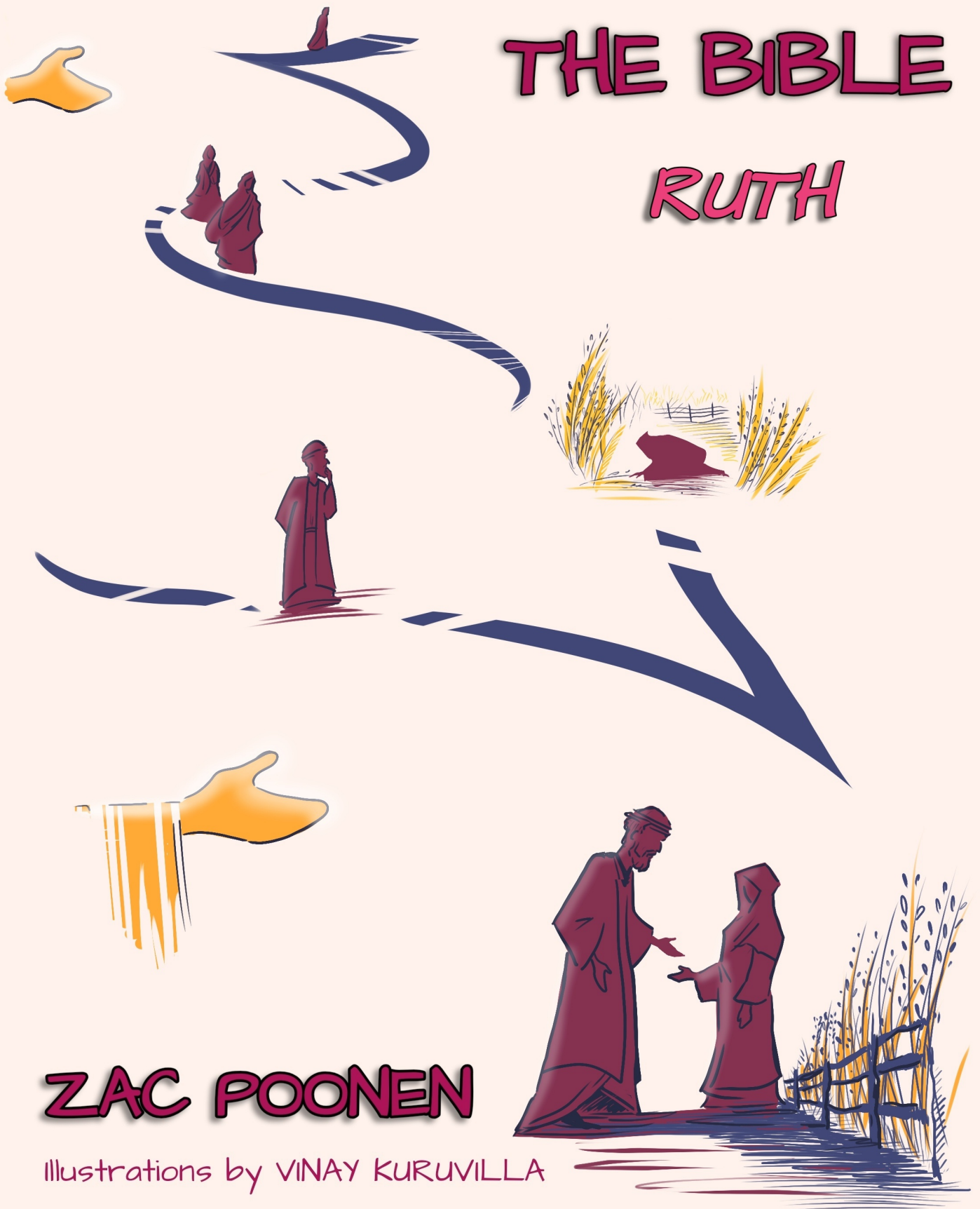


THROUGH THE BIBLE *RUTH*



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RUTH



The story of *Ruth* is about a *Moabite* girl, not a *Jew*. Moab was born out of an incestuous relationship between Lot and his daughter.

