

ENRICHMENT LESSON 7

THE STORY OF RUTH

LESSON NOTES

FOCUS: THE MOABITE GREAT-GRANDMOTHER OF DAVID, WHO WORKED HARD, LOVED GOD, AND GOD'S PEOPLE (THE BOOK OF RUTH)

- **SACRED STORY**
- **ENRICHMENT PRESENTATION**

THE MATERIAL

- **LOCATION: OLD TESTAMENT SACRED STORY SHELVES, MIDDLE SHELF, UNDER "THE TEN BEST WAYS"**
- **PIECES: MODEL OF BETHLEHEM, PEOPLE OF GOD (9 TOTAL), STALKS OF GRAIN, CROWN, BLUE YARN**
- **UNDERLAY: DARK BROWN FELT, 22" X 36"**

BACKGROUND

The story of Ruth is a connecting story. It connects the wilderness experience of the People of God and living in the promised land, with living in the promised land and King David. Ruth was not one of the People of God. She was a Moabite. She married one of God's people, Boaz, and became the great-grandmother of David the King.

The Hebrew Bible is organized into Torah, Prophets, and Writings. The Book of Ruth is included among the Writings. It presents a peaceful contrast to the political chaos, scarcity and cruelty of the time of the judges.

NOTES ON THE MATERIAL

Ruth's story sits in a deep wooden or wicker tray (12" x 8" x 3"). The story icon (5" x 2.5") is an image of Ruth gathering wheat. It can be attached to the end or the side of the tray depending on the size of the shelves, the classroom or other considerations. The underlay is a large piece of dark brown felt, 22" x 36". The story calls for the following objects: a long piece of yarn (about 42" long so you can place it on the underlay in a squiggly line to represent the Jordan River, a small model of Bethlehem

(like the one used in "Advent I-IV," *Volume 3*, approximately 4" tall), nine People of God, stalks of grain and a crown.

SPECIAL NOTES

The core stories about the People of God are placed on the top of the sacred story shelves. The enrichment stories about the key people in the core stories are placed on the lower shelves of the sacred story section in the room, under the core stories they enrich and extend (see diagram below).

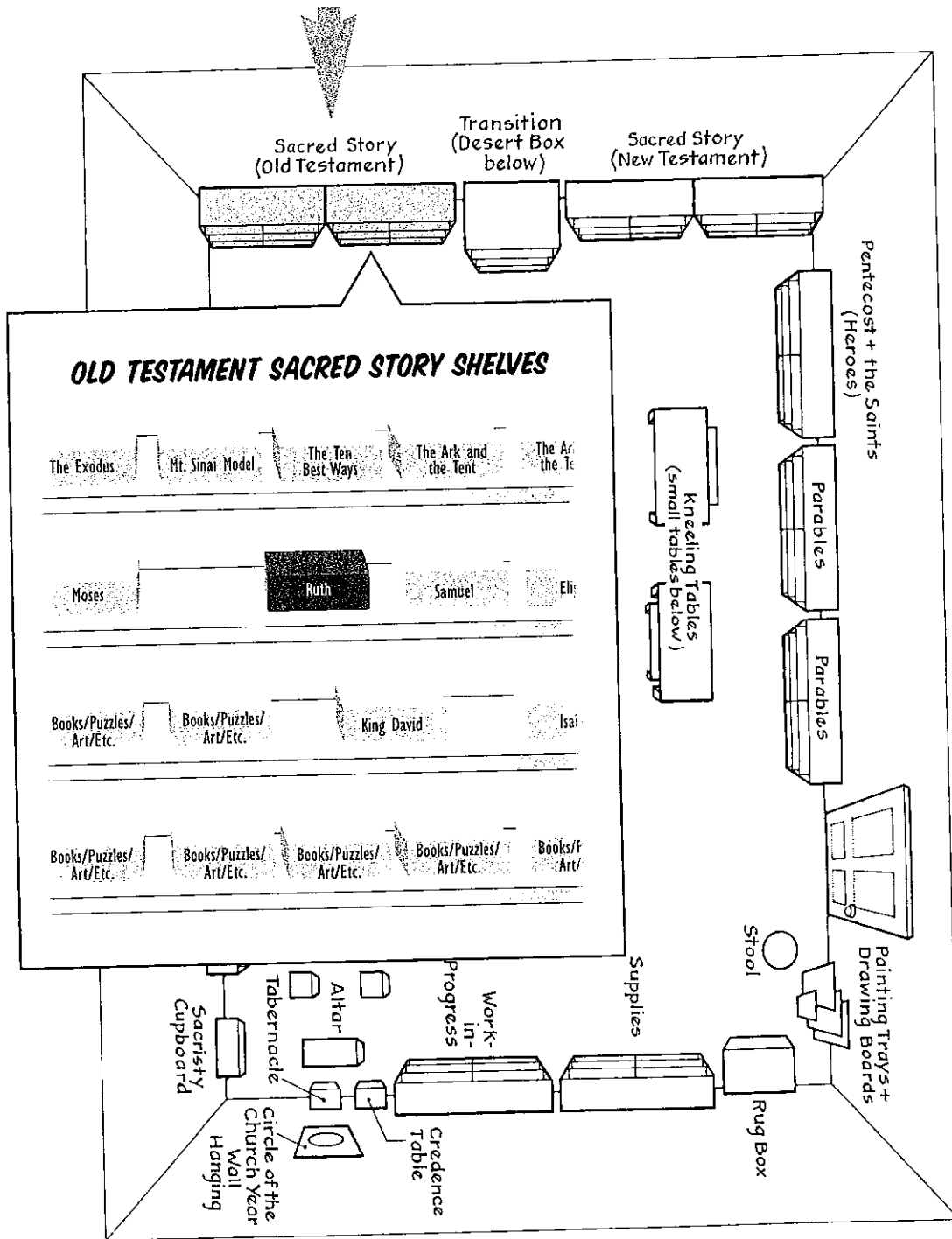
When you introduce the stories in this volume, take care to set them in the larger context of the sacred story of which they are a part. You can accomplish this by:

