

Lesson 14: Ruth and Boaz

Ruth 3-4

4th and 5th Grade Class

Jordan Park church of Christ

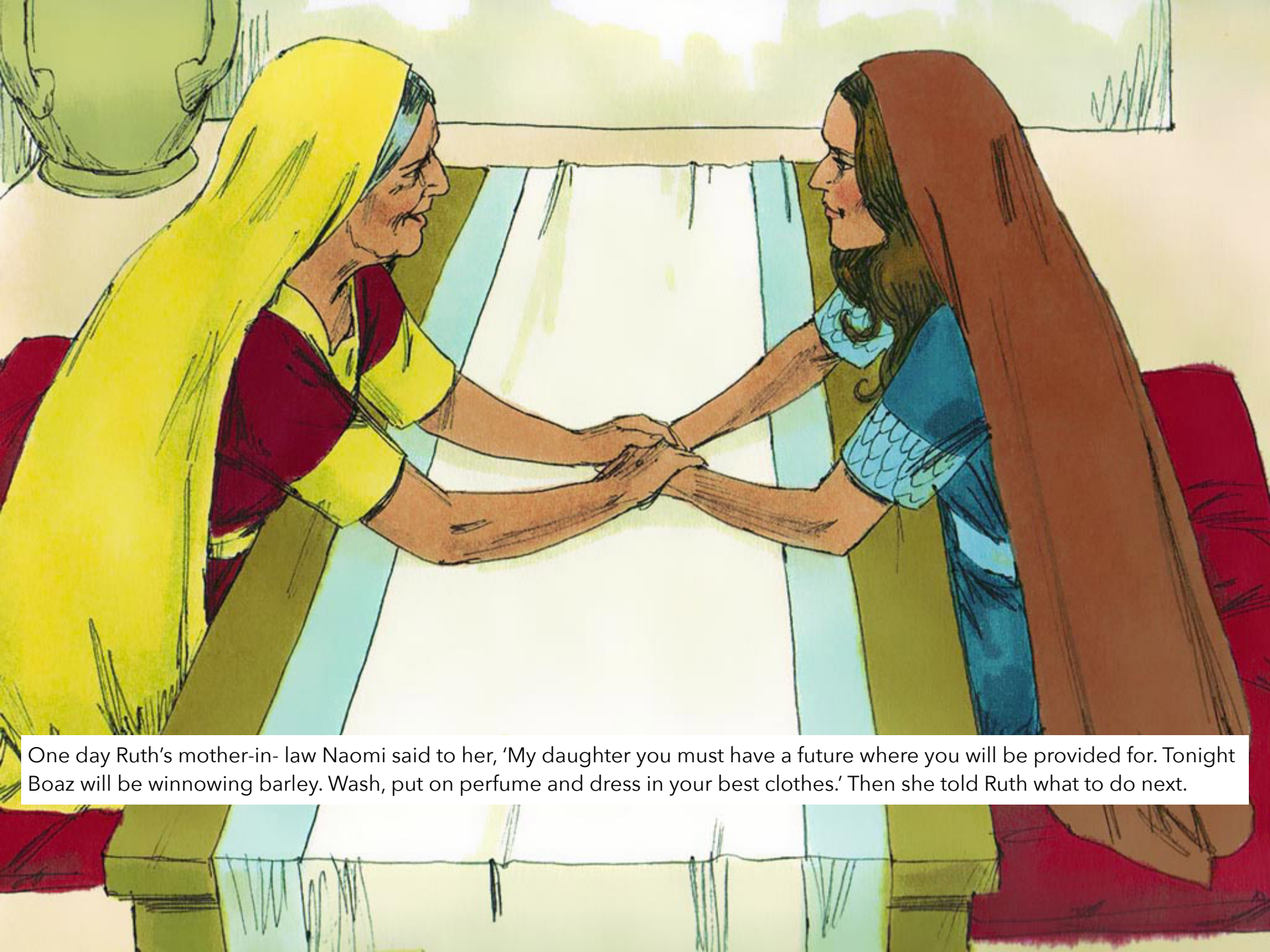


THE STORY OF RUTH

Part 3 - Ruth 3-4



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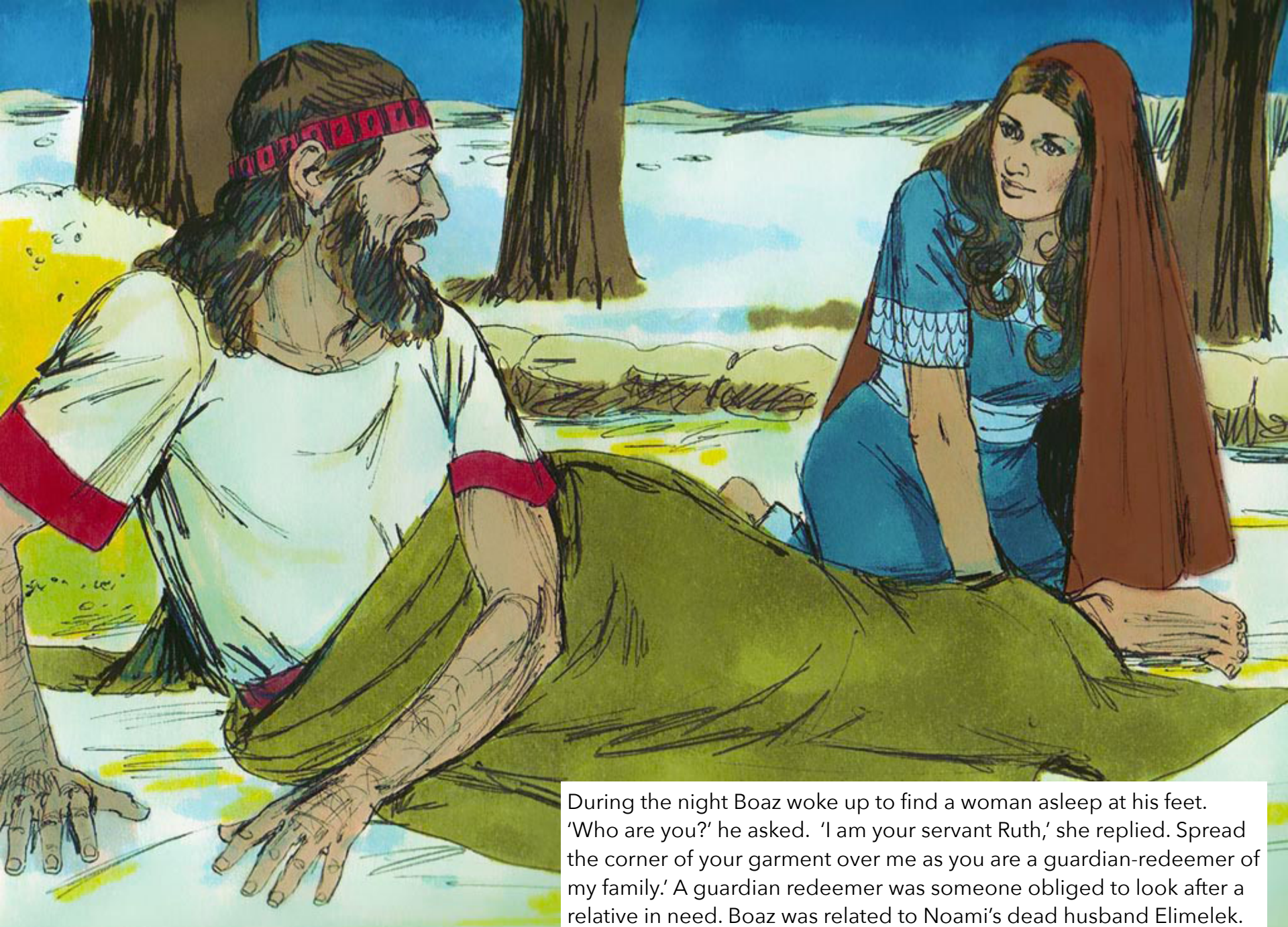
One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, 'My daughter you must have a future where you will be provided for. Tonight Boaz will be winnowing barley. Wash, put on perfume and dress in your best clothes.' Then she told Ruth what to do next.



