

Lesson 13: Ruth and Naomi

Ruth 1-2

4th and 5th Grade Class

Jordan Park church of Christ



THE STORY OF RUTH

Part 1 - Ruth 1



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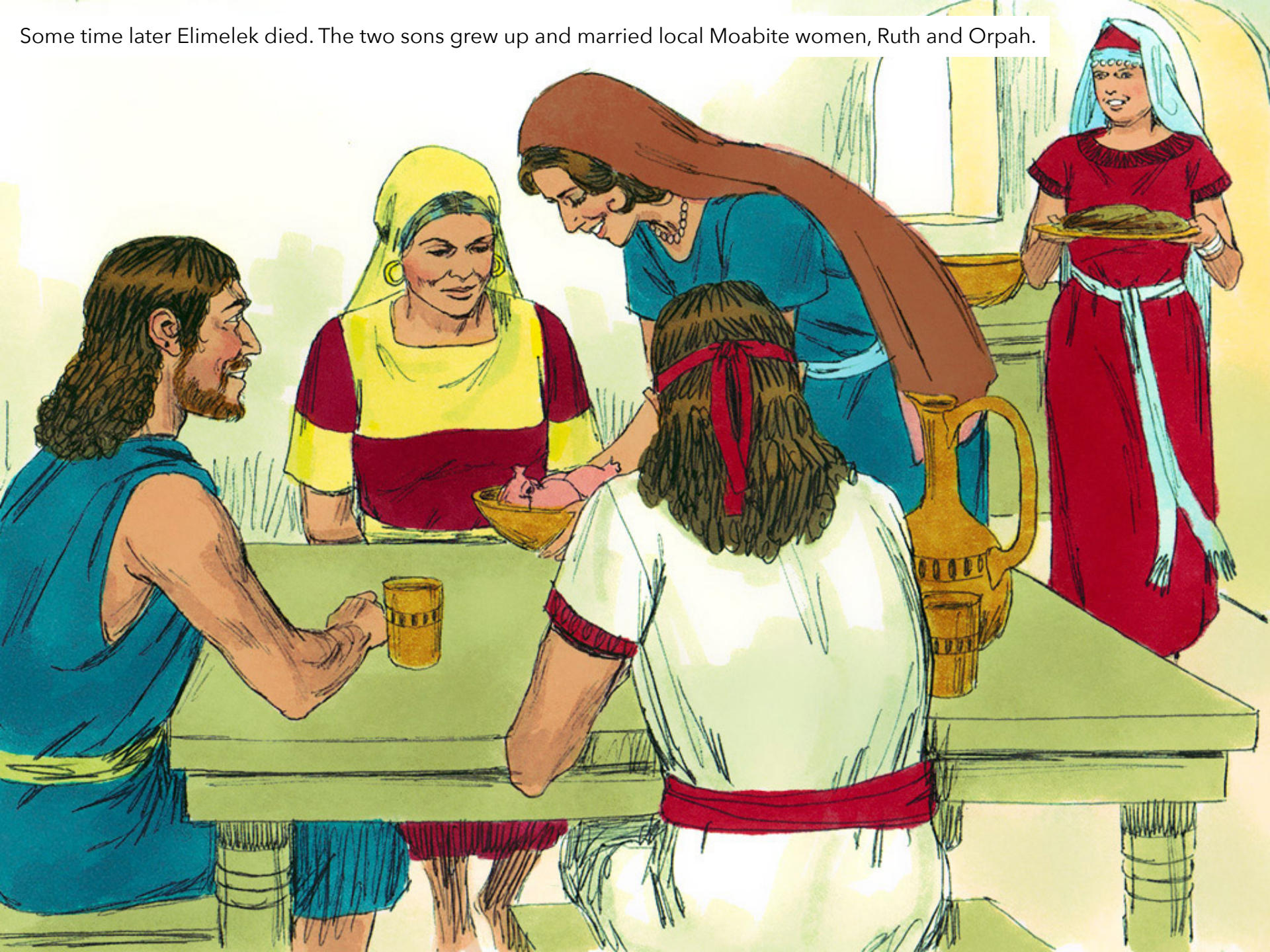
Elimelek and his wife Naomi had two sons, Mahlon and Kilion, and lived in the town of Bethlehem in Judah. When the area was hit with famine they decided to leave to find food.