- presenting the top shelf story the week before and then following up with this,
- presenting the top shelf story briefly on the same day you present this, or
- standing by the shelf and reminding the children of the top shelf story before bringing this one to the circle.

Ruth's story does not unroll like a life in the way that the other stories in this volume do. The movement of the story is instead from the Promised Land, specifically the city of Bethlehem, to the land of Moab, and back again.



STORY ICON FOR THE STORY OF RUTH



MOVEMENTS

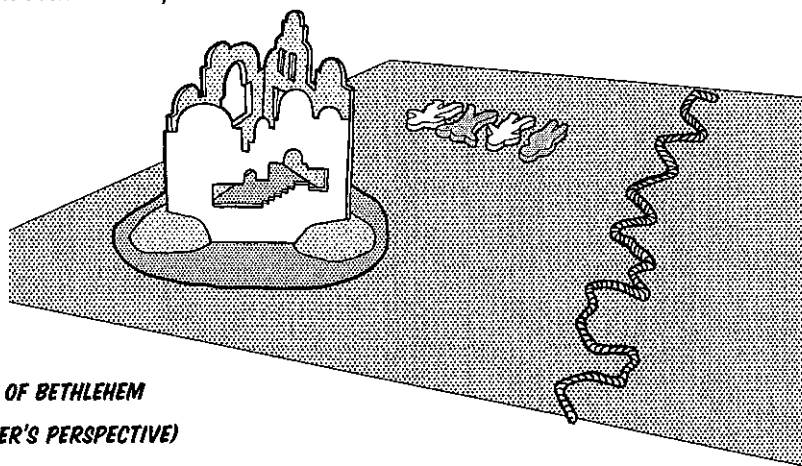
Move with deliberation to the shelf where the material waits.

Pick up the tray containing the material and return to the circle.

You may need to say:

Take the underlay out of the tray and spread it out. Place the blue yarn down the middle in a squiggly line to represent the Jordan River, which actually does twist and turn like this.

Move your hand from your left to the right of the river, placing it on the dark brown underlay as you say, "They filled the land." Place four of the People of God in the Land. Then place the model of Bethlehem between the people and you.



**THE MODEL OF BETHLEHEM
(STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)**

Show with your hand the land of Moab—to the right of the river from the storyteller's perspective. Move the four People of God (Naomi, her husband and their two sons) across the river into Moab.

Take away one person.

WORDS

Watch. Watch where I go.

Everyone needs to be ready.

After the People of God crossed over the Jordan River, into the Promised Land, they filled the land. Some of them began to live in Bethlehem.

Many years went by. Then a time came when there was no rain so the wheat could not grow. Some of the people decided to cross over the Jordan River to Moab where there was food. Naomi, her husband and their two sons, were among those who went.

In this new land they were happy, until Naomi's husband died. That was very sad.