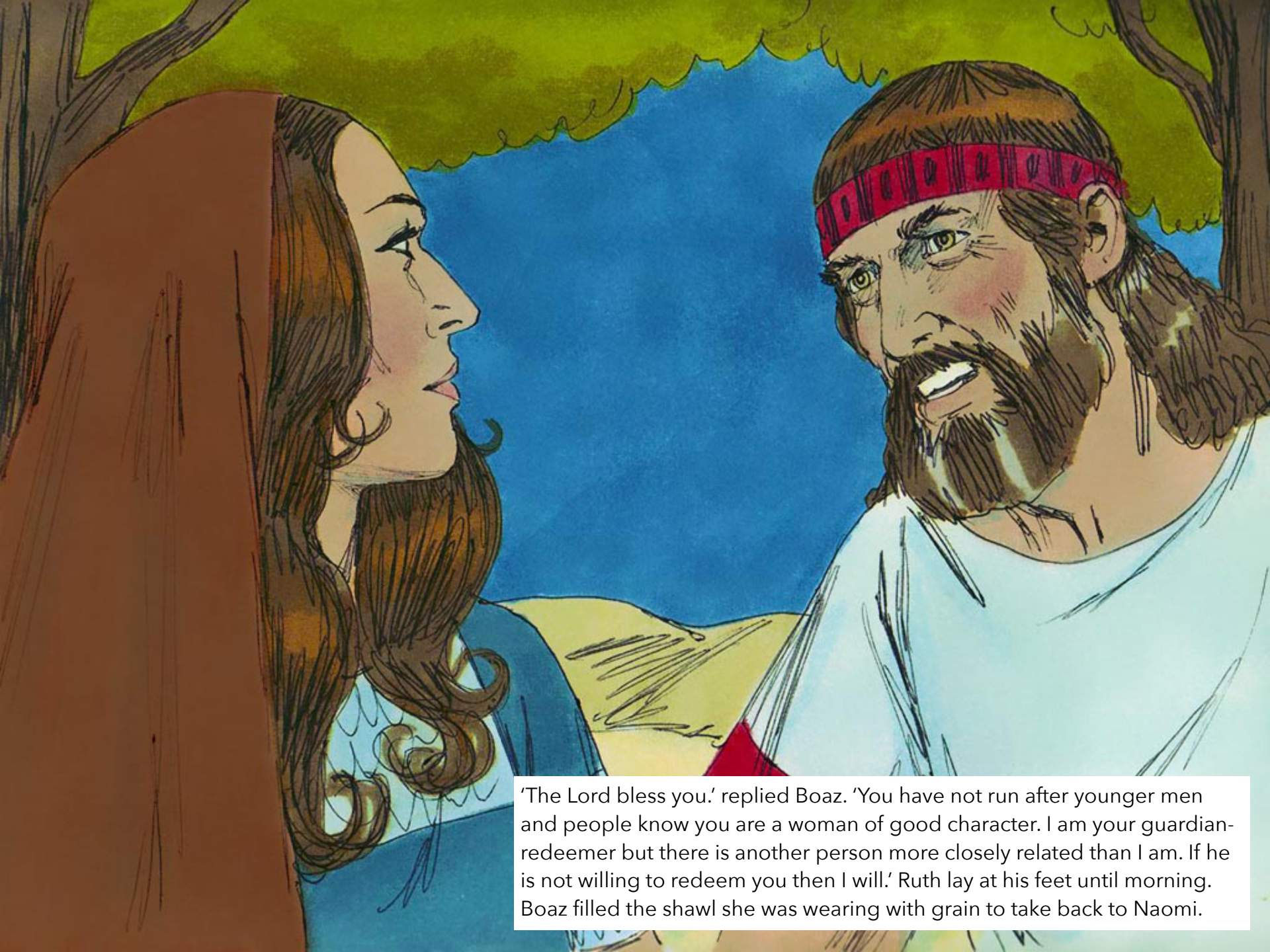
Ruth made her way down to the threshing floor where Boaz was working making sure she was not seen.



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.