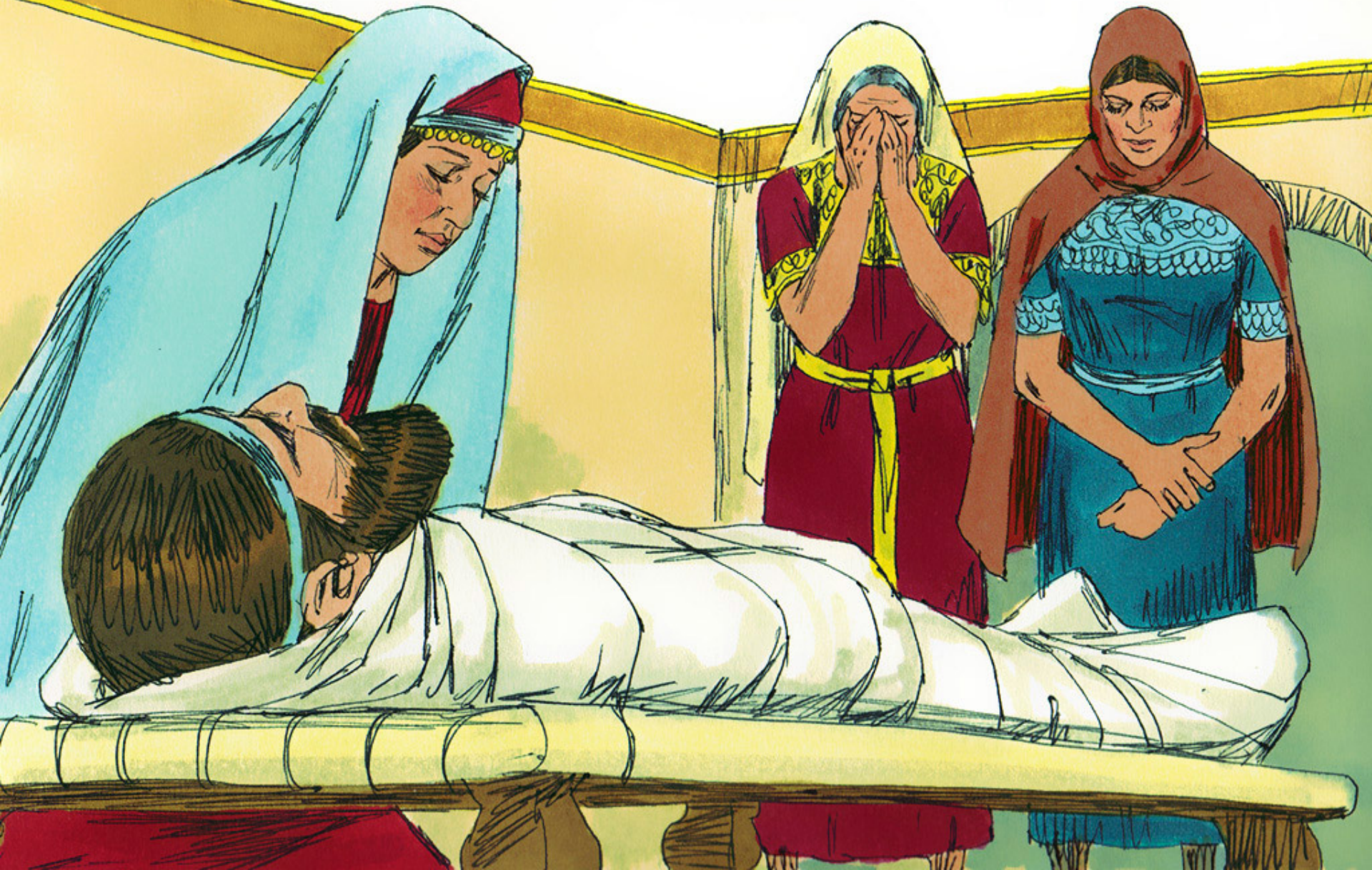


They travelled to the nearby land of Moab and settled there to live. The Moabite people did not worship God but their own idols.

Some time later Elimelek died. The two sons grew up and married local Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah.



Sadly tragedy struck again. Ten years after the two sons had settled in Moab Mahlon and Kilion both died. It left three widows, Naomi and her two young Moabite daughter-in-laws, Ruth and Orpah.



When Naomi heard that the Lord had provided food for the people back in Bethlehem she decided to return. The three widows packed up their belongings



Naomi then told her two daughter-in-laws, 'Go back to your own mothers' homes. May the Lord show you the same kindness you have show to your dead husbands and to me. May God help you find new husbands.



Naomi kissed them both goodbye and they wept aloud. 'We will go back with you to your people,' they replied. 'No you must return home,' Naomi insisted. 'You can marry again.' Naomi felt embittered and that God was against her





Orpah and Ruth wept again. Orpah kissed Naomi goodbye and returned home to her mother's house. Ruth however clung hold of Naomi and would not let go.