Thus, Ruth had a very **bad** heritage. The descendants of Moab were **not allowed** to enter the assembly of God, even to the **tenth** generation. Yet, God **bypassed** that law when it came to Ruth. She was the great grandmother of King David, a man after God's own heart. Her descendant, King Solomon, actually **built God's temple!** Those of us who have a **bad heritage** or have lived **wicked** lives in the past, can be **encouraged**. Men may **reject** and **despise** such a person, but **not** God. Such a person can be a **saint**

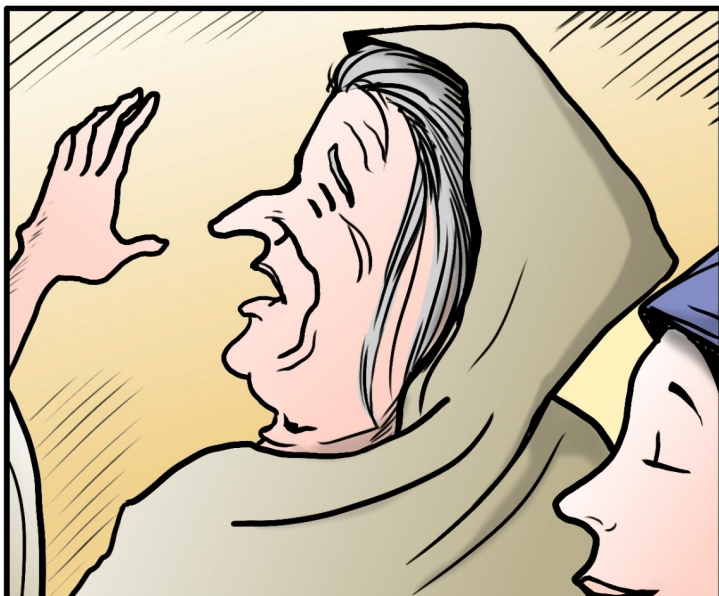


There was a **famine** in Israel and Elimelech and his wife Naomi went to Moab. His sons violated God's laws and married Moabite women. Then Elimelech and his sons **died** leaving two **widows** Orpah and Ruth. Naomi, being kind, told them to **go back** to their own land and find new husbands.



Both Orpah and Ruth **wept** aloud when they heard this. **Oprah** then **went back** but Ruth **clung** onto Naomi. She had **learnt** something about the true **God** from Naomi. She wanted to worship and serve this God, **more** than she wanted a husband. There was a **fork** in the road. Ruth took to right turning. Orpah took the **wrong** one. This made **all** the **difference** for all **eternity**. We come to such forks often.

Forks **compel** us to make a **decision**. Ruth took a decision so Naomi let Ruth accompany her back to Israel.



Naomi complained against God foolishly. If only she knew what lay ahead of her. Sometimes **we** complain that the Lord has brought us back empty, or that the Lord is **against** us, or that the Lord has **afflicted** us. (1: 21) But **even** though her mother-in-law was foolish, Ruth herself did **not** complain. She was **thankful** that she had found the **true** God. She was a very good daughter-in-law and took care of her mother-in-law. God saw this heathen girl **not** complaining and **humble** spirit of **service**. Many times, those who come out of heathenism to Christ are much **better** believers than those who are born in **believers'** families. Ruth is a **challenge** to all of us. God rewarded her ..