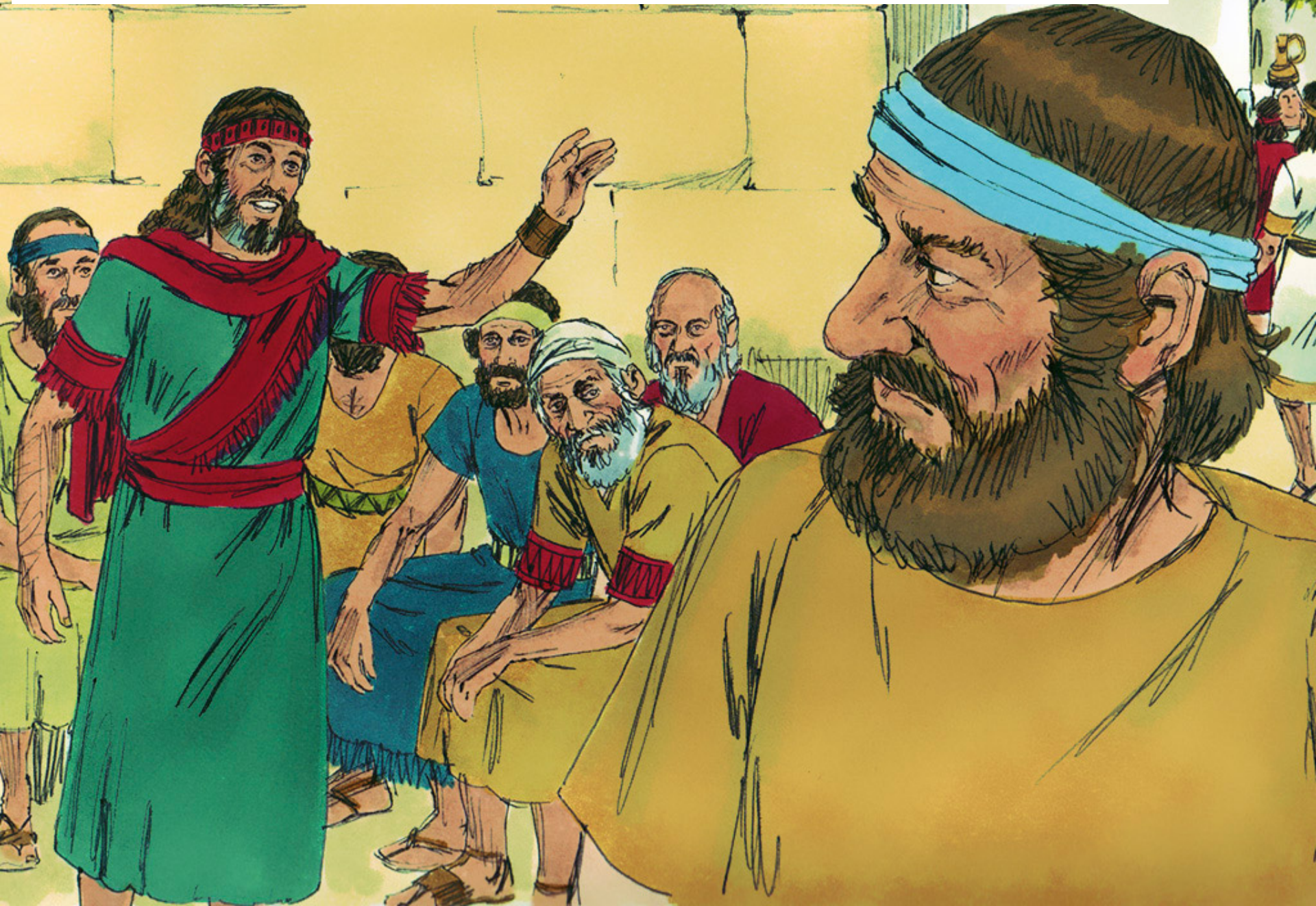


During the night Boaz woke up to find a woman asleep at his feet. 'Who are you?' he asked. 'I am your servant Ruth,' she replied. Spread the corner of your garment over me as you are a guardian-redeemer of my family.' A guardian redeemer was someone obliged to look after a relative in need. Boaz was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