'Orpah has returned to her people and their gods,' said Naomi. 'Go back with her.'

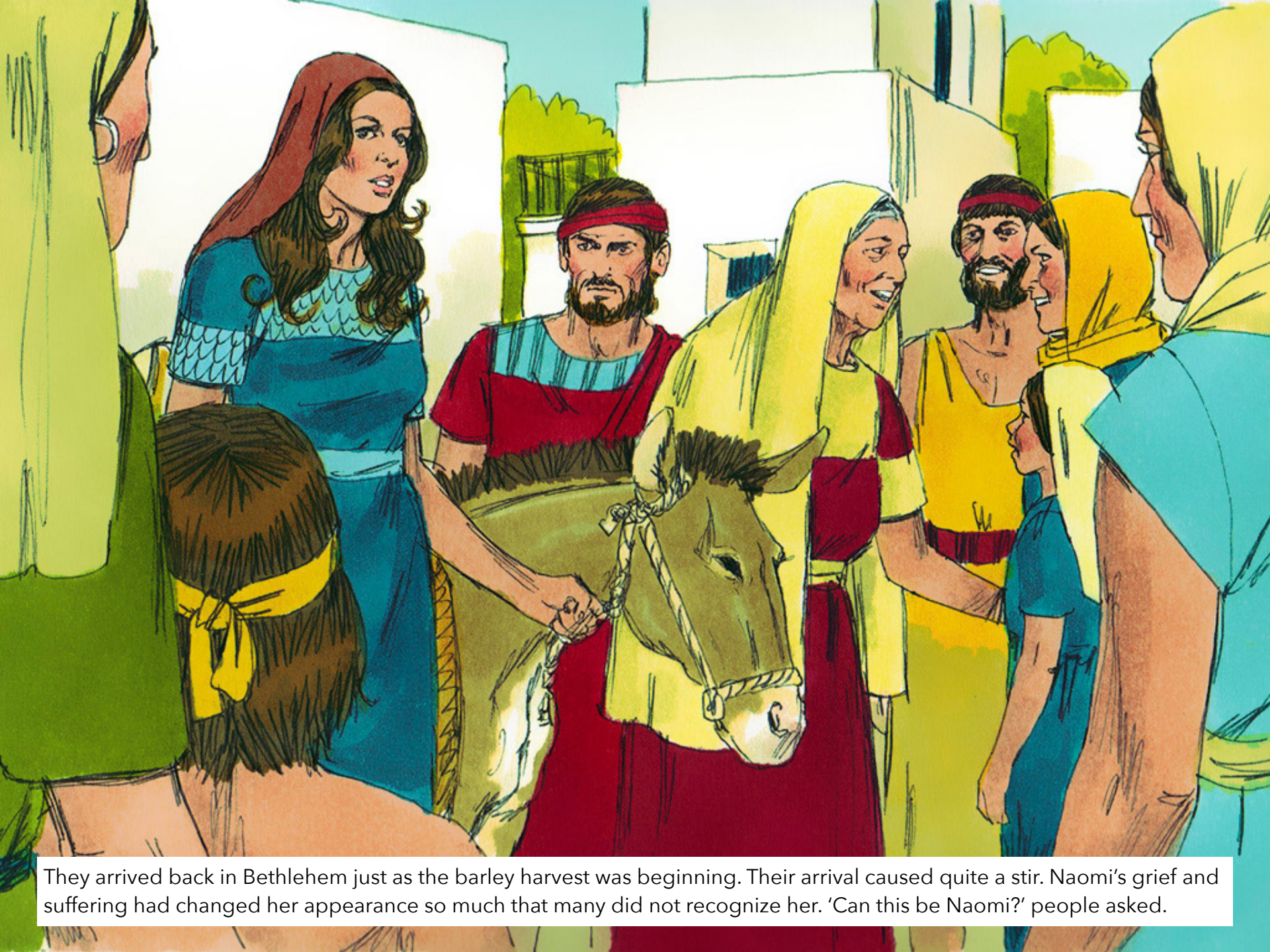


Don't urge me to leave you,' Ruth replied. 'Where you go I will go, where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God. Where you die I will die.'

