

Ruth

In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elim'elech and the name of his wife Na'omi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chil'ion; they were Eph'rathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elim'elech, the husband of Na'omi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years; and both Mahlon and Chil'ion died, so that the woman was bereft of her two sons and her husband. Then she started with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she was, with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. But Na'omi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find a home, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Na'omi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with

me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?

Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband.

If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you

5 therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone forth against me." Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

10 But Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God; where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if even death parts me from you." And when Na'omi saw that she was

15 determined to go with her, she said no more. So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, "Is this Na'omi?"

She said to them, "Do not call me Na'omi, call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the LORD has

20 brought me back empty. Why call me Na'omi, when the LORD has afflicted

me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?" So Na'omi returned,
and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the
country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley
harvest. Now Na'omi had a kinsman of her husband's, a man of wealth, of
5 the family of Elim'elech, whose name was Bo'az. And Ruth the Moabitess
said to Na'omi, "Let me go to the field, and glean among the ears of grain
after him in whose sight I shall find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my
daughter." So she set forth and went and gleaned in the field after the
reapers; and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to
10 Bo'az, who was of the family of Elim'elech. And behold, Bo'az came from
Bethlehem; and he said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they
answered, "The LORD bless you." Then Bo'az said to his servant who was
in charge of the reapers, "Whose maiden is this?" And the servant who was
in charge of the reapers answered, "It is the Moabite maiden, who came
15 back with Na'omi from the country of Moab. She said, 'Pray, let me glean
and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has
continued from early morning until now, without resting even for a moment."
Then Bo'az said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in
another field or leave this one, but keep close to my maidens. Let your eyes
20 be upon the field which they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not

charged the young men not to molest you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn." Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, when I am a foreigner?"

5 But Bo'az answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. The LORD recompense you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under

10 whose wings you have come to take refuge!" Then she said, "You are most gracious to me, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not one of your maidservants." And at mealtime Bo'az said to her, "Come here, and eat some bread, and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her

15 parched grain; and she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. When she rose to glean, Bo'az instructed his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. And also pull out some from the bundles for her, and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her." So she gleaned in the field until evening; then she beat out

20 what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it

up and went into the city; she showed her mother-in-law what she had gleaned, and she also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took
5 notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Bo'az." And Na'omi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Na'omi also said to her, "The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin." And Ruth the
10 Moabitess said, "Besides, he said to me, 'You shall keep close by my servants, till they have finished all my harvest.'" And Na'omi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is well, my daughter, that you go out with his maidens, lest in another field you be molested." So she kept close to the maidens of Bo'az, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests;
15 and she lived with her mother-in-law. Then Na'omi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek a home for you, that it may be well with you? Now is not Bo'az our kinsman, with whose maidens you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the
20 threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has

finished eating and drinking. But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what to do." And she replied, "All that you say I will do." So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had told her.

5 And when Bo'az had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and lay down. At midnight the man was startled, and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant; spread your skirt over

10 your maidservant, for you are next of kin." And he said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; you have made this last kindness greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear, I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of worth. And now

15 it is true that I am a near kinsman, yet there is a kinsman nearer than I. Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will do the part of the next of kin for you, well; let him do it; but if he is not willing to do the part of the next of kin for you, then, as the LORD lives, I will do the part of the next of kin for you. Lie down until the morning." So she lay at his feet

20 until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another; and he said,

"Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." And he said, "Bring the mantle you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley, and laid it upon her; then she went into the city. And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did
5 you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today." And Bo'az went up to the gate and sat
10 down there; and behold, the next of kin, of whom Bo'az had spoken, came by. So Bo'az said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here"; and he turned aside and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here"; so they sat down. Then he said to the next of kin, "Na'omi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land
15 which belonged to our kinsman Elim'elech. So I thought I would tell you of it, and say, Buy it in the presence of those sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." Then Bo'az said,
20 "The day you buy the field from the hand of Na'omi, you are also buying

Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the dead, in order to restore the name of the dead to his inheritance." Then the next of kin said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it." Now this was the custom in former times

5 in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. So when the next of kin said to Bo'az, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. Then Bo'az said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of

10 Na'omi all that belonged to Elim'elech and all that belonged to Chil'ion and to Mahlon. Also Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from the gate of his native place; you are witnesses this day." Then all the people

15 who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you prosper in Eph'rathah and be renowned in Bethlehem; and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the children that the

20 LORD will give you by this young woman." So Bo'az took Ruth and she

became his wife; and he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception,
and she bore a son. Then the women said to Na'omi, "Blessed be the
LORD, who has not left you this day without next of kin; and may his
name be renowned in Israel! He shall be to you a restorer of life and a
5 nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is
more to you than seven sons, has borne him." Then Na'omi took the child
and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse. And the women of the
neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Na'omi."
They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now
10 these are the descendants of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron
of Ram, Ram of Ammin'adab, Ammin'adab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon,
Salmon of Bo'az, Bo'az of Obed, Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.*

* From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1946, 1952, and 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.