### Ruth

## Chapter 1

1Back in those days, during the time of the Judges, there was a famine that came to the land. As a result, a man from BethLehem of Judah traveled into the fields of MoAb with his wife and two sons. 2The man’s name was EliMelech, his wife’s name was NaOmi, and his two sons were named MahLon and ChiLion… They were EphRathites.  
  
And after they’d moved there from BethLehem of Judah, 3EliMelech (NaOmi’s husband) died, leaving just her and her two sons. 4Thereafter, the sons married Moabite women; one was named Orpah, and the other was named Ruth.  
  
  
Then, after [NaOmi] had been there for about 10 years, 5both MahLon and ChiLion (the sons of her and her husband) also died. 6So she got up and told her two daughters-in-law that she was going to return to her own country, because she’d heard (from someone in the land of MoAb) that Jehovah had turned back to His people and that He was once again providing them loaves of bread to eat.  
  
7Well, [as she was preparing] to leave the place where she was staying, both of her daughters-in-law came and met with her, because they wanted to go with her to the land of Judah.  
  
8But NaOmi said to her daughters-in-law:  
  
 ‘Go back home to your mothers… And may Jehovah show as much mercy to you as you’ve shown to my dead ones.  
  
 ‘Thank you for meeting with me, 9but may Jehovah now provide each of you rest in the house of a husband.’  
  
Then she kissed them and they both started to cry, 10and they said to her:  
  
 ‘We want to return with you to your people.’  
  
11But NaOmi said:  
  
 ‘No! Please, my daughters! Why do you want to go with me?  
  
 ‘Do you think that I still have sons in my belly that I can give as your husbands?  
  
 12‘Please go home, my daughters!  
  
 ‘Go, because I’ve grown too old to have a man anymore. I’ve asked myself:  
  
 ‘Might it be possible for me to marry again and to give birth to sons 13for whom you should wait, and not marry again until they’ve grown into men?’  
  
 ‘No, my daughters; for I’ve become very bitter since the hand of Jehovah has come against me.’  
  
14Then they all started to cry again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and returned to her family. However, Ruth continued to follow her; so NaOmi said:  
  
 15‘Look, Ruth,  
  
 ‘Your sister-in-law has returned to her people and to her gods. So, please turn back and catch up with your sister-in-law.’  
  
16And Ruth replied:  
  
 ‘Don’t force me to leave you and go back; for wherever you go, I’ll go, and wherever you stay, I’ll stay! Your people will be my people and your God will be my God!  
  
 17‘Where you die is where I’ll die, and that’s where I’ll be buried.  
  
 ‘May Jehovah [curse] me and add more to it if anything other than death will separate me from you!’  
  
18Well when NaOmi saw that she was so determined to go with her, she no longer tried to discourage her. 19So they both traveled on together until they arrived at BethLehem.  
  
  
And when they got there, the whole city of BethLehem cheered for them, asking:  
  
 ‘Is this really NaOmi?’  
  
20And she said to them:  
  
 ‘Please don’t call me NaOmi, call me Mary (Bitter), because [God] has made me very bitter.  
  
 21‘For after I left, Jehovah sent me back with nothing.  
  
 ‘So, why call me NaOmi [meaning, Pleasure], when Jehovah has humbled and persecuted me?’  
  
22Thus NaOmi returned from the country of MoAb with her Moabite daughter-in-law Ruth, arriving in BethLehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.