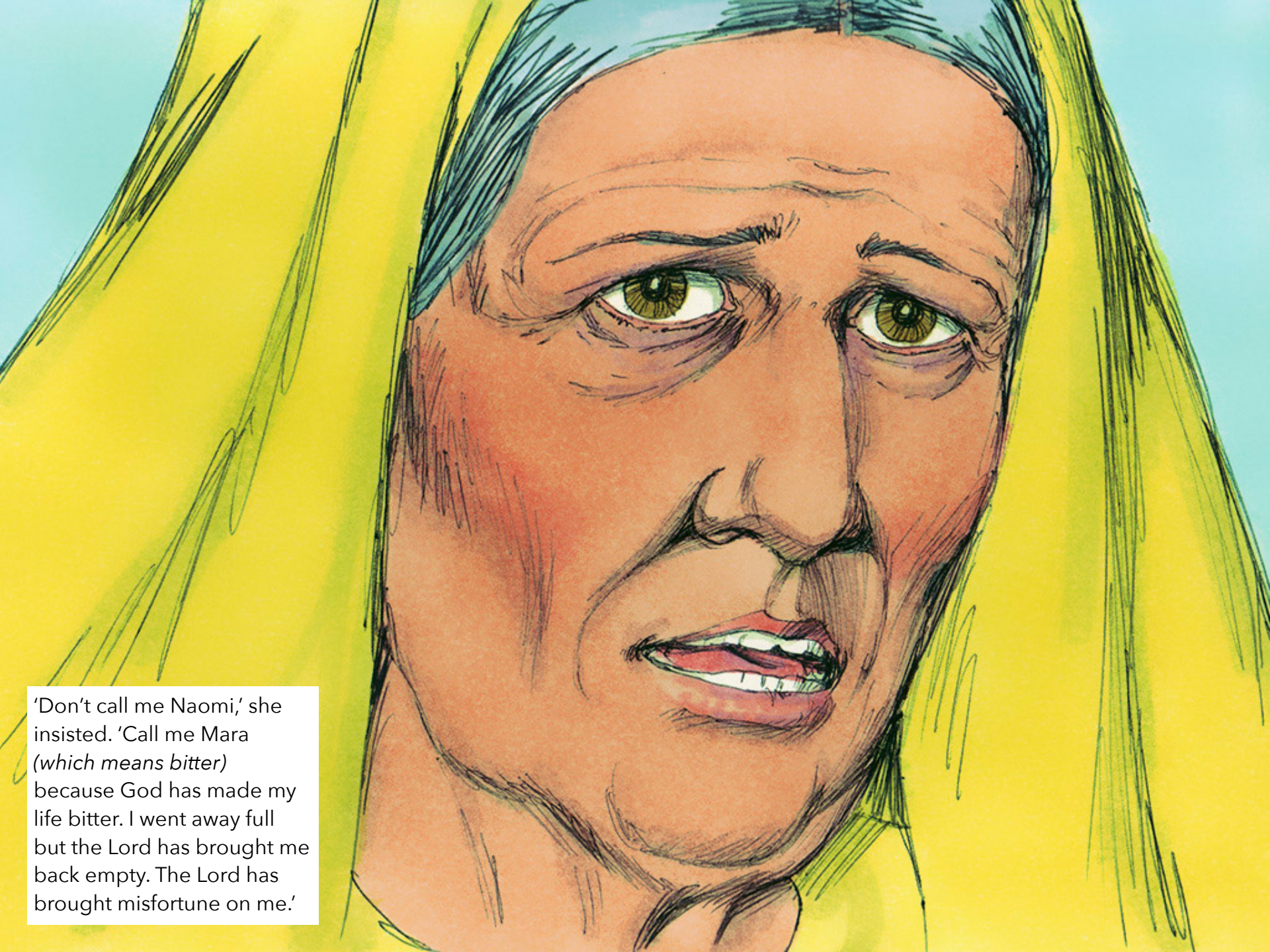




When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to stay with her they both set off on the road to Bethlehem



They arrived back in Bethlehem just as the barley harvest was beginning. Their arrival caused quite a stir. Naomi's grief and suffering had changed her appearance so much that many did not recognize her. 'Can this be Naomi?' people asked.



'Don't call me Naomi,' she insisted. 'Call me Mara (*which means bitter*) because God has made my life bitter. I went away full but the Lord has brought me back empty. The Lord has brought misfortune on me.'



