# Ruth

Ruth is a story about how the Great-Grandmother of King David came to IsraEl and converted to Judaism.

The events happened sometime around 1300 BCE. It was likely written by SamuEl around 1090 BCE, because it appears to have originally been a continuation of the book of Judges.

### 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* 13*for 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.

### Ruth

## Chapter 2

1Well, there was a very wealthy man [in BethLehem] that NaOmi knew (because he was a relative of her husband EliMelech) whose name was BoAz.

2So Ruth (the Moabite) said to NaOmi:

 ‘If he approves of me, should I go into his field to glean grain?’

And NaOmi replied:

 ‘Go, my daughter.’

3So she went into the field and followed behind those who were doing the harvesting... And it so happened that the portion of the field she was in was being harvested by some of BoAz’s relatives at the time.

4Then {Look!} when BoAz came from the city (BethLehem), he said to those who were harvesting there:

 ‘May Jehovah be with you.’

And they replied:

 ‘May Jehovah bless you.’

5Then BoAz asked the servant that was supervising the harvesting:

 ‘Whose young woman is that?’

6And the supervisor replied:

 ‘She’s the Moabite servant who just came here from the country of the MoAbites along with NaOmi.’

7So [Ruth] then [went up] to him and said:

 ‘Please, may I collect grain here… I’ll just follow behind those who are doing the harvesting.’

Well, she’d been working all day long, from morning until evening, and she hadn’t stopped at all to rest.

8So BoAz said:

 ‘Hasn’t anyone told you, my daughter? You don’t have go into my field to just glean… [go and work] with the rest of the young women [who are my relatives].

 9‘Look around the field and see where they are, and work along with them, for I’ve instructed my servants not to bother you... And when you get thirsty, you may go and drink from the water in the jugs that belong to my servants.’

10Well at that, she bowed low before him with her face to the ground, and then she asked him:

 ‘What have I done to find so much favor in your eyes that you should treat me this well, since I’m just a stranger?’

11And BoAz answered:

 ‘All the things you’ve been doing for your mother-in-law since the death of her son, your husband, have been reported to me... I’ve heard about how you arrived in this unfamiliar land just two days ago after leaving your father, your mother, and your country.

 12‘So, may Jehovah repay your good deeds, and may the God of IsraEl that you’ve come here to serve shelter you under His wings.’

13Then she said:

 ‘I [hope] that may I find your favor, my master, and [that I can prove worthy] of the comfort that you’ve given to me; for your words have touched the heart of your slave girl.

 ‘Look, I’m your servant!’

14Then BoAz said to her:

 ‘It’s almost suppertime.

 ‘Here, take some of my bread… And here’s some vinegar to dip it in.’

15And at that, Ruth sat down next to the rest of the harvesters, and BoAz gave her a large amount of toasted grain, which she ate.

Then, after she’d eaten enough, she left.

16So, [the next day] she got up to collect [grain]. And BoAz gave orders to his servants, saying:

 ‘Absolutely let her collect for them middle of the sheaves – and don’t give her any trouble! Definitely reserve some of what’s heaped up for her, and leave her be! She’ll collect – and you won’t bother her.’

17So she worked all day long... And when she beat out the grain, she found that she’d collected a heaping bushel full, 18which she then carried back to the city.

Now, when her mother-in-law saw how much she’d collected and how much she’d been given, she asked:

 ‘Where did you go today, and where did you get this? May the one who recognized you be blest!’

19Then Ruth told her mother-in-law where she did [the harvesting] and said:

 ‘The man who let me to do this today is called BoAz.’

20And NaOmi said:

 ‘Praise Jehovah!

 ‘For He hasn’t forgotten to be merciful [to the widows] of those who’ve died.’

Then she added:

 ‘This man is our next-of-kin… One of our closest relatives!’

21And Ruth said to her mother-in-law:

 ‘He also told me to [work alongside] his servants until I’ve finished harvesting everything I need!’

22Then NaOmi told Ruth:

 ‘My daughter, it’s good for you to work alongside his servants, for you likely wouldn’t have been able to meet his relatives in any other field.’

23So thereafter, Ruth worked along with the young women of BoAz’s family through both the barley harvest and the wheat harvest (about 50 days).

### Ruth

## Chapter 3

1Well, while she was staying there with her mother-in-law, NaOmi said to her:

 ‘My daughter,

 ‘How else can I give you some rest and allow good things to happen to you?

 2‘BoAz, the one whose young women you’re working among, is a close relative... And tonight he will be threshing barley in his barn. 3So... Take a bath, [rub your body] with [fragrant] oils and dress up – then go to his barn.

 ‘However, you must not reveal yourself to him until after he’s finished eating and drinking. 4But then, when you see that he’s fallen asleep, go uncover his feet and lie down there at his feet and go to sleep!

 ‘Thereafter, he will tell you what to do.’

5And Ruth said:

 ‘I’ll do whatever you say.’

6So she went down to the barn and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed... 7[She saw] BoAz eating and drinking until his heart was quite satisfied, and then he went to sleep in the hay.

So Ruth crept up quietly and uncovered his feet, then she got down to go to sleep. 8However, this woke BoAz – and when he saw the woman lying at his feet, 9he asked:

 ‘Who are you?’

