

RUTH

Conversational Version

Elimelech's Family Moves to Moab

1¹Judges were ruling when a famine came over the country. A man from Bethlehem in Judah went with his wife and sons to stay in Moab. ²His name was Elimelech, his wife was Naomi, and his sons were Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites. ³But Elimelech died and Naomi was left with her two sons. ⁴They married Moabite wives Orpah and Ruth. They lived there about 10 years, ⁵and Mahlon and Chilion died too. So Naomi lost her husband and both sons. **Ruth 1:1-5**

Naomi and Ruth Return

⁶⁻⁷With her daughters-in-law she started to go back from Moab, because she'd heard that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. ⁸She told them,

"Both of you, go to your mother's house. May the LORD deal graciously with you, as you have with the dead and with me. ⁹May he grant you to find a home in your husband's house."

She kissed them. They cried ¹⁰and said to her, *"No, we'll go with you to your people."*

¹¹But Naomi said, *"Go back, my daughters. Why go with me? Can I still have sons to become your husbands? ¹²I'm too old to have a husband. If I said I have hope, even if I should have a husband tonight and have sons, ¹³would you wait till they were grown? Would you hold back from marrying? No, it's really bitter for me that the LORD has worked against me."* **Ruth 1:6-13**

¹⁴Then they cried out loud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵Naomi said, *"See, your-sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."*

¹⁶But Ruth said,

"Don't ask me not to follow you. I'll stay where you stay. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God. ¹⁷I'll die where you die and be buried there. The LORD do so to me and more if even death separates me from you."

¹⁸When Naomi saw she was determined to go with her, she didn't say anything more.

¹⁹The two of them went on to Bethlehem. When they got there, the whole town was stirred. The women said, *"Is this Naomi?"*

²⁰*"Don't call me Naomi, call me Mara. The Almighty has dealt 'bitterly' with me. ²¹I went away full; he brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has made me suffer; the Almighty has brought me misfortune."*

²²So Naomi came back, and Ruth came with her. They reached Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. **Ruth 1:14-22**

Ruth Meets Boaz

²¹Naomi's husband Elimelech had a wealthy relative named Boaz. ²Ruth said to Naomi, *"Let me go glean among the heads of grain after one that might take an interest in me."*

"Go ahead, my daughter."

³She went and gleaned behind the harvest crew. She happened to come to the part of the field that belonged to Boaz. ⁴He came from Bethlehem and said to the crew, *"The LORD be with you."*

They said, *"The LORD bless you."*

⁵He asked the crew chief, *"Whose young woman is this?"*

⁶*"She's the Moabite that came back with Naomi. ⁷She asked to glean behind the harvest crew among the bundles. She came and stayed since morning. She's been sitting in the house for a little while."* **Ruth 2:1-7**

⁸Boaz told Ruth,

"Listen carefully, my daughter. Don't glean anywhere else. Stay here with my maids. ⁹Watch which field they harvest and follow them. I've warned the young men not to bother you. When you're thirsty, go to the water jars and drink what the servants draw."

¹⁰She fell on her face, bowing to the ground, *"Why have I been pleasing enough to you that you've paid attention to me? I'm a foreigner."*

¹¹Boaz said,

"I've heard what you've done for your mother-in-law after her husband died: you left your parents and the land where you were born and came to people you didn't know. ¹²May the LORD God of Israel reward your work and pay your wages in full under whose wings you've taken refuge."

¹³She said, *"You've been gracious to me, my lord. You've comforted me and talked nice to me, though I'm not one of your workers."* **Ruth 2:8-13**

¹⁴At mealtime Boaz told her, *"Come and eat some bread and dip your piece in the wine."* She sat beside the harvest crew, and he served her roasted grain. She ate till she was satisfied and had some left over. ¹⁵When she got up to glean, Boaz told his men, *"Let her glean even among the sheaves, and don't get after her for it. ¹⁶Pull some out from the bundles and leave it for her. Don't fuss at her."*

¹⁷She gleaned in the field till evening. When she beat out what she'd gleaned, it was about 1.1 bushels ^{1 ephah} of barley. ¹⁸She picked it up and went into town, and her mother-in-law saw it. She gave Naomi what she had left after she'd had enough. **Ruth 2:14-18**

¹⁹Her mother-in-law said, *"Where'd you glean today? Where'd you work? May he who noticed you be fortunate."*

"I worked with a man named Boaz."