THE STORY OF RUTH

Part 2 - Ruth 2



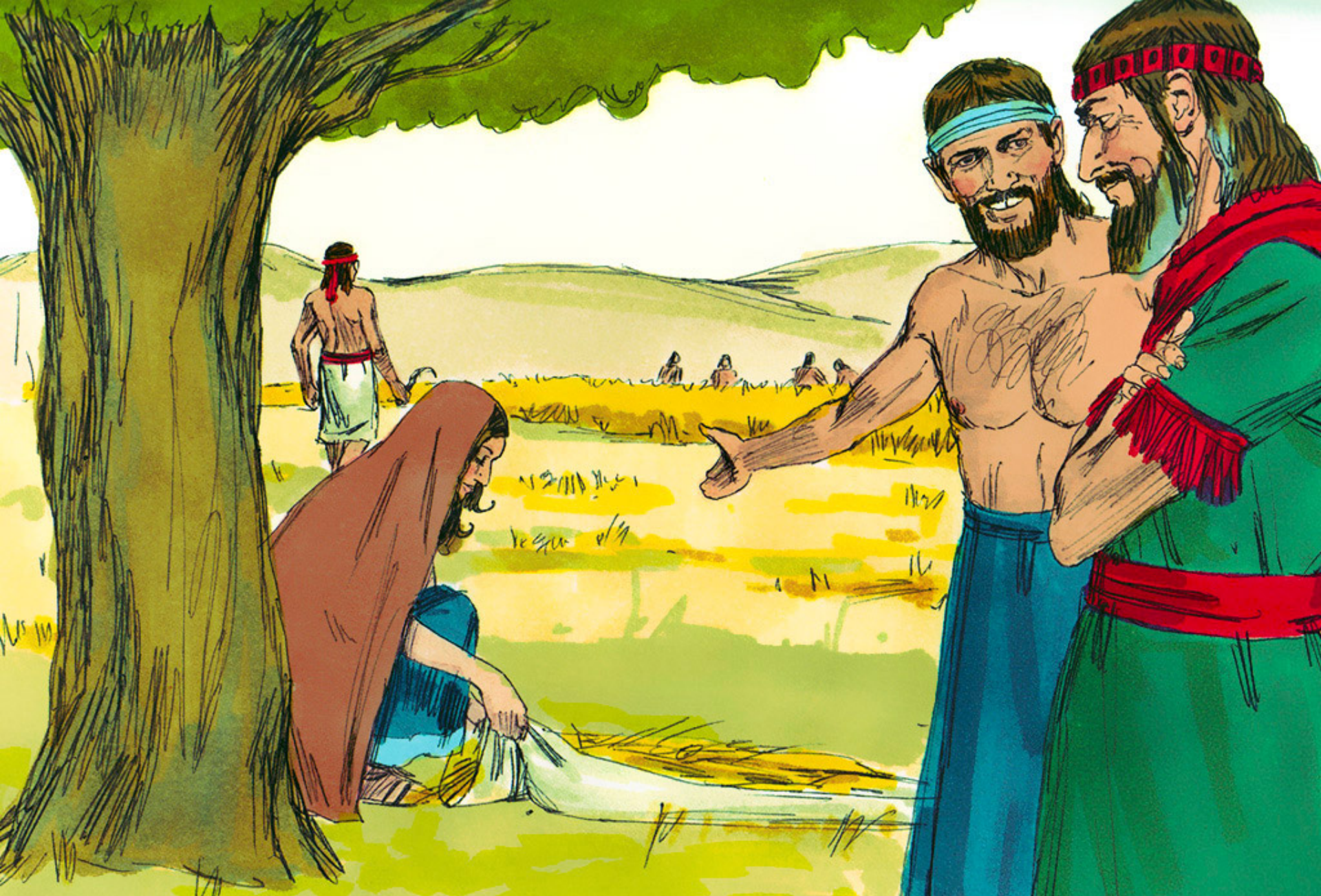
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After Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem they needed food. 'Let me go into the barley fields to pick up the leftover grain.' The poor were allowed to pick up grain that the harvesters had left on the ground. 'Go ahead, my daughter,' Naomi replied.



