

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

Naomi goes to Moab.

- 1 **I**T was in the time when the Judges Ruled, that there came a famine in the land, and a man of Beth-lehem-judah went to stay in the plains of Moab, with his wife and two sons.
- 2 The man's name was Elimelekh, and his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Khilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. These went to the plain of Moab and remained there.
- 3 Elimelekh, the husband of Naomi died, however, and left her with her
- 4 two sons, who took Moabitesses as wives for themselves; the name of one was Orpah, and of the other Ruth, and they resided there ten years. Both
- 5 of them then died,—Mahlon and Khilion,—so the woman was deprived of
- 6 her two sons and her husband. She consequently arose with her daughters-in-law, and left the plain of Moab, for she had heard, in the plain of Moab, that the EVER-LIVING had
- 7 visited His people, and given them bread. So she went out of the village where she had stayed, and her two daughters-in-law with her, and proceeded on her journey to return to the
- 8 land of Judah. Naomi, however, said to her two daughters-in-law,
- 9 "Go! return each of you to her mother's home. May the EVER-LIVING show you the kindness that you showed to the dead, and to me!
- 10 May the EVER-LIVING grant you to find happiness, each in the home of her Husband." Then she kissed them, and lifted up her voice and wept.
- 11 But they replied to her, "Why should we not go back with you to your own people?"
- 12 Naomi, however, answered, "Turn back, my girls!—Why should you go with me? Are there any sons in my breast, who could become husbands to you? Go back, my girls, therefore, for I am too old to have a husband! Even if I should say I hope for one,—if I should have a husband to-night, and
- 13 sons should be born to me, would

you separate yourselves until they were grown up? Would you remain without having a man?—No! my girls. Altho' it is more bitter for me than for you;—for the hand of the LORD has come upon me!"

Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law,—but Ruth clung to her! But she said, "Look! return with your sister-in-law to her people, and her GOD,—turn back after your sister-in-law."

Ruth, however, answered, "Do not entreat me to leave you, or to turn back from you. For wherever you go, I will go; and where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your GOD my GOD! Wherever you die I will die; and there I will be buried!—The EVER-LIVING do this to me, and more than this,—if anything but death shall part between me and you!"

When she saw that she was decided to go with her, she ceased to persuade her, and both of them went to travel to Beth-lehem; and when they arrived at Beth-lehem, the village was excited about them, and they asked, "Is not this Naomi?"

But she replied, "Call me not Naomi (Pleasantness), for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me! I went away full, and the EVER-LIVING has returned me empty!—Why should you call me Pleasantness when the LORD has spoken against me, and the ALMIGHTY wronged me?" So Naomi returned and her daughter-in-law Ruth, the Moabitess with her, when she came back from the plain of Moab, and came to Beth-lehem, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Boaz meets Ruth Gleaning.

But Naomi had a relative of her husband, a very rich man, of the family of Elimelekh, whose name was Boaz. And Ruth, the Moabitess, once said to Naomi, "I will go out into the field, and glean amongst the

sheaves, after whoever I may, in whose eyes I find kindness." And she replied, "Go my girl."

3 So she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happened to alight on that part of the plain belonging to Boaz, of the family of Elimelekh! And Boaz also came out from Beth-lehem, and said to the reapers, "The EVER-LIVING be with you!" and they replied to him, "The EVER-LIVING bless you!"

5 Then Boaz asked his Steward whom he had appointed over the reapers, "Whose girl is this?"

6 And the foreman of the reapers replied, and said, "She is a Moabitess, who resided with Naomi in the plain of Moab, and she asked, 'May I glean, please,—and gather after the reapers among the sheaves?' So she came, and has gleaned since this morning till now,—except that she returned a while to her home."

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Do you not hear my child? Go not to another part of the plain, nor retire from here, but keep along with my own girls. Watch for the field where they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty go to the buckets and drink what the young men have drawn."

10 Then she inclined her face, and bowed earthward, and asked him, "Why have I found favour in your eyes? for you to attend to me, when I am a foreigner?"

11 But Boaz replied and asked her, "Tell me all that you have done for your mother-in-law, after the death of your husband,—when you abandoned your father and mother, and country to go, and travel to a people whom you did not know formerly?"

12 May the EVER-LIVING reward your act! And may the EVER-LIVING GOD of Israel pay you well, since you came to shelter under his canopy!"

13 And she answered, "I have found favour in your sight, sir,—for you have comforted me. And you have spoken to the heart of your servant, altho' I am not one of your servants."

14 Then Boaz said to her;—"At dinner time go along with them and eat of the food, and dip your morsel in the wine."

So she sat beside the reapers, and he handed her oatcake, and she ate, and was satisfied, and left some

of it! Then she arose to glean, and Boaz ordered his men saying;

"Let her even glean amongst the stalks, and do not insult her. And also pull some out from the sheaves and drop, that she may glean it, and find no fault with her":

She consequently gleaned in the field till dusk, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was an Ephah of barley. Then she took it up, and went to the village, and showed her mother-in-law what she had gleaned. Then she brought out, and gave to her what she had left after herself had dined.

Her mother-in-law consequently asked her, "Where have you gleaned to-day, and what have you done? May whoever noticed you be blest!"

So she informed her mother-in-law who had done it for her, and she said, "The name of the man who was kind to me to-day is Boaz!"

Then Naomi exclaimed, "May he be completely blest by the EVER-LIVING for he has not ceased his kindness to the living or to the dead!" —Naomi also said to her, "That man is related to us,—he can restore us!"

Then Ruth the Moabitess added, "Yes! For he also said to me, 'You must keep with my servants to the end of the whole harvest that I have!'"