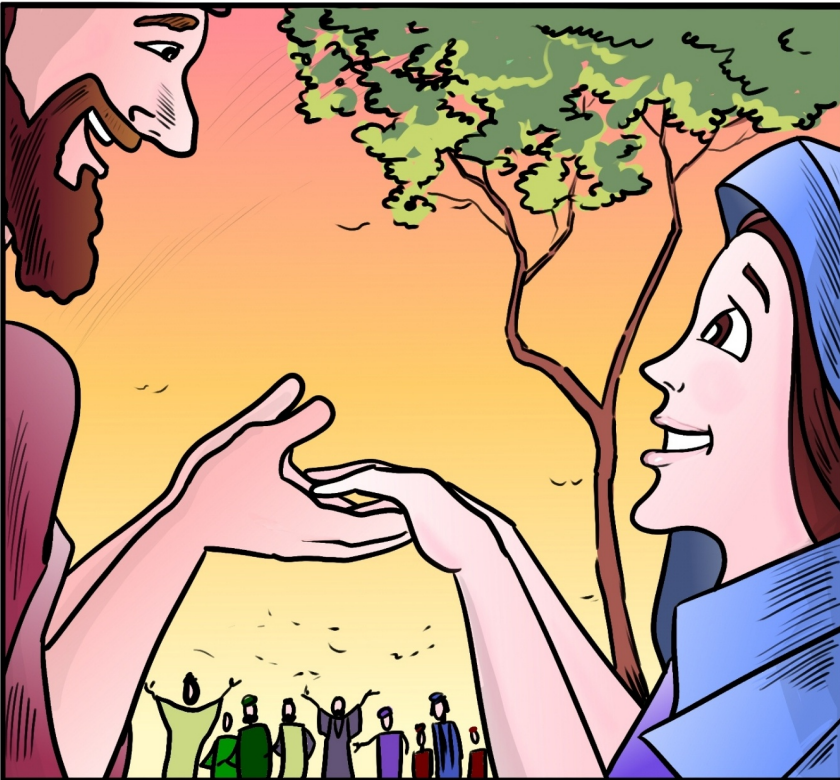


Now Naomi had a close relative, a man of great wealth, named Boaz. There was a law in Israel that if a married man died, his closest relative must marry the widow and raise children in the dead man's name. Ruth didn't know that law. She did **not** come to Israel looking for a husband. She sought God. Naomi and Ruth were poor but Ruth was a **hard-working** girl, not afraid to do lowly jobs to earn her daily bread.

There was a law that God made saying that when people glean their grain, they must **leave** the **corners** of their fields so that the **poor** can glean them. Ruth went to pick up such **left-over** grain. The **sovereignty** of God led her to the field of Boaz. Boaz saw Ruth gleaning and asked his workers who she was. He was a kind and godly man who concerned that Ruth should **not** be **molested**. So he told her to glean from his field alone and even asked the workers to drop some grain **on purpose**. He commanded his men **not to** touch her. When Ruth asked him **why** he had been so kind to her, he said that he had **heard** all about the kindness Ruth had shown her **mother-in-law** and how she **forsook** her idols and **followed** God.



Ruth went and narrated all this to Naomi who told her that Boaz was a **close** relative. So Ruth requested Boaz to **redeem** and **marry** her. But there was **another** relative who was **closer** than him. Being a **righteous** man, Boaz asked that man first if he was willing. Initially, the man agreed to redeem Naomi's property but later he **declined** when he knew he would have to **marry Ruth and raise sons in her dead husband's name**. Later on, these sons would claim **inheritance** with **his sons** and it would be all quite complicated. He **didn't** want all that! Now Boaz was happy that Ruth hadn't **chosen** to marry a more **handsome, younger** man and now Boaz was **first** in line to redeem the property and marry Ruth. He readily agreed to do that. Ruth came seeking God and found God and also found a **good husband and a good heritage**. God honours those who honour Him.



This was a bold step for a prominent man like Boaz to take - to marry a **Moabite** girl. But he had seen some outstanding qualities in Ruth and **respected** her for coming out of a **heathen** family. Christian boys often **hesitate** to marry girls who have been saved from **non-Christian** families. But, in most cases, such girls are **stronger** Christians than those born in Christian homes. Boaz married Ruth and they had a son called **Obed** who became the **father** of **Jesse**, who became the **father** of **David**. God honoured this girl from a **heathen, incestuous** background. There is **no** partiality with God.



This story is also a beautiful picture of our **spiritual union** with Christ. Ruth is a perfect type of what we are in our **sinful** state. Jesus Christ had to **become** our "**near-relative**", before he could **redeem** us. This is **why** He took on **flesh and blood** and was **made** "in all things like us, His brothers" (Hebrews 2: 17) Thus He became our **kinsman-redeemer**. It was God who planned the union between Ruth and Boaz and also **our** union with Christ **before** the foundation of the world