# The Book of Ruth

1 In the days when the judges judged, there was
a famine in the land. A certain man of Bethlehem
Judah went to live in the country of Moab with his
wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was
Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi. The
names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion,
Ephrathites of Bethlehem Judah. They came into
the country of Moab and lived there. 3 Elimelech,
Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her
two sons. 4 They took for themselves wives of the
women of Moab. The name of the one was Orpah,
and the name of the other was Ruth. They lived
there about ten years. 5 Mahlon and Chilion both
died, and the woman was bereaved of her two
children and of her husband. 6 Then she arose
with her daughters-in-law, that she might return
from the country of Moab; for she had heard in
the country of Moab how Yahweh† had visited his
people in giving them bread. 7 She went out of
the place where she was, and her two daughters-
in-law with her. They went on the way to return
to the land of Judah. 8 Naomi said to her two
daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her
mother's house. May Yahweh deal kindly with
you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.
9 May Yahweh grant you that you may find rest,
each of you in the house of her husband."

† **1:6** "Yahweh" is God's proper Name, sometimes rendered "LORD" (all caps) in other translations.

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their
voices, and wept. 10 They said to her, “No, but we
will return with you to your people.”

11 Naomi said, “Go back, my daughters. Why do
you want to go with me? Do I still have sons in
my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12 Go
back, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old
to have a husband. If I should say, ‘I have hope,’ if
I should even have a husband tonight, and should
also bear sons, 13 would you then wait until they
were grown? Would you then refrain from having
husbands? No, my daughters, for it grieves me
seriously for your sakes, for Yahweh’s hand has
gone out against me.”

14 They lifted up their voices and wept again;
then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth
stayed with her. 15 She said, “Behold,‡ your sister-
in-law has gone back to her people and to her god.
Follow your sister-in-law.”

16 Ruth said, “Don’t urge me to leave you, and to
return from following you, for where you go, I will
go; and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will
be my people, and your God§ my God. 17 Where
you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May
Yahweh do so to me, and more also, if anything but
death parts you and me.”

18 When Naomi saw that she was determined to
go with her, she stopped urging her.

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‡ **1:15** “Behold”, from “”, means look at, take notice, observe, see, or gaze at. It is often used as an interjection. § **1:16** The Hebrew word rendered “God” is “” (Elohim).

19 So they both went until they came to Bethlehem. When they had come to Bethlehem, all the city was excited about them, and they asked, "Is this Naomi?"
20 She said to them, "Don't call me Naomi.† Call me Mara,‡ for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went out full, and Yahweh has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since Yahweh has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?" 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, who returned out of the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

# 2

1 Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz. 2 Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me now go to the field, and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I find favor."
She said to her, "Go, my daughter." 3 She went, and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.
4 Behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, "May Yahweh be with you."
They answered him, "May Yahweh bless you."
5 Then Boaz said to his servant who was set over the reapers, "Whose young lady is this?"

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† **1:20** "Naomi" means "pleasant". ‡ **1:20** "Mara" means "bitter".

6 The servant who was set over the reapers
answered, “It is the Moabite lady who came back
with Naomi out of the country of Moab. 7 She
said, ‘Please let me glean and gather after the
reapers among the sheaves.’ So she came, and
has continued even from the morning until now,
except that she rested a little in the house.”

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen, my daughter.
Don’t go to glean in another field, and don’t go
from here, but stay here close to my maidens. 9 Let
your eyes be on the field that they reap, and go
after them. Haven’t I commanded the young men
not to touch you? When you are thirsty, go to the
vessels, and drink from that which the young men
have drawn.”

10 Then she fell on her face and bowed herself to
the ground, and said to him, “Why have I found fa-
vor in your sight, that you should take knowledge
of me, since I am a foreigner?”

11 Boaz answered her, “I have been told all about
what you have done for your mother-in-law since
the death of your husband, and how you have left
your father, your mother, and the land of your
birth, and have come to a people that you didn’t
know before. 12 May Yahweh repay your work,
and a full reward be given to you from Yahweh,
the God of Israel, under whose wings you have
come to take refuge.”

13 Then she said, “Let me find favor in your sight,
my lord, because you have comforted me, and
because you have spoken kindly to your servant,
though I am not as one of your servants.”

14 At meal time Boaz said to her, “Come here,
and eat some bread, and dip your morsel in the
vinegar.”
She sat beside the reapers, and they passed her
parched grain. She ate, was satisfied, and left
some of it. 15 When she had risen up to glean, Boaz
commanded his young men, saying, “Let her glean
even among the sheaves, and don’t reproach her.
16 Also pull out some for her from the bundles, and
leave it. Let her glean, and don’t rebuke her.”
17 So she gleaned in the field until evening; and
she beat out that which she had gleaned, and it
was about an ephah† of barley. 18 She took it up,
and went into the city. Then her mother-in-law
saw what she had gleaned; and she brought out
and gave to her that which she had left after she
had enough.
19 Her mother-in-law said to her, “Where have
you gleaned today? Where have you worked?
Blessed be he who noticed you.”
She told her mother-in-law with whom she had
worked, “The man’s name with whom I worked
today is Boaz.” 20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-
law, “May he be blessed by Yahweh, who has not
abandoned his kindness to the living and to the
dead.” Naomi said to her, “The man is a close
relative to us, one of our near kinsmen.”
21 Ruth the Moabitess said, “Yes, he said to me,
‘You shall stay close to my young men until they
have finished all my harvest.’ ”
22 Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It
is good, my daughter, that you go out with his

† **2:17** 1 ephah is about 22 liters or about 2/3 of a bushel

maidens, and that they not meet you in any other
field." 23 So she stayed close to the maidens of
Boaz, to glean to the end of barley harvest and of
wheat harvest; and she lived with her mother-in-
law.

