

RUTH



A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

By
Wayne McMorran

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BOAZ, RUTH AND NAOMI (Sorry, they did not have color film in those days!)

INTRODUCTION

Books of the Bible seldom need much introduction. The books themselves provide it and this is so here. There are a few comments to be made here.

The primary Bible Text used here is the NKJV (New KJV). The outline used is *Holman Outlines* Copyright © 1991 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by special arrangement with Broadman & Holman Publishers. Database © 2004 WORDsearch Corp.

Other Bible translations will be used from time to time and the abbreviations defined in the back of this study. This is also true for other works used. In cases where it becomes necessary to determine the precise meaning of the Hebrew text, the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* [BHS] @ 1967/77, 1983 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft Stuttgartensia will be used. It is a part of the *Biblical Analysis Research Tool* created by Wycliff SIL, Copyright @ 1998 1999 SIL.

Other outlines for this book:

Ruth Adopts Naomi's People and God (1:1-22)
 Ruth Meets Boaz (2:1-23)
 Ruth Asks for Boaz's Protection (3:1-18)
 Naomi's Heritage is Restored Through Ruth (4:1-22)

LESSONmaker Outlines

Ruth's decision to return with Naomi (1:1-22)
 Ruth's service to Naomi and introduction to Boaz (2:1-23)
 Ruth's invoking of the redemption law (3:1-18)
 Ruth's reward (4:1-22)

Unger's Outlines

Ruth deciding (1:1-22)
 Ruth serving (2:1-23)
 Ruth resting (3:1-18)
 Ruth rewarded (4:1-22)

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CHAPTER ONE

TRIAL AND TRAGEDY SEEMED TO OFFER LITTLE HOPE FOR GOD'S REDEEMING GRACE

The trial of famine gave way to the tragedy of death for Naomi (1:1-5)

Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion--Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

Ruth 1:1-5 (NKJV)

Now it came to pass. . . . For those who have not read any of my other studies. I should explain this phrase. It, unfortunately, sounds like "Once upon a time . . ." used in Children's stories. The "Now" should not really be there. See the comments in the appendix, page #33. The text should start out with the word "in."

In the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. This sets this book a some period during the time of the Judges (i.e., the Book of Judges). K&D¹ place this during the time recorded below.

*Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years, and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains. So it was, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey. For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as numerous as locusts; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it. **So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites,** and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.*

Judges 6:1-6 (NKJV)

And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. Again, forget the "and." "A certain man" is a Hebrew idiom which we would normally simplify to "A man of Bethlehem named . . ." It was a "certain man" in the sense that God choose to reveal him to us. The man, who was named Elimelech ("my God is king.") left Israel to go to the land of Moab. This journey is shown on the next page.

Without going any further in the text, I can say this was a mistake. It was a lack of faith in God to provide. Time and time again, starting with Abraham, the Hebrews have left the promised land while

¹See the expanded names of these references in the Appendix.

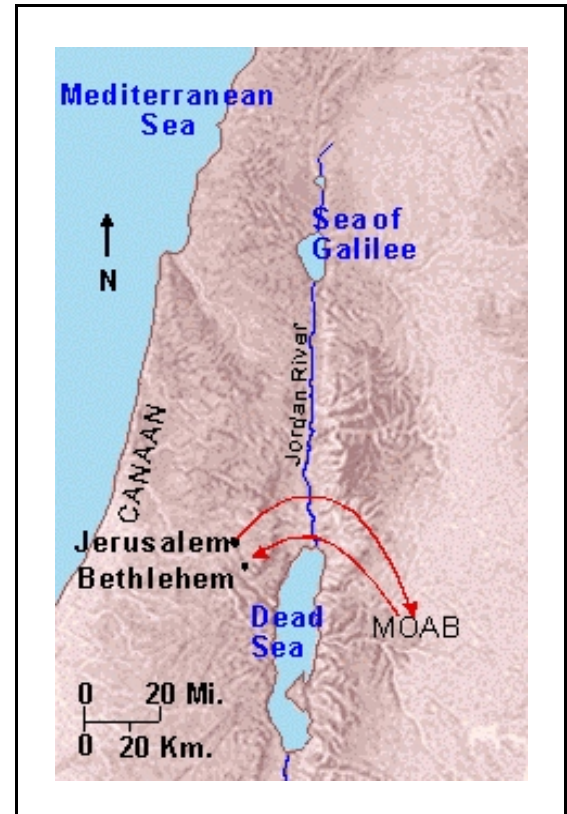
it was God's intention that they remain there. An interesting note here it that he was from בית לעם (Beth Lehem) = "The House of Bread" There was no bread for them in the house of bread!

