

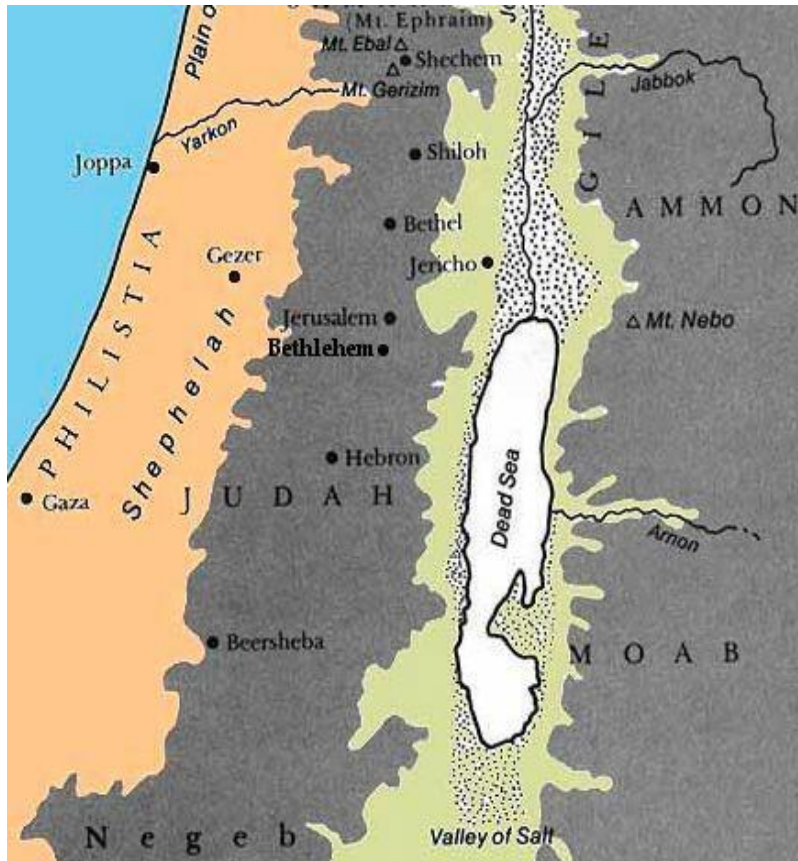
# RUTH – An Overview

About 150 years (around 1150 – 1000 BC) covered, in the lands of Moab and Israel.

1. In the days of the judges of Israel (1473-1023 BC), Elimelech of Judah leaves his hometown, Bethlehem, to escape famine, with his wife Naomi and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, and goes east to Moab. (c1)
2. The sons marry Moabite women: Mahlon to Ruth, Chilion to Orpah, but Elimelech dies, and Mahlon and Chilion die childless. (c1)
3. Naomi returns to Bethlehem broke, but Ruth comes with her. (c1)
4. Ruth goes to glean barley, coming into the fields of Boaz, Elimelech's kinsman. (c2)
5. Boaz treats Ruth very kindly, and she safely gathers much barley. (c2)
6. Naomi advises Ruth to appeal to Boaz to marry her, according to God's law in Deuteronomy 25:5-10. (c3)
7. Boaz agrees to Ruth's request, if a nearer kinsman will not do it. (c3)
8. In the forum of Bethlehem, Boaz publicly asks the nearer kinsman if he will buy (redeem) Elimelech's land and marry Ruth. (c4)
9. The nearer kinsman can buy the land, but cannot marry Ruth without disturbing his own inheritance, and so declines. (c4)
10. Boaz states he will buy the land and marry Ruth, and the townfolk approve. (c4)
11. Boaz marries Ruth, and they have a son named Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of king David. (c4)
12. Naomi becomes Obed's nurse, blessed by Ruth's love and Obed's company. (c4)

# An Israelite Family Leaves Israel (chapter 1)

- In the days of the judges (perhaps Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, or Samson), there was a famine in Israel.
- Elimelech, of Bethlehem in the tribe of Judah, took his wife Naomi and their sons, Mahlon and Chilion, eastward into Moab to try to escape the famine.
- While there, Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah, both of Moab.
- Elimelech died. Mahlon and Chilion died childless.
- By then, the famine in Israel had ended.



- Naomi decided to return into Israel.
- She told Ruth and Orpah to stay in Moab.
- At first, both wanted to go with her, but Naomi urged them to stay, and Orpah said goodbye.
- Ruth refused, however, to leave Naomi, saying, *“Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.”*
- Naomi relented, and took Ruth with her.
- When she returned to Bethlehem, people remembered her, but she called herself bitter and empty.

# God Provides Food for Ruth and Naomi (chapter 2)

- As a Moabitess, Ruth could not be a part of Israel at that time, according to Deut 23:3-6, but as a stranger, she could get food by gleaning in the fields as taught in Deut 24:19. So she did that.
- Ruth “happened” to go into a field belonging to Boaz, near of kin to Elimelech and Mahlon.
- Boaz spoke well with his workers, and learned Ruth’s situation.
- Boaz spoke kindly to Ruth, recognizing her devotion to Naomi, and encouraging her to stay and glean in his fields, where she could expect protection, water, and a lunch place.
- Boaz told his workers to leave some barley on purpose for Ruth to gather, and so she took a large amount home in the evening. He also provided additional food for lunch.
- From the amount she brought home, Naomi knew that Ruth had received some help, and asked Ruth where she had been to glean.
- When Ruth told her about Boaz, Naomi rejoiced, for Boaz, as a near kinsman, had the right and duty to help Ruth and herself.
- Ruth told Naomi of Boaz encouraging her to stay in his field, and Naomi encouraged her to do the same, for Ruth’s protection.





# Ruth Asks for Help from Boaz (chapter 3)

- The nearest willing kinsman of Mahlon had the right and duty to buy Elimelech's land from Naomi to help her, and to marry Ruth to provide a child in Mahlon's name.
- Naomi advised Ruth to bathe, use perfume, get dressed, and go and lie at Boaz's feet after the harvest feast to ask for such help.
- Ruth did this, and Boaz was very happy to help if the nearer kinsman (or relative) was unwilling.
- They had no sex that night, and Ruth was known as a good woman, but Ruth stayed there until morning, and Boaz sent her home with abundant food.
- Ruth told Naomi of all that happened during the night.
- Naomi advised her to wait, and assured her that Boaz would take action on the matter that very day.



# A Willing and Able Redeemer (chapter 4)

- Boaz went to the gate of Bethlehem that day, which was the forum, or place where public transactions took place, much like a court.
- He gathered ten elders of the city as witnesses, and got the nearer kinsman.
- Boaz told him that Elimelech's land was for sale to redeem, and he had first right to buy it from Naomi.
- The nearer kinsman agreed to buy the land.
- Boaz then informed him that any man wishing to redeem the land must also marry Ruth, since she was Mahlon's childless widow, to raise up a child in Mahlon's name, according to Deuteronomy 25:5-10.
- The nearer kinsman was unable to do that, because it would mess up his inheritance.
- The nearer kinsman recognized Boaz's right to redeem as the second-nearest kinsman, and drew off his shoe to acknowledge that fact.
- Boaz proclaimed that he would buy Naomi's land and marry Ruth.
- The people of Bethlehem witnessed Boaz's proclamation, and wished them all well.
- Boaz married Ruth, and God blessed them with a son whom they named Obed.
- Naomi became nurse to Obed, and her friends said that Ruth was better to her than seven sons, for she loved Naomi so much.
- Obed was the father of Jesse, the father of king David, the ancestor of Jesus Christ.

