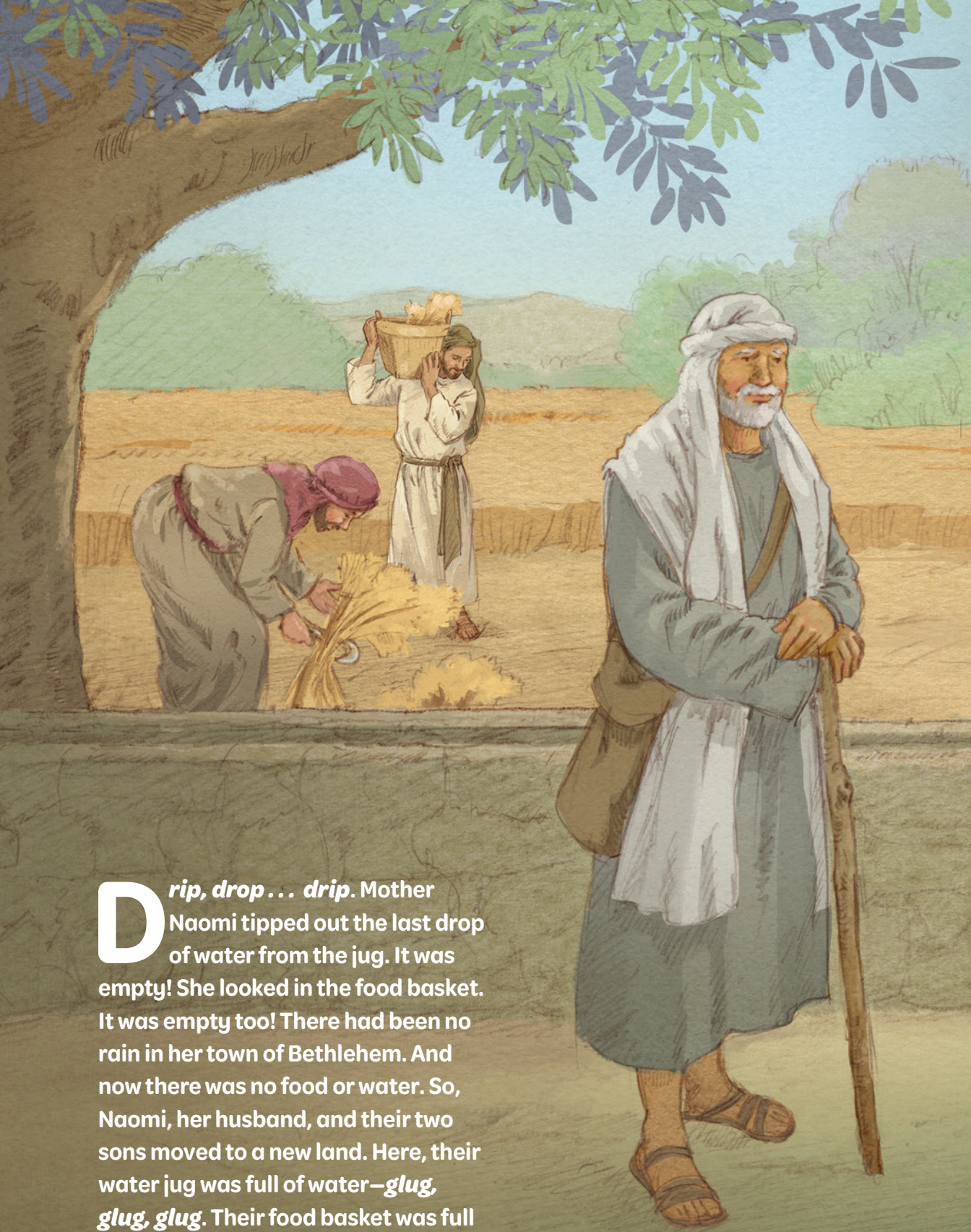
BIG IDEA: Jesus wants me to care for others.