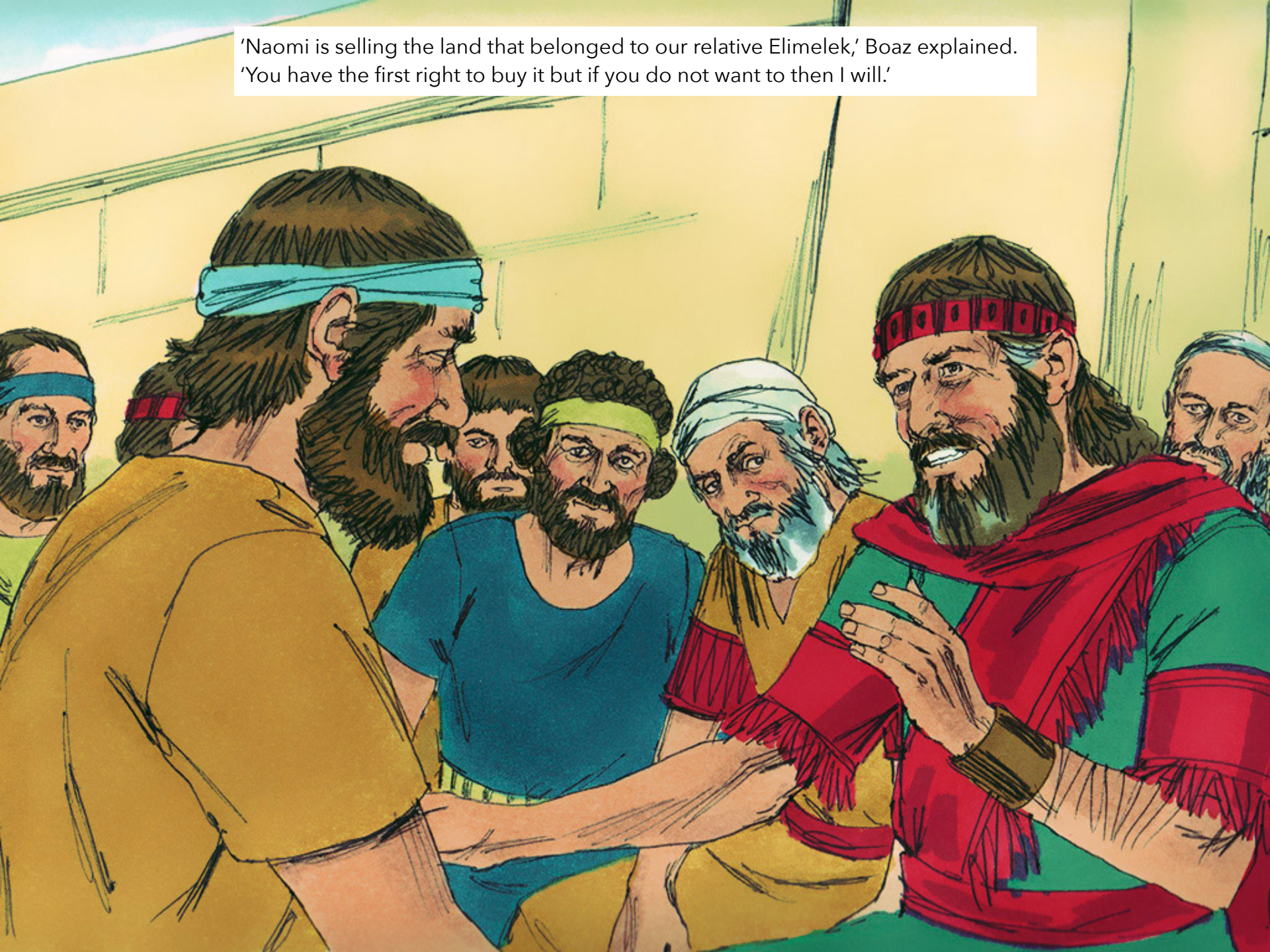


'The Lord bless you.' replied Boaz. 'You have not run after younger men and people know you are a woman of good character. I am your guardian-redeemer but there is another person more closely related than I am. If he is not willing to redeem you then I will.' Ruth lay at his feet until morning. Boaz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