But, now he is in Moab. I might note that, in spite of leaving the land of Canaan, this account will have a happy ending.

The text gives us full identification of the man and his family. The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion--Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. Ephraim was the name of the region and the name means "two pasture lands."

The name "Naomi" which means "*my pleasantness*," will come into place later. The names of the two sons were Mahlon, "*sickly*," and Chilion "*sickly*." Strange that the two boys had similar names. The two names do not mean exactly the same thing, but "sickly" will do for now.

Elimelech soon died, *and she was left, and her two sons.* Reason #one for not leaving Canaan. There she would be cared for. In the land of Moab, she was on her own.



Naomi's travels

Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. Reason #two for not leaving Canaan. There the two sons would, likely, have married Hebrew girls. There they only had Moabite women to choose from. God forbade Israel to marry other than within the Hebrew people (although He did not specifically they were not to marry a Moabite). They married Orpah "*neck*," or "*girl with a full mane*," (i.e., long haired) and Ruth "*friendship*." See note below²

By the end of ten years in Moab, *both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.* So now it is three women left in the land of the Moabites. What to do next?

The hint of blessing was seen in the tearful parting of Naomi from Orpah and the determined love of Ruth for her mother-in-law (1:6-14)

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread. Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. "The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? "Turn back, my daughters, go--for I am too

²Since it was not uncommon to wait for a child to reach 13 years old to give them a formal name, enough time elapsed so that an appropriate(?) name could be given.

old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, "would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!" Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

Ruth 1:6-14 (NKJV)

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab. The word "arose," קָוַם (qom) is used 271 times in the Old Testament and has a variety of meanings. Here, it does not mean she "stood up" but rather to "arise (out of inaction)"³ She had been there for ten years, lost her husband and her sons. She had nothing but her two Moabite daughters-in-law. What caused her to now begin anew?

She had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread The word "visit" here may be a bit misleading to some. He did not come down and sit with the people and "visit" with them. The word, פָּקַד (paqad) means "attend to, visit, muster, appoint, etc."⁴ The Lord saw to it that Israel had food. "Bread" לֶחֶם (lehem) may literally mean "bread" but most usually, as here, it refers to food (mostly grain) in general. Incidentally, "Bethlehem" means "house of bread." The rains had returned to Israel and the famine was over. It was time for her to return.

Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. While this is a quite good translation of the Hebrew, it is a bit awkward in its reading. Naomi got prepared and left on the road that led to the land of Judah. Refer to the map on page #4. She presumed her two daughter's-in-law were going along as far as the border (i.e., the Jordan River) with her to see her off.

Thus she said to them *"Go, return each to her mother's house."* It has been noted in the commentaries that there are two verbs here, "Go," - stop following me, and "return" - return to their mother's homes. It is unusual to speak of a "mother's home." The only other instance of it is in Genesis.

*So the young woman ran and told her (Rebekah's) **mother's household** these things.*

Genesis 24:28 (NKJV)

It would be no good for them to accompany her to her home since the Hebrew men were forbidden to marry anyone but Hebrew women. It would be unlikely they would find a husband if they went with her. Therefore, they were to return to their **mother's homes** where they could start over again and find some Moabite husbands.

Noami's intentions are made clear with what follows. *The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. "The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband."* They had both been loyal daughters-in-law and wives and now Naomi would seek the Lord's blessing on them as they returned and found Moabite husbands. An interesting question one might ask is "Would God bless a Moabites when they worshiped other gods? In this case, Naomi

³BDB, קוֹם

⁴BDB, פָּקַד

asks for the blessing more out of care for them than really sincere prayer.

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people." In English it is impossible to tell whether all three of them wept of just the two daughters. The Hebrew, however does. K&D has, "*The daughters-in-law, however, began to weep aloud, and said, "We will return with thee to thy people" כִּי before a direct statement serves to strengthen it, and is almost equivalent to a positive assurance.*"⁵ Were they serious? Did they actually mean that they would go to Israel where the opportunity to get a husband would be slim and they would most likely end up begging for food?

Let me ask another question. How many times have you, after hearing a wonderful missionary speak, said, "I will surely be praying for you!" and then didn't? All too often, in the emotions of the moment, we say things we really do not mean.