Week 4

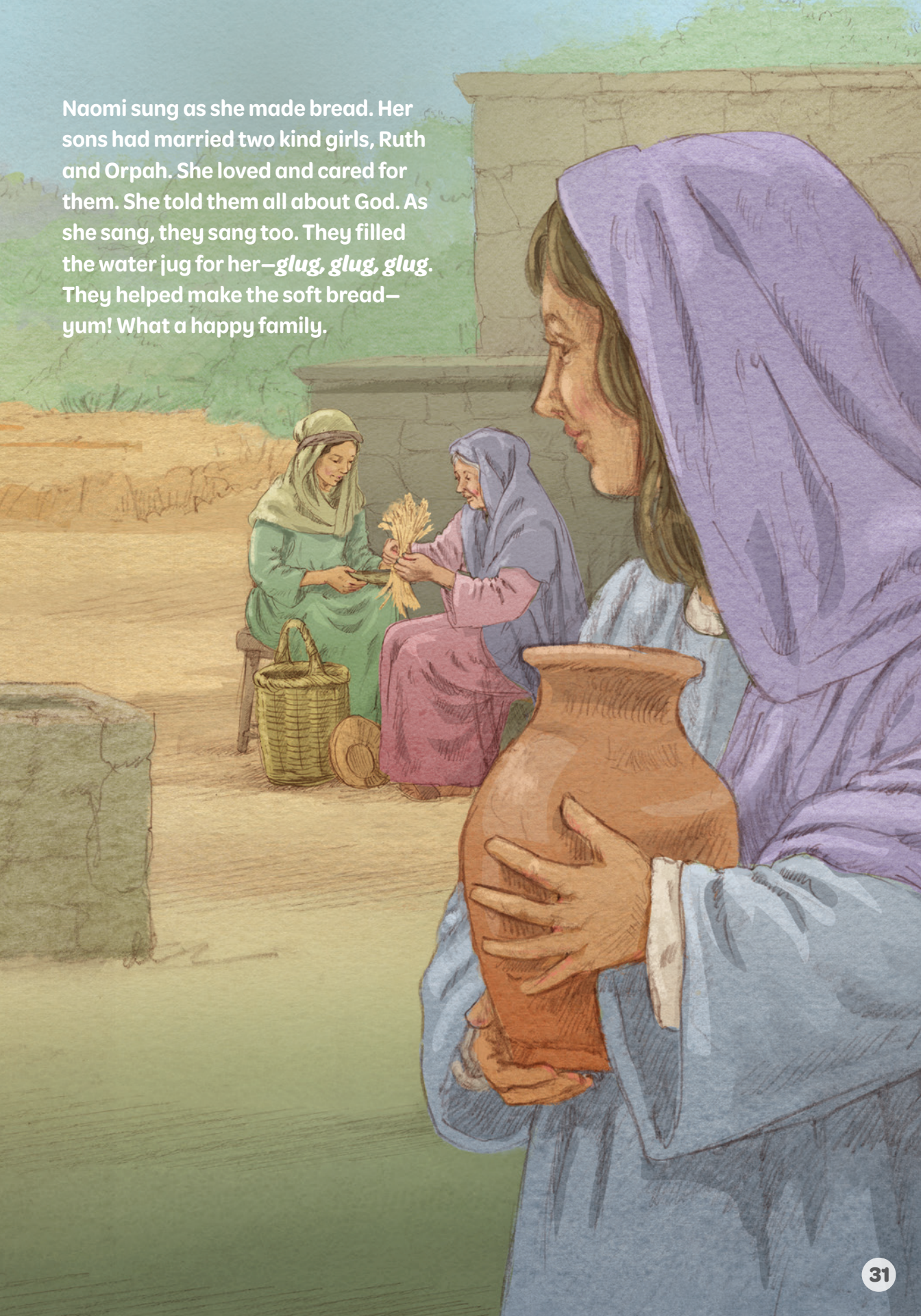
Ruth and Naomi



This lesson is based on Ruth 1.