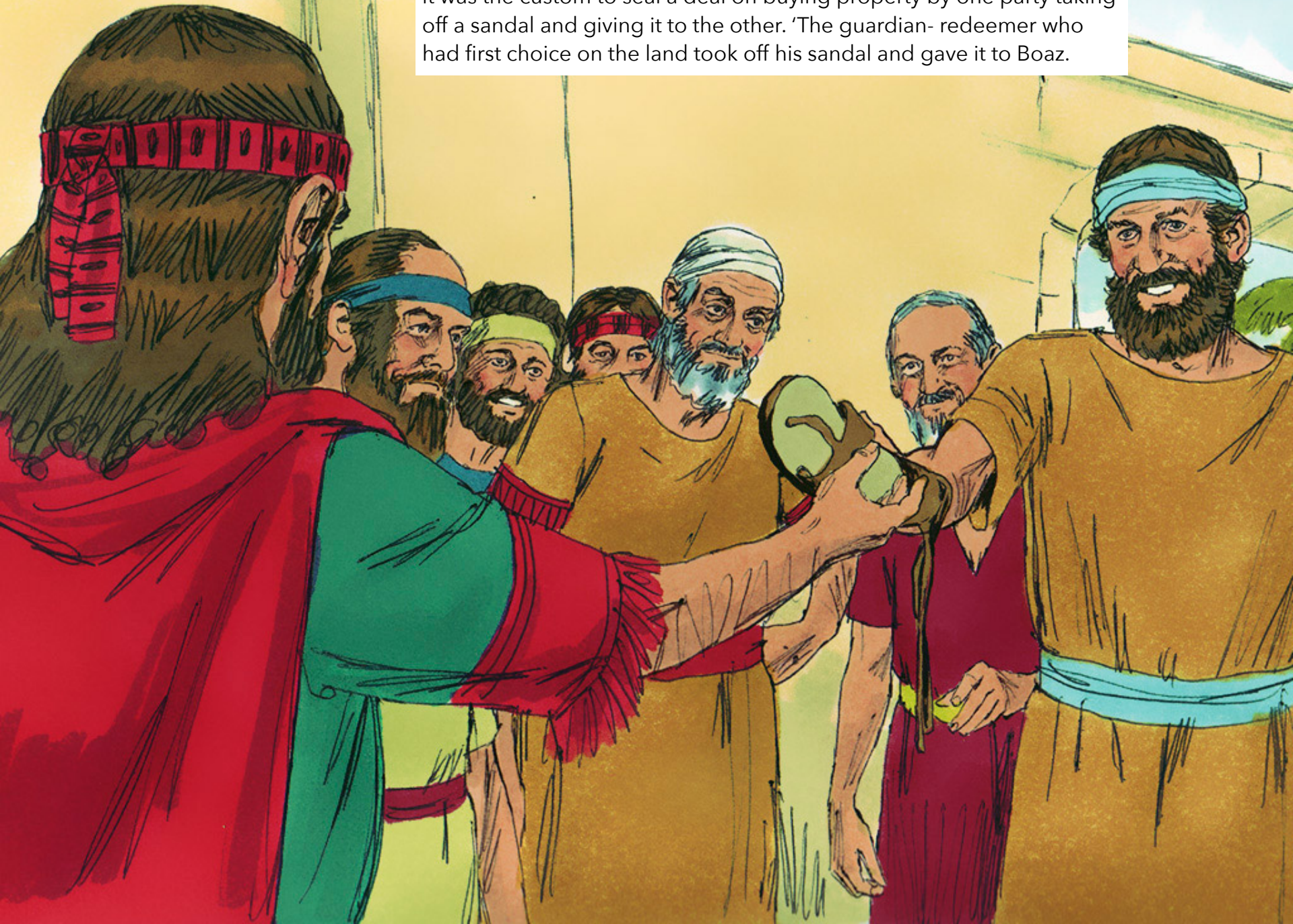
'Naomi is selling the land that belonged to our relative Elimelek,' Boaz explained.
'You have the first right to buy it but if you do not want to then I will.'