*But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? K&D note, "Her meaning is: I am not pregnant with sons, upon whom, as the younger brothers of Mahlon and Chilion, there would rest the obligation of marrying you, according to the Levitate law."*⁶ The reference is to the laws the Lord laid down for Israel.

And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother."

Genesis 38:8 (NKJV)

"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

Deuteronomy 25:5 (NKJV)

Naomi would have no more sons for them to marry and, even if she did, it would be a long time before they would be of marriageable age and the two women would be rather old. Naomi points this fact out to them. . *If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, "would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? She makes it abundantly clear that there is no place for them in Israel. They must return to the mother's homes and start over there.*

At this point there comes a division. *No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!" Then they lifted up their voices and wept again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.* Naomi had enough to grieve over. No husband, her two sons gone, she wished no more grief. The result was twofold.

- Orpah **kissed** her mother-in-law - a kiss meaning "good bye." She would go home.
- Ruth **clung** to her. BDB has for "clung," *cling, cleave to, a. fig. of loyalty, affection etc., sometimes with idea of physical proximity retained.*⁷ Despite what Naomi had said, she would return with Naomi.

⁵K&D, Ruth 1:8-10

⁶K&D, Ruth 1:11

⁷BDB, דבק

In spite of Naomi's urging, Ruth resisted the injunction of her mother-in-law to remain in Moab and accompanied Naomi as she returned to Judah (1:15-18)

And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever 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. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me." When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.

Ruth 1:15-18 (NKJV)

And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." One might say that Naomi was not a good witness for the Lord, telling Orpah to "return to her gods." Dr. McGee wrote,

Orpah made the decision to go back. Her decision for God had not been real, you see. She goes back to idolatry. And when she goes back, she walks off the pages of Scripture into silence and into oblivion. We never hear of her again. But Ruth made a decision for God, and when she made this decision, it was for time and eternity. And you'll find her mentioned in the very first chapter of the New Testament. She's in the genealogy that led to Christ. Naomi wants to test her to see if she's genuine or not. She told her to go back to her gods, to go back with her sister-in-law

McGEE, Ruth 1:15

Ruth, politely responded to Naomi's request with *"Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you."* K&D commenting on the Hebrew text here, states,

With Ruth, however, it was evidently not merely strong affection and attachment by which she felt herself so drawn to her mother-in-law that she wished to live and die with her, but a leaning of her heart towards the God of Israel and His laws, of which she herself was probably not yet fully conscious, but which she had acquired so strongly in her conjugal relation and her intercourse with her Israelitish connections, that it was her earnest wish never to be separated from this people and its God

K&D, Ruth 1:16

*For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever 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. **The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me.** I have underlined the portion about which KD wrote, "The words [here] are a frequently recurring formula in connection with an oath (cf. 1 Sam 3:17; 14:44; 20:13, etc.), by which the person searing called down upon himself a severe punishment in case he should not keep his word or carry out his resolution."⁸*

These are powerful words from Ruth. If only all Christians would acknowledge God like this!

⁸K&D, Ruth 1:16

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:37-39 (NKJV)

Naomi was convinced. "When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her. When it says she "stopped speaking to her" it does not mean she would not talk to her. It means she dropped the subject of returning to her mother's house.

The "emptiness" of Naomi's return to Judah provided the transition to God's grace by means of Ruth (1:19-22)

Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. "I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?" So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

Ruth 1:19-22 (NKJV)

Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. Having sent Orpah back home, Naomi and Ruth went on to Bethlehem. ***And it happened*** . . . The KJV and the NKJV has "And it came to pass" or "And it happened. Does anything just "happen" when God is in control? The NASB, in its strict observance of Hebrew usage has "*And when they had come to Bethlehem*" which is a much better translation. The three fastest means of communication used to be telephone, telegraph, and "tell a woman." (Sorry about that, ladies). They had not been in Bethlehem long when the word spread about them.

All the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" K&D note regarding the subjects of this verse, *the inhabitants of the town, but chiefly the female portion of the inhabitants, who were the most excited at Naomi's return. This is the simplest way of explaining the use of the feminine in the verbs. . . . In these words there was an expression of amazement, not so much at the fact that Naomi was still alive, and had come back again, as at her returning in so mournful a condition, as a solitary widow, without either husband or sons;*⁹

Naomi complained about what they called her. "*Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara.*" This name is a slightly different form of the Hebrew, מַרָּא (mara) than that found below.

Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.