And she replied:

 ‘I’m Ruth, your servant girl... Wrap me in your blanket, for you’re my relative.’

10So BoAz said:

 ‘May Jehovah God bless you for your goodness and mercy, my daughter, because you’ve chosen the last over the first!

 ‘You could have looked for a younger man, whether rich or poor.

 11‘But daughter; don’t be afraid, for I’ll do whatever you ask, since my whole tribe knows what a mighty woman you are.

12However, there’s someone who’s a closer relative than me. 13You may spend the rest of the night here, but in the morning we’ll go and find out if he’s willing to do right by you, since he is your closest relative...

 ‘Now, as Jehovah is living, you may just go to sleep until the morning.’

14So [Ruth] went back to sleep at his feet and she stayed there until the next morning.

And when she awoke (while [it was still too dark] to be seen), BoAz said:

 ‘Don’t tell anyone that a woman spent the night in my barn.’

15Then he said to her:

 ‘Now, bring me the apron that you wore.’

So she held it out, and he poured 6 quarts (5.7l) of barley into it for her; and thereafter, she returned to the city.

16Well, when she got back, her mother-in-law asked:

 ‘What happened, my daughter?’

And she told her everything that the man had done, saying:

 ‘He also gave me 6 quarts (5.7l) of barley, 17and he told me to carry this to my mother-in-law.’

18Then [NaOmi] said:

 ‘Now, let’s just sit here and wait, my daughter, to see how this thing works out. For the man won’t be satisfied until he’s finished everything that has to be done.’

### Ruth

## Chapter 4

1Well, the [next morning], BoAz went and sat down at the [city] gate.

Then {Look!} before long, he saw the man he’d told [Ruth] about, so he asked him to come and sit in a secluded spot. 2He also found ten of the city’s elders and asked them to come and sit with them. So, they all sat down together.

3Then BoAz said to the relative:

 ‘This matter is regarding the portion of the field that belonged to our brother EliMelech, which he passed on to NaOmi...

 ‘Since she’s just returned from the land of MoAb, 4I thought that I should whisper in your ear and urge you to purchase the field before others in the city do so, or before the elders claim it, for you’re [EliMelech’s] closest living relative.

 ‘However, if you aren’t interested in buying it, let me do that, since I’m next in line as his relative.’

And [the man] replied:

 ‘I’ll [claim it] as his next of kin!’

5And BoAz said:

 ‘Well, on the day that you buy the field from NaOmi, you must also take the Moabite woman, Ruth. For she was the [wife] of your dead relative, and you have to keep his name alive to receive his inheritance.’

6Well at that, the relative said:

 ‘Oh! Then I won’t be able to accept the responsibility of being his closest relative, for I’m afraid that it would ruin the rights of my own inheritors.

 ‘So, you may go and claim the right.’

7Now, it was the custom in IsraEl at the time (when it came to establishing matters to do with inheritances and such) for the man who [was giving up his right], to untie his sandal and give it to the one who would be the acting next-of-kin, as proof that the right of inheritance was being given to him.

For this is how they testified to such things in IsraEl back then.

8So when the relative told BoAz that he could buy it for himself and the right of inheritance would be his, he untied his sandal and gave it to BoAz...

9Then BoAz said to the elders and to everyone else who was sitting there:

 ‘You people are all eye-witnesses today that I’ve acquired the right to buy everything that belonged to EliMelech, ChiLion, and MahLon from NaOmi… 10Including Ruth, the Moabite woman.

 ‘So I’ve now acquired MahLon’s woman as mine, and I’ll raise a [son] in the name of the one who died, so that his inheritance won’t be lost.

 ‘For I’m his brother, and you and all the people at this gate are my witnesses.’

11Well, the elders all agreed, saying:

 ‘We are eye-witnesses. And may Jehovah make the woman who’s entering your home like RachaEl and LeAh who built the house of IsraEl!

 ‘May they succeed in doing that in a powerful way in EphRatha, and in making a name in BethLehem.

 12‘May your house become like the house of Perez, whom Thamar bore to Judah; and regarding your offspring, may Jehovah give you children from this maidservant.’

13So BoAz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he [slept with] her and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son.

14And thereafter, she said to NaOmi:

 ‘May Jehovah be praised, because He didn’t rest until He provided a son for you today!

 ‘May [this son] speak of your name in IsraEl, 15and may he restore life and nourishment to your grey hair; for your daughter-in-law has given birth to a good child who’s better than seven sons!’

16Well after that, NaOmi took the boy and held him to her breasts, becoming his wet nurse. 17Then she called the neighbors in and named him…

She said:

 ‘Since NaOmi has now given birth to a son, I’ll call him Obed [meaning, Servant].’

This one became the father of JesSe and the grandfather of David.

18Now, these are the descendants of Perez:

 • Perez fathered HezRon,
 • 19HezRon fathered Aram,
 • Aram fathered AmiNadab,
 • 20AmiNadab fathered NaShon,
 • NaShon fathered SalMon,
 • 21SalMon fathered BoAz,
 • BoAz fathered Obed,
 • 22Obed fathered JesSe, and
 • JesSe fathered David.