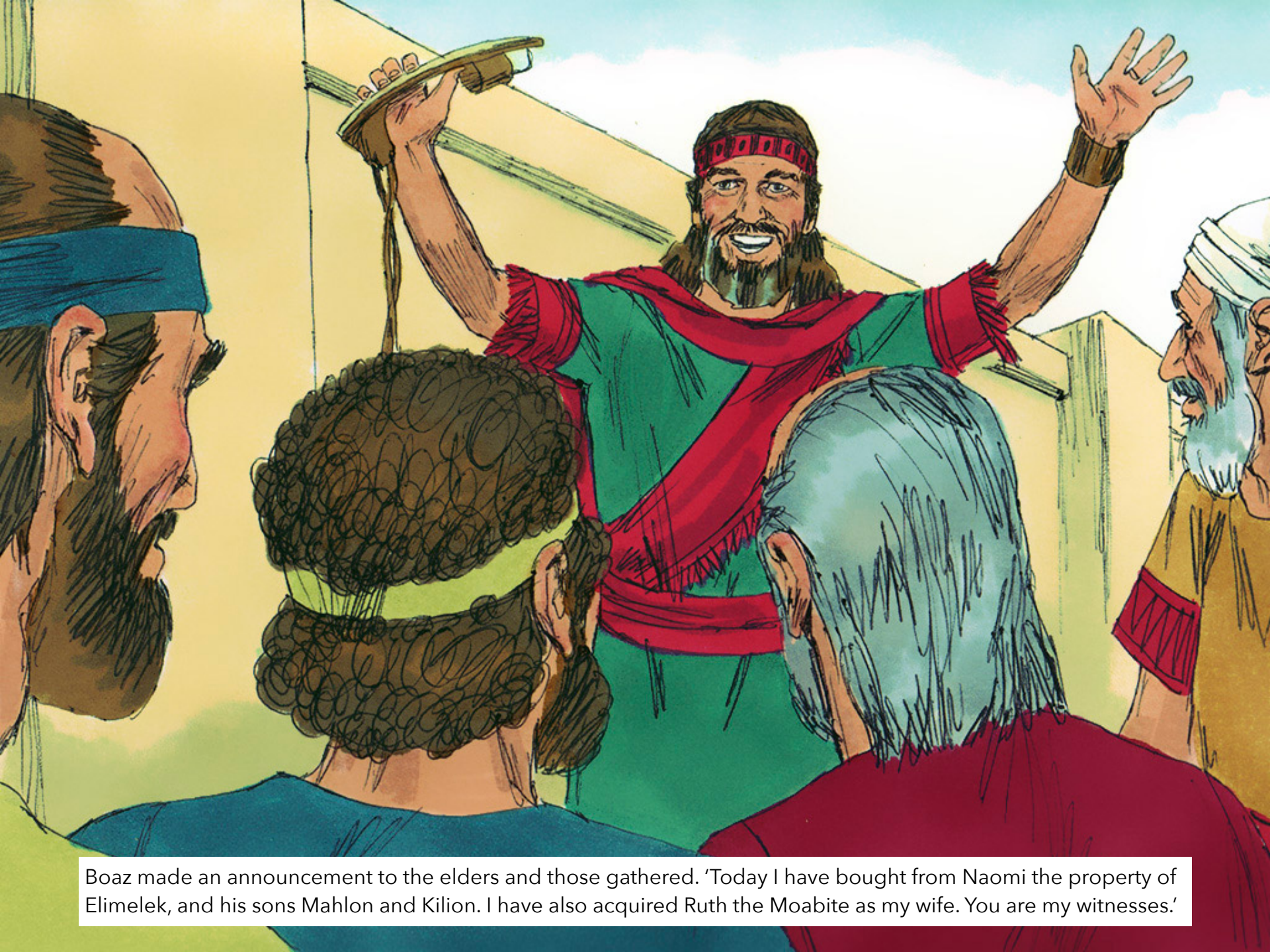




'I cannot buy the land without causing problems with my own estate,' came the reply. 'You buy it as I cannot.'

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.



RUTH - THE OUTSIDER

Book of Ruth

Boaz was a rich landowner in the town of Bethlehem. At harvest time he obeyed God's laws and allowed the poor to follow behind his reapers to pick up the loose grain that had fallen to the ground. One day he noticed a stranger, a foreign refugee, among the poor hunting for grain.



'Who is that young woman over there?' he asked the worker in charge of the reapers. 'She is the young woman from Moab who came back with Naomi.' Boaz knew Naomi, he was a distant relative of hers. Naomi's husband, Elimelech had owned land in Bethlehem. But in a time of famine, Elimelech and Naomi had traveled to live in nearby Moab. Their two sons had married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah.



Sadly tragedy struck. Firstly, Elimelech died and then Naomi lost her two sons too. She had become a widow with two daughters-in-law who were also widows.



Naomi had decided to return to Bethlehem. She told Ruth and Orpah to stay in Moab. Orpah wanted to remain with her people but Ruth replied. 'Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.'





Ruth was now a widow, a Moabite foreigner living among Jews in Bethlehem. With nothing to eat, she had gone out into the fields to gather grain for herself and Naomi. Naomi struggled to understand why God allowed her to suffer so much. She changed her name from Naomi (meaning pleasant) to Mara meaning 'bitter'.

Boaz went over to Ruth, 'Stay in my fields and you will be protected. Follow behind the young women reapers. I have warned the young men not to mistreat you. When you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well.' Ruth thanked him warmly. 'What have I done to deserve such kindness?' she asked. 'I am a foreigner.' 'I know you have looked after my relative Naomi,' Boaz replied. The God of Israel will be your refuge.'



When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his young men, 'Let her gather grain right among the sheaves without stopping her. And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don't give her a hard time!'



So Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she beat out the grain that evening, it filled an entire basket. She carried it back to her mother-in-law. 'Where did you gather all this grain today?' Naomi asked. 'May the Lord bless the one who helped you!' So Ruth told her mother-in-law about Boaz.



