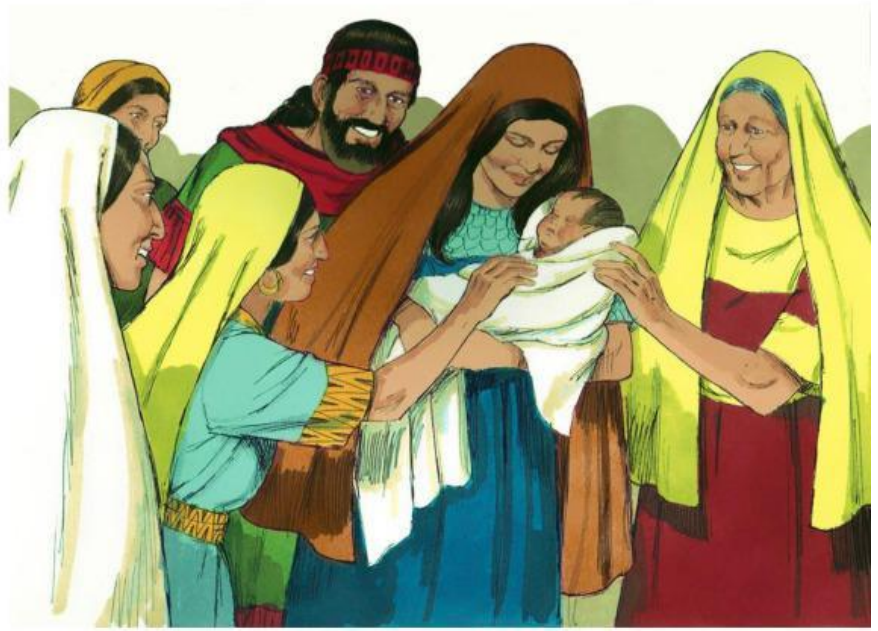
'I cannot buy the land without causing problems with my own estate,' came the reply. 'You buy it as I cannot.'



It was the custom to seal a deal on buying property by one party taking off a sandal and giving it to the other. 'The guardian redeemer who had first choice on the land took off his sandal and gave it to Boaz.



Boaz made an announcement to the elders and those gathered. 'Today I have bought from Naomi the property of Elimelek, and his sons Mahlon and Kilion. I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite as my wife. You are my witnesses.'



So Boaz married Ruth and the Lord blessed them with a son. Women told Naomi, 'Praise the Lord. He has looked after you in your old age. Ruth loves you and is better to you than seven sons.' Ruth and Boaz's son was called Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse whose youngest son David became King of Israel. A descendant of David was Mary the mother of Jesus.