

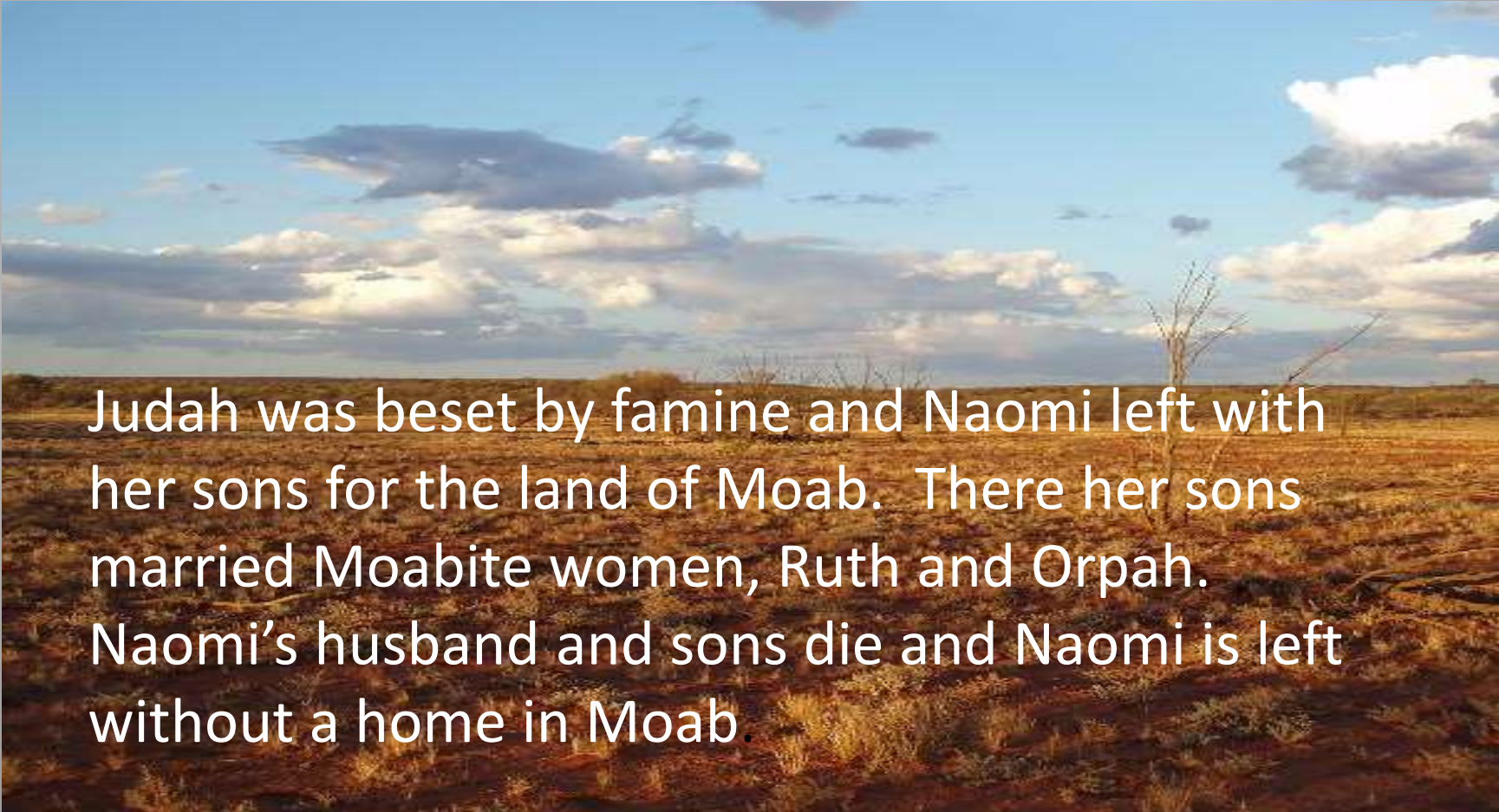
**RUTH....**

The Most Beautiful Story....

Goethe called the Book of Ruth “the most beautiful story,” but what is it really?

- It has been many things
  - A foretelling of Christ’s redemption
  - A love story
  - A “*hesed*” story
  - A testimony to strong character
  - A witness to the universality of God’s love for all people
  - A statement about divine providence

# A quick overview....



Judah was beset by famine and Naomi left with her sons for the land of Moab. There her sons married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. Naomi's husband and sons die and Naomi is left without a home in Moab.

Naomi decides to return to Judah, but pleads with her daughters in law to return to their mothers' homes in Moab that they may find favor with God there....being a servant in a Moab household is better than being a stranger in Judah. Orpah agrees but Ruth clings to Naomi.



But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.

*Ruth 1:16*

In Judah, Ruth and Naomi are left to the kindness of strangers and Ruth is left to glean the fields of a prosperous man named Boaz



# Ruth “finds favor” with Boaz



- Boaz is taken with Ruth's noble character
- Boaz dines with Ruth and gives her more than she can eat
- He allows her to “take more than her share” of the barley crop



# The Scene in the Threshing Room.....



Naomi tells Ruth to bathe, perfume herself, and dress in her finest clothes.

When Boaz falls asleep after eating and drinking Ruth is to lie next to him and uncover his feet. Boaz will tell her what to do.

Ruth does this. Boaz is startled awake.

Ruth ask that Boaz cover her with his garment.

Boaz blesses her for her kindness as she did not pursue a younger man.

# Ruth and Boaz Have a Dilemma

Boaz tells Ruth  
there is a kinsman  
who is entitled to  
marry her and he  
must do the right  
thing.....



Everything ~~but the girl~~ including the girl

- Boaz finds the kinsman entitled to marriage and the property rights that go with it
- The nameless kinsman is unwilling to assume Ruth's care
- Boaz is free to marry Ruth

All's well that ends well ....but the story doesn't end there



Ruth gives birth to Obed who is the grandfather of David and  
Ruth is mentioned in the NT in the genealogy of Jesus



# Themes In Ruth

- *Hesed*: Hebrew for loving-kindness, related to caritas and loyalty.
- *Divine Providence*: God provides for those with faith
- *Nobility*: Ruth and Boaz are altruistic and do what is right
- *Universality*: God shows favor to Jews and Gentiles

# *Hesed*

- Ruth refuses to leave Naomi on her own
- Boaz nurtures Ruth and provides for her well-being
- The nameless kinsman is left a non-person because he cannot show hesed by providing for Ruth





# Providence

- God gives Ruth and Boaz to one another as help-mates
- Naomi has her bitterness removed and finds a home.
- History is given King David
- The History of Salvation comes through Ruth



# Nobility

- Ruth stays with Naomi though it is not in her interest
- Desire is tempered with restraint
- Boaz puts obligation ahead of affection



# Universality

- God's hospitality is shown to Jews and Gentiles
- Belief in God is not for a single race of people



# Other Facts About Ruth

- The story is set in the time of the judges
- Samuel is attributed with writing Ruth, but probably did not (the author knew of King David who lived around 1000 BC)
- The Hebrew Canon places Ruth with the Writings (like Psalms and Ecclesiastes)
- The Christian Canon places Ruth with the historical books like Judges