'May the LORD bless him!' Naomi exclaimed. 'He is showing his kindness to us. That man is one of our closest relatives, one of our family redeemers.' A family redeemer was someone who could purchase the land of dead relative but had to care for his widow and family.



Ruth continued gathering grain in the fields of Boaz throughout the wheat harvest. The Naomi said to Ruth, 'Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he's been very kind by letting you gather grain. Tonight he will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor. Dress up and go to the threshing floor. Notice where he lies down to sleep, then go and lie down by his feet.'



Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to see a woman at the end of his makeshift bed. 'I am your servant,' Ruth explained. 'And you are my family redeemer.' 'Don't worry Ruth,' Boaz replied. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are a virtuous woman. But while it's true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am. I will sort out this matter in the morning.'



The next morning Boaz went to the town gate and met up with the man who was the closer family redeemer. 'If you purchase of the land from Naomi the law requires you marry Ruth, the Moabite widow,' Boaz explained. 'That way she can have children who will carry on her husband's name and keep the land in the family.'



The man was interested in buying the land but did not want the complication of marrying Ruth the Moabite. 'I can't redeem it,' he replied. 'You redeem the land instead.' It was the custom for anyone transferring a right of purchase to remove his sandal and hand it to the other party. So the other family redeemer handed his sandal to Boaz.

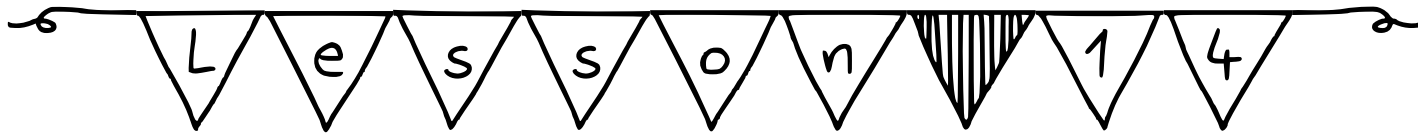


So Boaz bought the land belonging to Naomi's husband and her sons. He then married Ruth. Later Ruth gave birth to a son.





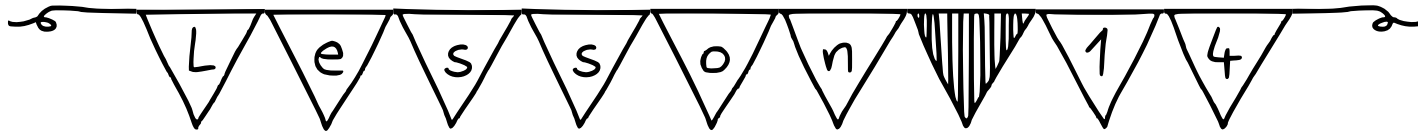
They named their son Obed. The local women said to Naomi, 'Praise the Lord, who has provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel and care for you in your old age. Obed became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of King David.



Boaz was not a judge but this happened in the time of the judges. Boaz's mother was Rahab. That gives you some idea about when this story takes place. Matthew 1:5

One theme of this book could be called, "A Woman of Excellence" (Ruth 3:11)

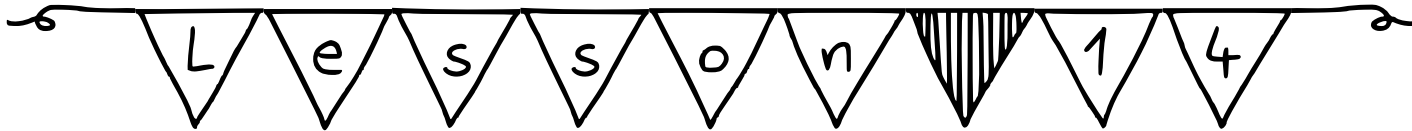
Ruth is described as a worthy woman. God puts a priority on Godly women qualities. Proverbs 31:10-31



Ruth and God's Plan to Send a Savior

The story of Ruth is about a stranger in a strange land. Ruth was taken care of by someone willing to pay the price for her safety and well-being. Boaz, a close relative, paid for the right to marry and protect Ruth. He volunteered to pay this price even though he did not have to. Jesus, like Boaz, gives freely to buy eternal life for us. The price Jesus paid was His own life.

It is exciting to know that this picture of Jesus can be seen in a man who was the ancestor of the Lord. The Gospel writers Matthew and Luke trace the line of Jesus' ancestors.



The Genealogy of Christ