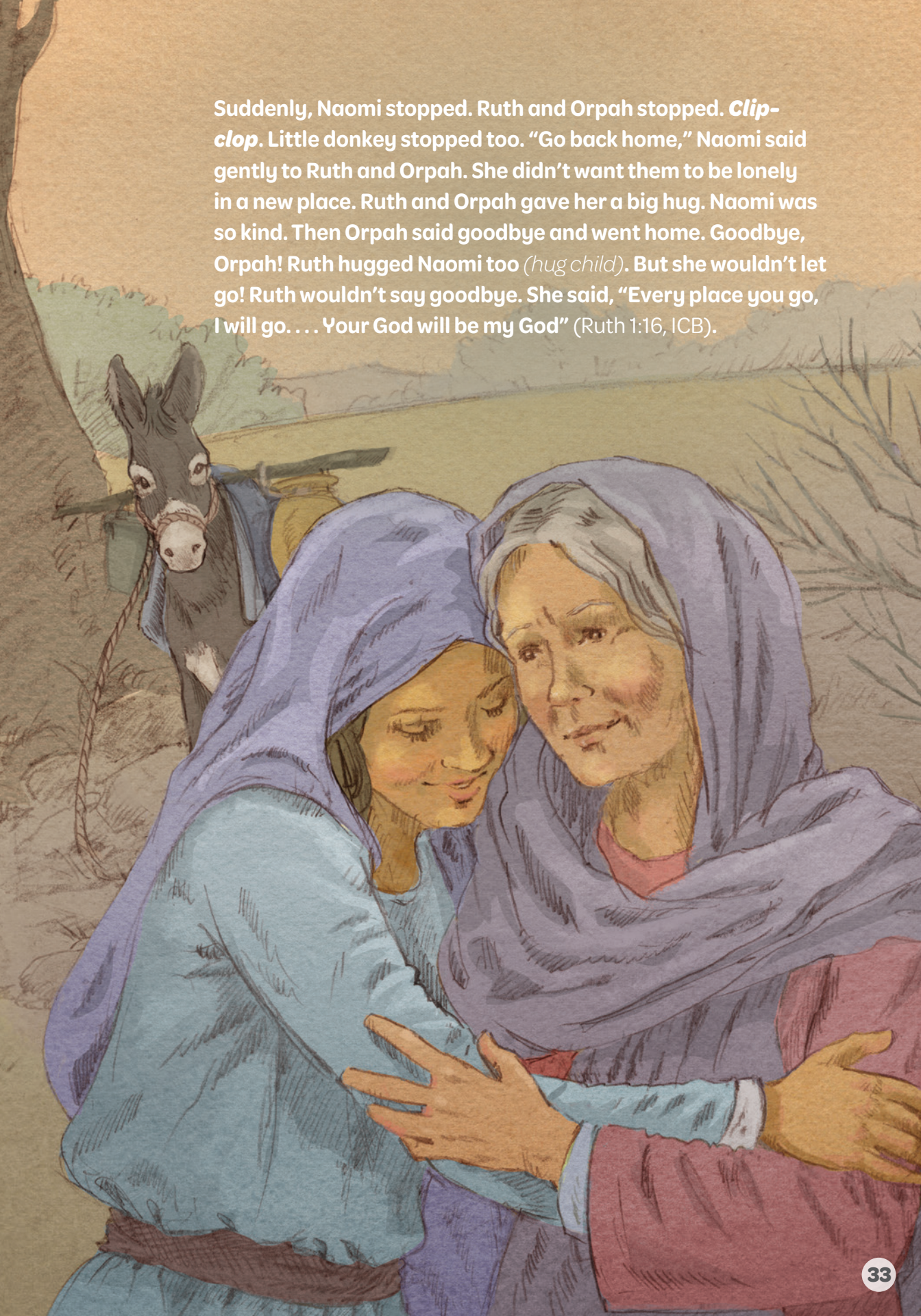
Drip, drop . . . drip. Mother Naomi tipped out the last drop of water from the jug. It was empty! She looked in the food basket. It was empty too! There had been no rain in her town of Bethlehem. And now there was no food or water. So, Naomi, her husband, and their two sons moved to a new land. Here, their water jug was full of water—***glug, glug, glug***. Their food basket was full of soft bread—yum! Her boys grew up to be good strong farmers.