²⁰*"The LORD bless him. He hasn't withdrawn his kindness to the living and the dead. He's one of our closest relatives."*

²¹Ruth said, *"Besides, he told me to stay close to his workmen till they've finished his harvest."*

²²Naomi said *"It's good for you to go out with his maids so others won't harm you in another field."*

²³She gleaned close by Boaz's maids till the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest. She was living with her mother-in-law. **Ruth 2:19-23**

Ruth at the Threshing Floor

3:¹Then Naomi told her,

"Let me find a permanent home for you so things will go well for you. ²Isn't Boaz our relative the one whose maids you were with? ³Take a bath, anoint yourself, put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor. Don't make yourself known to him till he's finished eating. ⁴Notice where he lies down and go uncover his feet and lie down. He'll tell you what to do." [⁵]

⁶She went down to the threshing floor and did that. ⁷When Boaz had eaten and drunk and was enjoying himself, he went to lie down at the end of the pile of grain. She came secretly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. ⁸In the middle of the night, he was startled and bent forward, and a woman was lying at his feet. **Ruth 3:1-8**

⁹He said, *"Who are you?"*

"I'm Ruth. Spread your covering over me. You're a close relative."

¹⁰*"The LORD bless you, my daughter. You've shown your last kindness to be better than the first by not going after younger men, rich or poor. ¹¹Don't worry. I'll do what you ask, because my people in town know you're an excellent woman. ¹²I am a close relative, but there's one closer. ¹³Stay tonight; in the morning, if he'll redeem you, all right. If he doesn't want to, I will, as sure as the LORD lives. Lie down till morning."*

¹⁴She lay at his feet till morning and got up before people could recognize one another. He said, *"No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor. ¹⁵Hold out the cloak you're wearing."* She held it out, and he laid six measures of barley on her, and she went into town.

¹⁶When she got to her mother-in-law, she asked her what happened.

She told her what he'd done, ¹⁷*"He gave me these six measures of barley and said not to go to my mother-in-law empty-handed."*

¹⁸*"Wait till you find out how the matter goes. He won't rest till he's settled it today."*

Ruth 3:9-18

Boaz Marries Ruth

⁴¹Boaz went up to the gate and sat down, and the close relative went past. He said, “*Come over here, my friend, and have a seat.*” He went over and sat down. ²He had ten elders of the town sit down there. ³He told the closest relative, “*Naomi is back from Moab and has to sell the ground that belonged to our relative Elimelech.* ⁴*I thought to inform you to buy it with my people sitting here as witnesses. If you’ll redeem it, redeem it. If not, tell me so I’ll know. There’s nobody but you to redeem it. I’m after you.*”

“*I’ll redeem it.*”

⁵“*When you buy the field from Naomi, you also need to acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased, to maintain title to his inheritance.*”

⁶The close relative said, “*I can’t do that. I’d jeopardize my own inheritance. You redeem it. Take my right of redemption.*”

Ruth 4:1-6

⁷This was the former custom in Israel when they redeemed and exchanged land. To confirm the transaction, a man would remove his sandal and give it to the other one. ⁸The closest relative told Boaz, “*Buy it.*” The other close relative took off his sandal. ⁹Then Boaz told the elders and the people,

“*You’re witnesses today that I’ve bought from Naomi everything that belonged to Elimelech, Chilion, and Mahlon.* ¹⁰*I’ve acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon’s widow, as my wife to maintain title to his inheritance, so his name won’t disappear from his relatives or the court in his birthplace.*”

¹¹The elders and people in court said,

“*We’re witnesses. May the LORD make the woman that’s coming to your home like Rachel and Leah, who built the House of Israel. May you gain wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem.* ¹²*May your house be like the House of Perez that Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring the LORD gives by this young woman.*”

Ruth 4:7-12

The Genealogy of David

¹³Boaz married Ruth, and the LORD enabled her to have a son. ¹⁴The women said to Naomi,

“*Blessed is the LORD who has given you a redeemer today. May he become famous in Israel.* ¹⁵*May he restore your life and sustain you in your old age. Your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.*”

¹⁶Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷The neighbor women said, “*Naomi has a son!*” They named him Obed, who became father of Jesse father of David.

¹⁸This is the genealogy of *their ancestor Perez*:

Perez was father of Hezron,

¹⁹father of Ram, father of Amminadab,

²⁰father of Nahshon, father of

Salmon, ²¹father of Boaz,

father of Obed, ²²father of Jesse. father of David.

Ruth 4:13-22

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