Exodus 15:23 (NKJV)

The connection is seen in her response. *The Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. "I went out full,*

⁹K&D, Ruth 1:19

and the LORD has brought me home again empty.” She refers to God as “The Almighty” which is not used to any great extent. The Hebrew is יְדַי (shaday) of which the Theological Dictionary of the O.T. says,

Shaddai, as a divine title, is used forty-eight times in the OT. Most often it appears in Job (thirty-one times), on the lips of almost every person in this drama: Eliphaz, 5:17; Job, 6:4; Bildad, 8:3; Zophar, 11:7; Elibu, 32:8; the Lord, 40:2. Of these forty-eight times shadday is prefaced by 'el (God) seven times: Genesis 17:1; Genesis 28:3; Genesis 35:11; Genesis 43:14; Genesis 48:3; Exodus 6:3; Ezekiel 10:5. The remaining forty-one times shadday stands alone.-

TWOT, יְדַי

“The Almighty” is the closest we can come to its meaning. The question is why Naomi uses it here, Some of the reference in Job are below.

*“Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects;
Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.*

Job 5:17 (NKJV)

*For the arrows of the Almighty are within me;
My spirit drinks in their poison;
The terrors of God are arrayed against me.*

Job 6:4 (NKJV)

*Does God subvert judgment?
Or does the Almighty pervert justice?*

Job 8:3 (NKJV)

It appears to be used when God has subjected one to chastening or judgement. Naomi returns a bitter woman for what God has done to her. Should she be bitter? Elimelech was wrong to leave Israel, but should God’s judgement for what he did rest on her? She was to obey her husband. Yet, when he died, she did not immediately return to Israel.

When she says she went “out full.” it does not refer to wealth or goods; it refers to her having a husband and two sons. Sons are considered a blessing of the Lord. Solomon wrote,

*Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;
They shall not be ashamed,
But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.*

Psalms 127:4-5 (NKJV)

She says she has come back empty. If I were Ruth, I think I would feel this was a “put down” to her. Didn’t she give up all to return with Naomi?

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

The last sentence here should be included in the next section so we will discuss it there.



Ruth continues on with Naomi while Orpha returns

CHAPTER TWO

IN THE ORDINARY ACTIONS OF A FOREIGNER, GOD BEGAN TO PREPARE THE WAY OF BLESSING

Ruth's initiative provided not only food for the present, but a foundation for the future welfare of her family (2:1-7)

There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz. So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!" Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?" So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab." And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house."

Ruth 2:1-7 (NKJV)

Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. As before, forget the "Now." As they had returned, the barley harvest began.

*There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz. So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." Ruth asks Naomi if she can go out into the fields of a man named Boaz to "glean heads of grain after him . . . " A little background is in order here. Holman says that gleaning was *The process of gathering grain or produce left in a field by reapers or on a vine or tree by pickers. Mosaic law required leaving this portion so that the poor and aliens might have a means of earning a living.*¹⁰ This was required by God.*

'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. 'And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 19:9-10 (NKJV)

So Ruth wish to do so. Whether it was a custom among the Moabites or that Naomi had taught her about this, we can not determine. The introduction to Boaz here is to alert us to some circumstances which will arise. Boaz was (1) Elimech's relative, (2) a wealthy man, and a man destined to play an important role in the life of Jesus Christ.

"Go, my daughter." Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. Having obtained Naomi's "permission (she really did not have to ask, she was being respectful) she goes out

¹⁰HOLMAN, "gleaning"

to reap. Hopefully she could get enough for dinner that night. But it was important that she choose the right field. As K&D note, *“hard-hearted farmers and reapers threw obstacles in the way of the poor, and even forbade their gleaning altogether. Hence Ruth proposed to glean after him who should generously allow it”*¹¹

And she happened to come . . . Again, I dislike the translation of some of these Hebrew idioms. Was she just lucky that she came upon Boaz’s field? Again, Boaz has already been mentioned. It was by no means chance or luck, it was Divine Providence which led her there. קרה (yiqer) has the meaning *accident, chance, fortune*.¹² “Fortune may be all right but it was not by chance. Dr. McGee, in his usual style wrote,

And if you'd seen Ruth going out that day down the road from Bethlehem, you would have seen a girl who had no idea into which field she should go. How is she going to find her way into the field of Boaz? It's going to be very important that she get in that field. If she doesn't, then you can tell the wise men that there's no use coming to Bethlehem. Jesus won't be born there. And you can tell the shepherds to stay with their flocks on the hillside because He won't be born in Bethlehem. You see, it's important that she go into the right field. How is she going to find the right field?