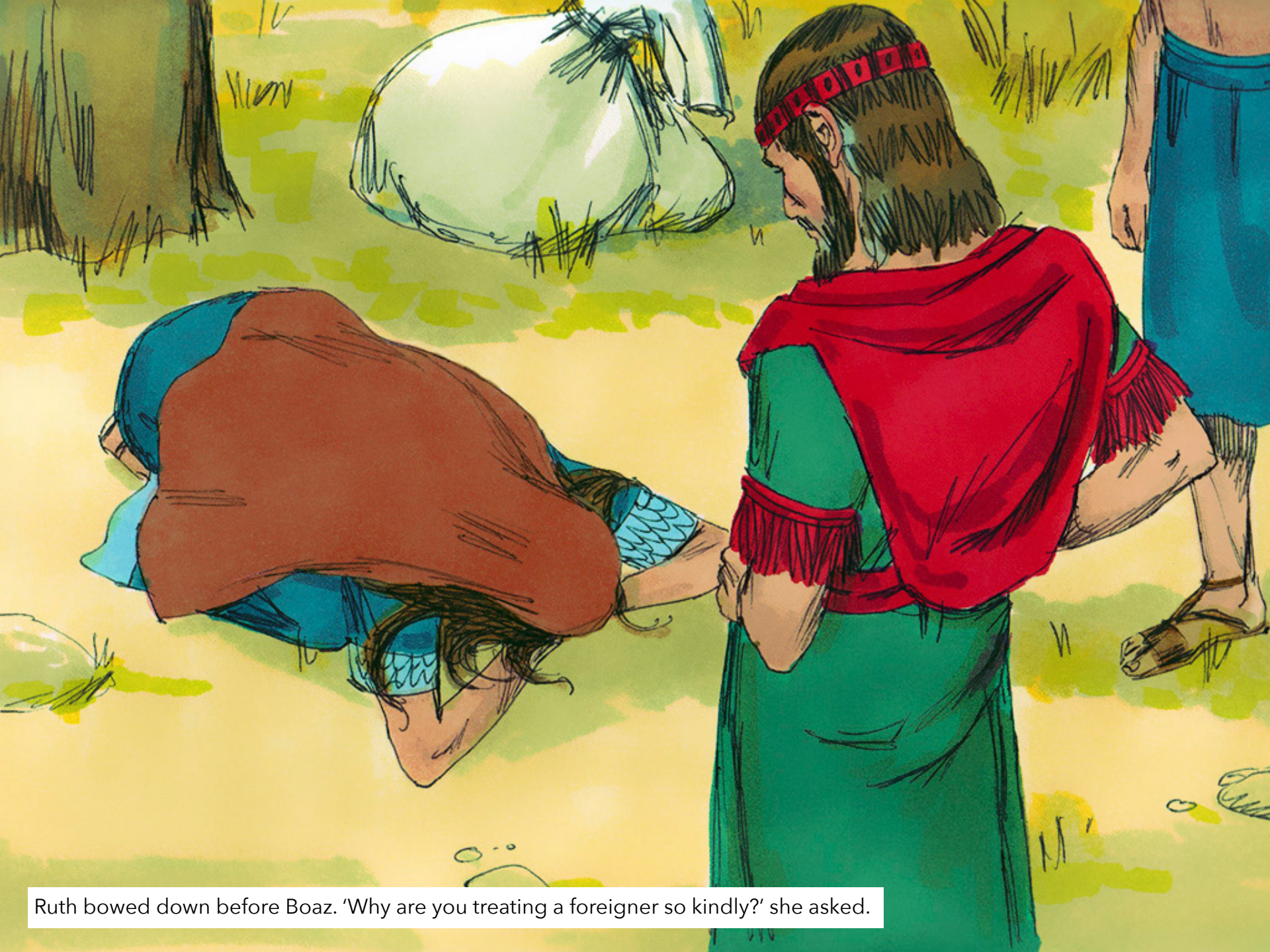
Ruth went into the fields belonging to Boaz. Boaz was a relative of Naomi's dead husband Elimelek. Later Boaz arrived and greeted the harvesters. 'The Lord be with you.' The harvesters replied, 'The Lord bless you.'