Naomi then replied to Ruth, "That is right, my girl!—so go along with his girls, and let no one find you in another field."

So she kept with the girls of Boaz to glean until the end of the barley harvest, and wheat harvest, and resided with her mother-in-law.

Naomi determines to marry Ruth to Boaz.

Then her mother-in-law Naomi said to her,—“My girl, ought I not to seek a resting place for you, that may benefit you? So, now, is there not Boaz, our relative, with whose girls you have been?—Look,—he is winnowing the barley at his barn to-night, therefore bathe yourself, and tidy, and put your cloak on you, and go down to the barn. But do not let the man know of you until he is full of victuals and drink. But when he lies down, then ascertain the apartment where he reclines, and go and uncover his feet and lie down,—when he will tell you what to do.”

- 5 And she answered, "All that you have said I will do."
- 6 So she went down to the barn, and did all that her mother-in-law ordered.
- 7 And Boaz ate and drank and rejoiced his heart;—then went to lie down in the lodge of the grainery, when she came quietly and uncovered
- 8 his feet and lay down. And it happened at midnight, that the man was startled, and turned over, and found
- 9 a woman lying beside him!—and asked, "Who are you?" When she replied, "I am Ruth, your servant. Therefore spread your cloak over your servant, for you are the Restorer!"¹
- 10 And he replied, "The EVER-LIVING bless you, my girl!—You have given more kindness at the last than at the first! For you have not gone after young fellows, whether poor or rich!
- 11 But now, my girl, do not be afraid; all that you have asked me, I will do for you; for all the Circle of my people know you are a virtuous
- 12 woman. But now for the fact;—I am a near relative myself; yet there is a nearer Redeptor than I.—
- 13 Stay here to-night, and when the morning comes, if he will redeem for you, good. But if he is not pleased to redeem your property, then I myself will redeem it for you. Lie with me till morning."
- 14 She consequently lay along with him until morning, but got up before one could distinguish his companion. And he said to her, "Do not let it be known that a woman came to the barn."
- 15 He also said, "Bring the wrapper that was on you, and hold it." So she held it, and he measured six measures, and lifted it on to her, and
- 16 she went to the village, and came to her mother-in-law, who asked her "What do you bring, my girl?" When she reported all that the man did to her, and said, "He gave me these six measures of barley, for," he said, "you shall not go empty to your mother-in-law."
- 17 And she replied, "Be quiet, my girl; wait until you know what will happen;—for the man will not rest to-day till he has finished the affair."

¹ NOTE.—Ch. 3, v. 9. "THE RESTORER," the next of kin to her husband, who by Hebrew Law was obliged to marry her and redeem her late husband's estate if mortgaged, as this seems to have been.—F. F.

Boaz Publicly states he will Redeem Ruth's Estate.

Boaz, however, went up to the Gate 4 and sat there. And saw the nearer relative, of whom Boaz had spoken, pass, and exclaimed, "Come here! Sit down here,—you, sir!" So he turned and sat down.

Then he summoned Ten of the 2 Elders of the village, and said, "Sit here!" And they sat down. When 3 he said to the redeptor;—"There is that part of our Estate, what belonged to Elimelekh, that Naomi, who has resided in the plain of Moab wishes to sell, so I have spoken 4 openly to your ears to advise you to buy it, in the presence of these men, and before the elders of my people. If you wish to redeem it,—redeem it. But if you will not redeem it, inform me; for there is no one to redeem it except yourself,—and I am after you." And he replied, "I will redeem it!"

But Boaz answered;—"On the day 5 that you purchase the estate from the hand of Naomi, you must buy it also from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead man, to raise up a name for the dead on the property!"

Then the next of kin said;—"I am 6 not able to purchase it by myself, lest I should injure my own property. You can purchase my right for yourself;—for I am unable to claim it."

Now this was the custom in Israel 7 about purchases and about transfers, to confirm any event,—a man took off his shoe and gave it to his friend;—and that was an attestation in Israel. So when the next of kin said to Boaz, 8 "Buy it for yourself," he slipped off his shoe, and Boaz said to the Elders, 9 and to all the people, "You are witnesses to-day that I have bought all that belonged to Elimelekh, and the whole that belonged to Khilion and Mahlon, from the hand of Naomi? 10 And also Ruth, the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I have bought for myself as a wife to raise up a name for the dead upon his estate, so that the name of the dead may not be cut off from the gate of his Home:—As you witness to-day!"

When all the people at the Gate 11 and the Elders replied, "We are witnesses!—The EVER-LIVING grant that the wife who comes to your house may be like Rachel and Leah, which two built up the house of

- Israel, and make wealth in Ephrathah, and a celebrated name, in Beth-lehem.
- 12 And may your house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bore to Judah. So may the heir be whom the LORD may give you from this young woman."
- 13 Then Boaz took Ruth the Moabitess, and she became his wife, and he went to her, and the EVER-LIVING gave her conception, and she bore a son.
- 14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Thank the EVER-LIVING who has not left you to-day without a relative! So let his name be celebrated in Israel! For he has been to you a restorer of life, and a supporter of your old age, on account of your

daughter-in-law who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons."

Naomi also took the lad and laid 16 him on her lap, and was a nurse to him, and her woman friends collected 17 to her and said, "There is a son born for Naomi," and chose Obed¹ for his name. He was the ancestor of Jessai, the father of David.

And this was the pedigree from 18 Pharez;—Pharez begat Hezron; and 19 Hezron begat Ram; and Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat 20 Nahshon; and Nahshon begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Boaz; and 21 Boaz begat Obed; and Obed begat 22 Jessai; and Jessai begat David.

¹ NOTE.—V. 17. Obed; "Serving for."

END OF THE BOOK OF RUTH.