Naomi sung as she made bread. Her sons had married two kind girls, Ruth and Orpah. She loved and cared for them. She told them all about God. As she sang, they sang too. They filled the water jug for her—*glug, glug, glug*. They helped make the soft bread—yum! What a happy family.



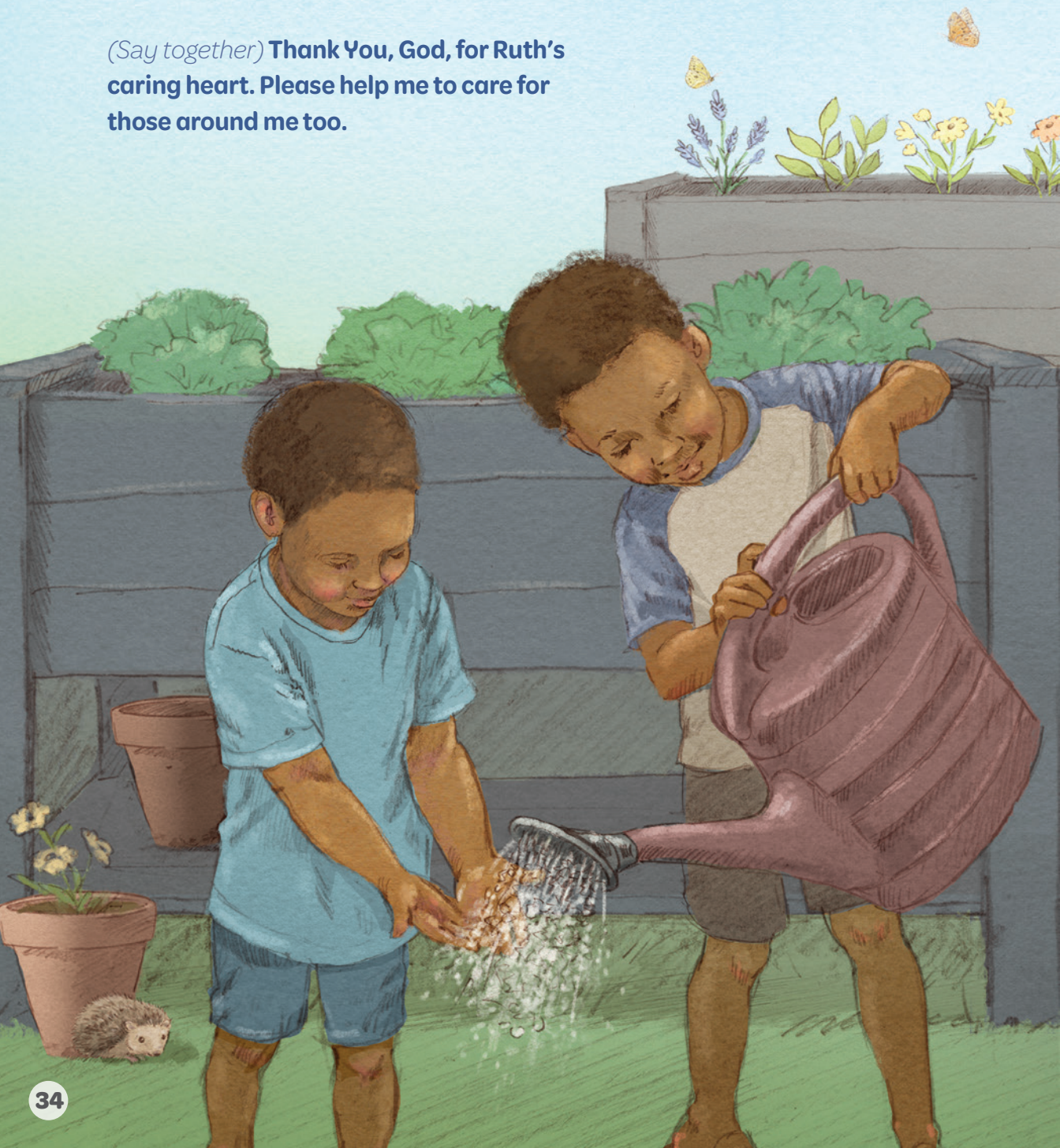
One day, Naomi stopped singing. She was very sad. Her husband and sons had died. It was time to leave this land and go home to Bethlehem. God had sent rain there. He would look after her. Naomi packed up her full water jug—***glug, glug, glug***. She packed her food basket with lots of soft bread—yum! She took Ruth, Orpah, and little donkey, and started the big walk home. ***Clip-clop, clip-clop***, went little donkey.