MOVEMENTS

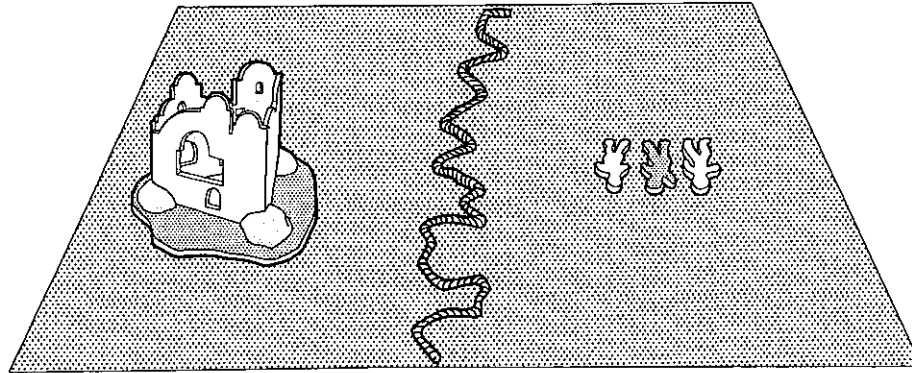
Add two people as you name Orpah and Ruth.

Take away two sons.

WORDS

Later her two sons married young women from Moab. Their names were Orpah and Ruth.

When these husbands died, Naomi, Ruth and Orpah were all widows together.



THE LAYOUT WITHOUT THE TWO SONS (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

Move Orpah away from the other two.

Naomi didn't know what to do, so she decided to go back across the desert to her family in Bethlehem. Orpah went to live with her mother in Moab.

Put your hand on Ruth as you say, "Where you go..."

Ruth stayed with Naomi. She said, "Where you go, I will go. Where you live, I will live. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God."

Move Naomi and Ruth back across the river to Bethlehem.

Then they traveled to Bethlehem where they found a small place to live.

Place the stalks of grain beside Naomi and Ruth.

They went into the nearby fields to gather grain left after the harvest. People let them do that because they were widows.

Place another person on the underlay beside Ruth to represent Boaz. Move Boaz close to Ruth and Naomi a little away.

One of the fields belonged to Boaz, a rich man. He saw Ruth. He liked how she worked hard and took care of Naomi.

Place another person on the underlay to represent Ruth and Boaz's son.

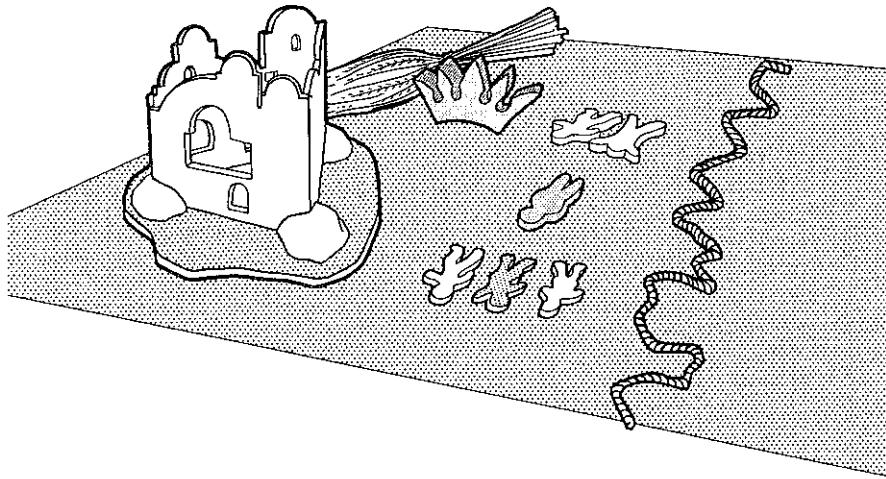
In time they were married and had children. Now Ruth was a mother and Naomi was a grandmother. She could hold her grandson on her lap.

MOVEMENTS

Place another person on the underlay to represent Jesse and then one for David. Put the crown beside David.

WORDS

When the little boy grew up he had a son, Jesse, and Jesse had many sons. One of Jesse's sons grew up to be the great King David. He was the great grandson of Ruth.



THE LAYOUT WITH JESSE AND THE CROWN IN PLACE (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

Sit for a moment and look at the lesson from beginning to end to let the story rest. Then begin the wondering.

I wonder what part of this story you liked the best?

I wonder what part was the most important?

I wonder what part was about you or what part you were in?

I wonder what part we could leave out and still have all the story that we need?

Carefully return everything to the tray. Model how to fold the underlay so it fits nicely in the tray. Return the story to its place on the shelves. Return to your place in the circle and begin to dismiss the children to their work.