# 3

1 Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My
daughter, shall I not seek rest for you, that it may
be well with you? 2 Now isn't Boaz our kinsman,
with whose maidens you were? Behold, he will be
winnowing barley tonight on the threshing floor.
3 Therefore wash yourself, anoint yourself, get
dressed, and go down to the threshing floor; but
don't make yourself known to the man until he
has finished eating and drinking. 4 It shall be,
when he lies down, that you shall note the place
where he is lying. Then you shall go in, uncover
his feet, and lie down. Then he will tell you what
to do."

5 She said to her, "All that you say, I will do."
6 She went down to the threshing floor, and did ev-
erything that her mother-in-law told her. 7 When
Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was
merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap
of grain. She came softly, uncovered his feet, and
lay down. 8 At midnight, the man was startled and
turned himself; and behold, a woman lay at his
feet. 9 He said, "Who are you?"

She answered, "I am Ruth your servant. There-
fore spread the corner of your garment over your
servant; for you are a near kinsman."

10 He said, “You are blessed by Yahweh, my
daughter. You have shown more kindness in the
latter end than at the beginning, because you
didn’t follow young men, whether poor or rich.
11 Now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do to
you all that you say; for all the city of my people
knows that you are a worthy woman. 12 Now it is
true that I am a near kinsman. However, there is
a kinsman nearer than I. 13 Stay this night, and in
the morning, if he will perform for you the part of
a kinsman, good. Let him do the kinsman’s duty.
But if he will not do the duty of a kinsman for you,
then I will do the duty of a kinsman for you, as
Yahweh lives. Lie down until the morning.”

14 She lay at his feet until the morning, then she
rose up before one could discern another. For he
said, “Let it not be known that the woman came to
the threshing floor.” 15 He said, “Bring the mantle
that is on you, and hold it.” She held it; and he
measured six measures of barley, and laid it on
her; then he went into the city.

16 When she came to her mother-in-law, she
said, “How did it go, my daughter?”

She told her all that the man had done for her.
17 She said, “He gave me these six measures of bar-
ley; for he said, ‘Don’t go empty to your mother-in-
law.’ ”

18 Then she said, “Wait, my daughter, until you
know what will happen; for the man will not rest
until he has settled this today.”

# 4

1 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down

there. Behold, the near kinsman of whom Boaz
spoke came by. Boaz said to him, "Come over
here, friend, and sit down!" He came over, and
sat down. 2 Boaz took ten men of the elders of
the city, and said, "Sit down here," and they sat
down. 3 He said to the near kinsman, "Naomi,
who has come back out of the country of Moab, is
selling the parcel of land, which was our brother
Elimelech's. 4 I thought I should tell you, saying,
'Buy it before those who sit here, and before the
elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem
it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I
may know. For there is no one to redeem it besides
you; and I am after you."

He said, "I will redeem it."

5 Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field
from the hand of Naomi, you must buy it also from
Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise
up the name of the dead on his inheritance."

6 The near kinsman said, "I can't redeem it for
myself, lest I endanger my own inheritance. Take
my right of redemption for yourself; for I can't
redeem it."

7 Now this was the custom in former time in
Israel concerning redeeming and concerning ex-
changing, to confirm all things: a man took off
his sandal, and gave it to his neighbor; and this
was the way of formalizing transactions in Israel.
8 So the near kinsman said to Boaz, "Buy it for
yourself," then he took off his sandal.

9 Boaz said to the elders and to all the peo-
ple, "You are witnesses today, that I have bought

all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chil-
ion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi.
10 Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of
Mahlon, I have purchased to be my wife, to raise
up the name of the dead on his inheritance, that
the name of the dead may not be cut off from
among his brothers and from the gate of his place.
You are witnesses today."
11 All the people who were in the gate, and the el-
ders, said, "We are witnesses. May Yahweh make
the woman who has come into your house like
Rachel and like Leah, which both built the house
of Israel; and treat you worthily in Ephrathah, and
be famous in Bethlehem. 12 Let your house be like
the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, of
the offspring† which Yahweh will give you by this
young woman."
13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife;
and he went in to her, and Yahweh enabled her
to conceive, and she bore a son. 14 The women
said to Naomi, "Blessed be Yahweh, who has not
left you today without a near kinsman. Let his
name be famous in Israel. 15 He shall be to you
a restorer of life and sustain you in your old age;
for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is
better to you than seven sons, has given birth to
him." 16 Naomi took the child, laid him in her
bosom, and became nurse to him. 17 The women,
her neighbors, gave him a name, saying, "A son is
born to Naomi". They named him Obed. He is the
father of Jesse, the father of David.
18 Now this is the history of the generations

† **4:12** or, seed

of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron,
19 and Hezron became the father of Ram, and
Ram became the father of Amminadab, 20 and
Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, and
Nahshon became the father of Salmon, 21 and
Salmon became the father of Boaz, and Boaz be-
came the father of Obed, 22 and Obed became the
father of Jesse, and Jesse became the father of
David.

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