Suddenly, Naomi stopped. Ruth and Orpah stopped. ***Clip-clop***. Little donkey stopped too. "Go back home," Naomi said gently to Ruth and Orpah. She didn't want them to be lonely in a new place. Ruth and Orpah gave her a big hug. Naomi was so kind. Then Orpah said goodbye and went home. Goodbye, Orpah! Ruth hugged Naomi too *(hug child)*. But she wouldn't let go! Ruth wouldn't say goodbye. She said, "Every place you go, I will go. . . . Your God will be my God" (Ruth 1:16, ICB).

Ruth smiled at Naomi as they walked to Bethlehem. ***Clip-clop, clip-clop*** went little donkey, beside them. Ruth helped Naomi as they walked. She helped her when they set up their tent at night. She cared for her all along the way. Her heart was full of love and kindness for Naomi. God wants us to have a kind and caring heart, just as Ruth had. He wants us to make kind choices that help those around us.

(Say together) **Thank You, God, for Ruth's caring heart. Please help me to care for those around me too.**



play throughout the Day

Create

Choose an empty jar at home. Brainstorm some caring acts that you could do as a family for others. Write each idea on a separate piece of paper and put them into the jar. Pull out an idea every Sabbath afternoon to do together as a family.

Model

Give your child some scenarios in which they could choose to be caring. For example: "What would a caring heart look like if Mommy or Daddy were folding the washing/making the beds/taking out the garbage? What would it look like to show care for your grandparents?" Ask God to help your child have a caring heart.

Build

Build a difficult obstacle course (inside or outside) that your child would need your help to complete. Do the course together, holding your child's hand. Share how Ruth followed Naomi and helped her along the way as she traveled back to Bethlehem.

Create

Make a small "caring" heart out of red paper. Decorate it with your child using plastic gems or glitter. Put a safety pin on the back and attach it to your child's clothing whenever you see them do something caring for someone else. Exclaim "I just love your caring heart!"

Pray

Each night before bed, affirm your child for a specific way they showed a caring heart that day. Share how it makes your heart and God's heart so happy when they show a caring heart to others. Pray with your child and ask God to come into their heart.



Extension weekly memory verse: "... love one another; as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

For You, Parents

Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16). You may have heard this famous speech countless times, but have you ever stopped to ponder the amazing strength and determination behind these words?

Ruth was drawn to Naomi by much more than friendship. Ruth was compelled by love—God's love. She wasn't sacrificing her life at home out of kindness, Ruth was claiming the only life worth having; a life of love with God.

We can assume that Ruth had glimpsed God's love through Naomi's many kind acts and loving deeds as a mother-in-law. In a similar way, your tender care as a parent and friend can be a strong witness. Your patience, the investment of your time, your listening ear, and helpful hands are a ministry. Ellen White says that "the warmth of true friendship . . . is a foretaste of the joys of heaven" (*The Adventist Home*, p. 106).

Before you rush to phone a friend or sit patiently with a child, pause to spend time with your very Best Friend, Jesus. It is His love that draws and compels. Allow Him to fill you with His kindness, mercy, gentleness, and care—to the point of overflowing. Only then may we impact those around us.

Naomi led Ruth into God's family—and more than that, she was included in Jesus' own family tree! God has special people to reach through you too. Why not ask Him who, and how, today.