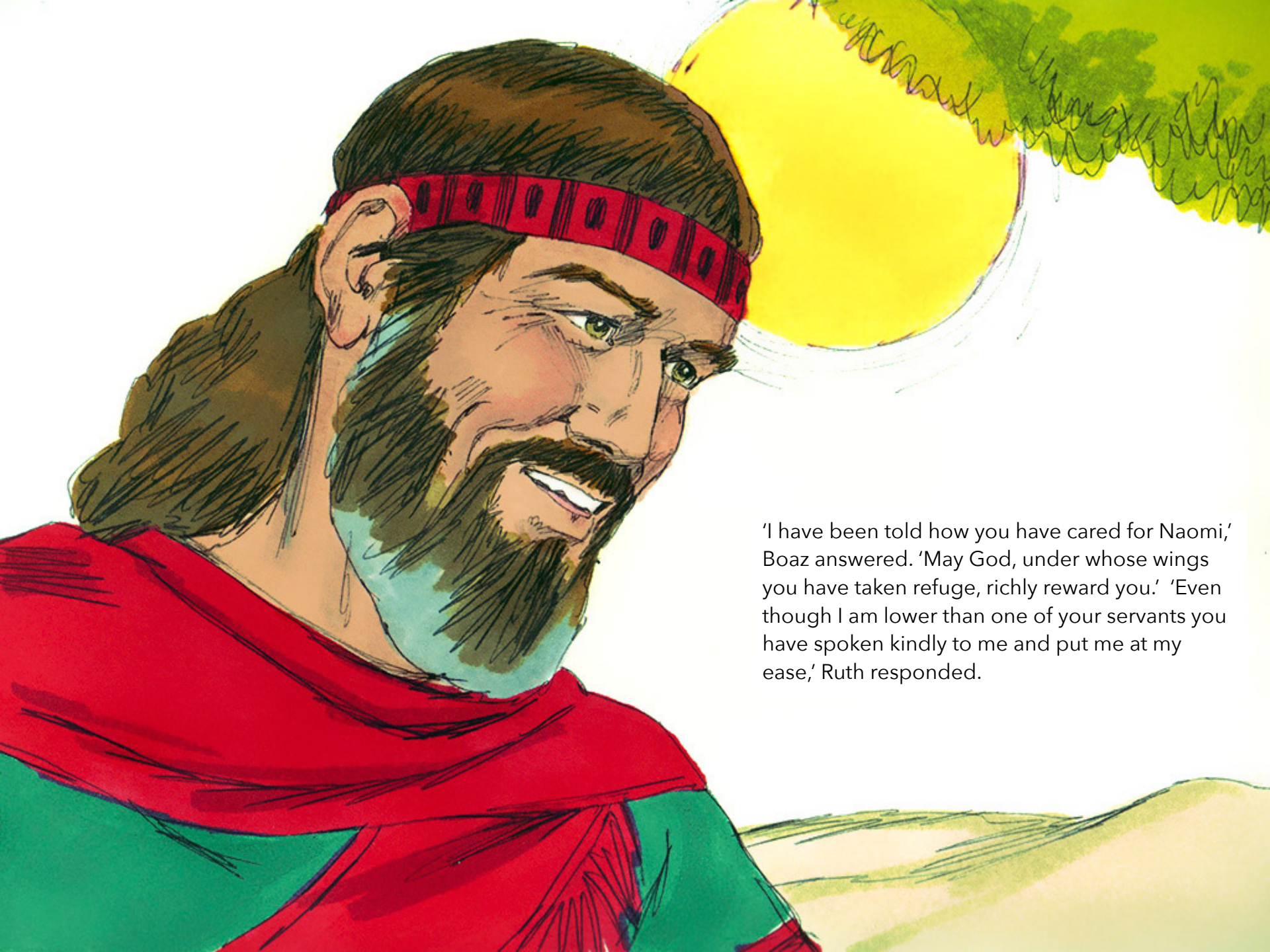
Boaz noticed Ruth collecting grain with the poor. 'Who is that woman?' he asked the man in charge of the harvesting. 'She is the Moabite who returned with Naomi,' he answered. 'She asked permission to pick up grain and has been working hard.'



Boaz went across to Ruth. 'Stay in these fields with the women who work for me,' Boaz told her. 'I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. When you get thirsty help yourself to the water jars the men have filled.'



Ruth bowed down before Boaz. 'Why are you treating a foreigner so kindly?' she asked.



'I have been told how you have cared for Naomi,' Boaz answered. 'May God, under whose wings you have taken refuge, richly reward you.' 'Even though I am lower than one of your servants you have spoken kindly to me and put me at my ease,' Ruth responded.

At mealtime Boaz invited her to eat with the other harvesters. 'Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar,' he said. He offered her roasted grain. Ruth ate all she wanted.



When Ruth got up to continue working Boaz gave secret orders to his men. 'Let her gather among the sheaves without telling her off. Even pull out some stalks from the bundles and drop them for her to gather.' Ruth busily gathered grain until the evening.





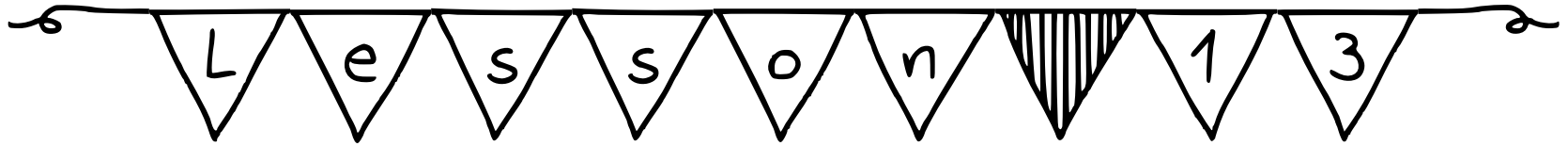
Ruth threshed the barley she had gathered and took it home to Naomi. It was a large amount, about 30 pounds (13 kilograms). She also brought Naomi the food leftover from the meal she had with Boaz and the harvesters.

'Where did you gather grain today?' Naomi asked. 'Who is the man who has been kind to you?' 'Boaz, Ruth replied. 'The Lord bless him,' said Naomi. 'He is a close relative we know as a guardian-redeemer. He has an obligation to look after a relative who is in need.'





From that point on Ruth continued gathering grain in the fields belonging to Boaz. She stayed close to the other women gathering grain knowing she would be safe. She worked hard in the barley harvest and then in the wheat harvest that followed making sure that Naomi had enough food to eat.



Compassionate Words

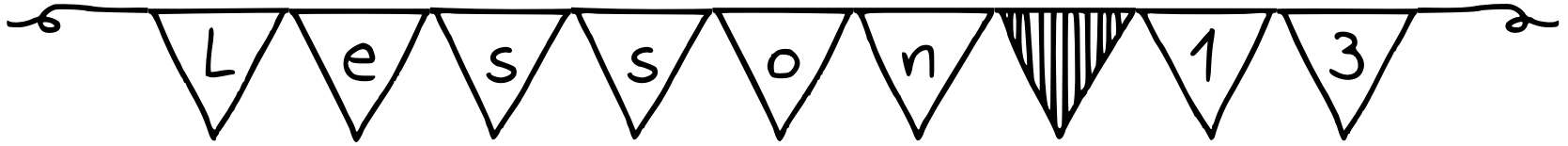
sympathetic
considerate
gentle

concerned
empathetic
giving

kind
caring
tender hearted

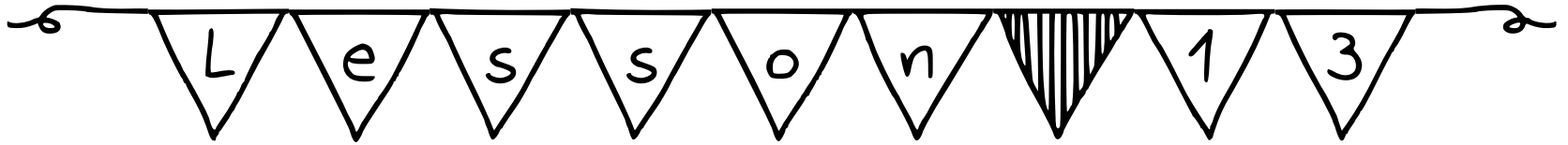
Can you think of any others?

- Are you a generous person?
- How have you shown compassion?
- Think about a time someone was compassionate to you.
- "Compassion is the language the deaf can hear and the blind can see."
-Unknown What does this quote mean to you?
- Do all people deserve to be treated with compassion? Why or why not?
- Have you ever shown compassion to nature or an animal?
- Think of someone you know who is in need. What is keeping you from reaching out with compassion?



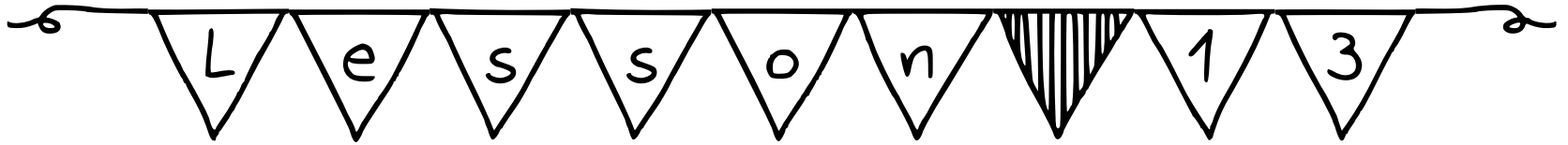
Ruth's great love for her mother-in-law is an example for all of us today. We should be more benevolent with others and share what we have.

This book teaches examples of faith, love, patience, loyalty, devotion, industry and kindness. (1:8,16,17; 2:18,23)



The book of Ruth is only one of two books of the Bible named after women. The other one is Esther. This book is so different from the tone that has been set in Judges.

Quiet scenes of rural life versus violence
Loyalty versus unfaithfulness
Purity versus immorality
Harvest fields versus battlefields



The book of Ruth shows God's providence. Elimelech and Naomi's misfortune, two son's marriages to Moabite girls, Ruth's loss of her husband and conversion to God. She is one of the four women mentioned by name in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1)

But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

Ruth 1:16-17