McGEE, Ruth 2:1

Oh Oh! Boaz is coming! *Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!"* It is too bad that we do not greet one another like this today. “Hi,” “Hello,” etc. leave the Lord out of our meeting. Boaz was, apparently, a very good man in the sight of his employees.

Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?" Boaz immediately spotted Ruth in the field. “Young woman” here is נערה (naharah) which refers to a young woman of marriageable age, but not necessarily married. When Boaz asks “whose young woman is this?” he is probably asking who her parents were, not her husband.

So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. "And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house." K&D make the following three notes:

It is evident from this answer of the servant who was placed over the reapers, (1) that Boaz did not prohibit any poor person from gleaning in his field; (2) that Ruth asked permission of the overseer of the reapers, and availed herself of this permission with untiring zeal from the first thing in the morning, that she might get the necessary support for her mother-in-law and herself; and (3) that her history was well known to the overseer, and also to Boaz, although Boaz saw her now for the first time

K&D, Ruth 2:5

¹¹K&D, Ruth 2:3

¹²BDB, קרה

Ruth demonstrated that inclusion into the people of God is not predicated on birth alone (2:8-13)

Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. "Let your eyes be on the field which 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 vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. "The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge." Then she said, "Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants."

Ruth 2:8-13 (NKJV)

Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? I do not like the English in the NKJV here. The NIV has, "So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls." Boaz calls her "my daughter" though she really isn't - it was a very kind way of addressing her. There is a note to be made here with respect to daughters.

Although less emphasis is placed on daughters than sons (c. 585 references to 4850 respectively), they were greatly valued. The continuation of life depended on daughters-Eve is the "mother of all the living," and a daughter was valuable for her labor (Genesis 24:15; Genesis 29:9; Exodus 20:10). At marriage a bride price was paid to the daughter's father, but he normally restored it to her as a dowry (Genesis 31:15). The dowry may even have been higher than the price. . . The love of a father for an only daughter is illustrated by Jephthah's sorrow at the loss of his daughter (Judges 11:34-40; cf. 2 Samuel 12:3). If there were no sons, a man's daughters inherited his property, provided they married within the same tribe (Numbers 27:1-11; Numbers 36:1-12)

TWOT: בת

Boaz treats her very kindly, perhaps more kindly than one would expect. He now knows that she is eligible to be married. "Let your eyes be on the field which 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 vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." K&D note here,

The good report which the overlooker gave of the modesty and diligence of Ruth could only strengthen Boaz in his purpose, which he had probably already formed from his affection as a relation towards Naomi, to make the acquaintance of her daughter-in-law, and speak kindly to her. With fatherly kindness, therefore, he said to her (vv. 8, 9), "Dost thou hear, my daughter

K&D, Ruth 2:8-9

The Bible Knowledge Commentary notes:

When he told Ruth to continue gleaning in his field, he apparently meant that she should glean there

throughout the several weeks of harvesting (cf. v. 23) barley (March-April) and wheat (June-July). Normally the gleaners would move in after the harvesters had left an area. But Ruth was invited to follow along with the servant girls as they worked in the reaping. Boaz assured Ruth that she would be protected from any remarks or other embarrassing incidents that might have come from the male workers (cf. v. 15). When she got thirsty, she need not be concerned about drawing water. She could drink from that provided for the workers. In these several ways Boaz was providing for Ruth beyond what was required by the Law

BKC, Ruth 2:9

*So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" Boaz knew she was a Moabite girl. One would not expect a Hebrew to show such kindness to a Moabite. But, first of all, she was the ex-wife of an Israelite, she had attached herself to Naomi, and she had returned with Naomi because, as she said, *And your God, my God.* (Page #8). She was not a "typical Moabite girl" (besides, she may have been very good looking!)*

I suppose it seems strange to us for someone to "fall on their face to the ground" but we live in a completely different world with different customs.

As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from a place toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so.

1 Samuel 20:41(NKJV)

Now when Abigail saw David, she hastened to dismount from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant.

1 Samuel 25:23-24 (NKJV)

And when the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she fell on her face to the ground and prostrated herself, and said, "Help, O king!"

2 Samuel 14:4 (NKJV)

Then Joab fell to the ground on his face and bowed himself, and thanked the king. And Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord, O king, in that the king has fulfilled the request of his servant." So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. And the king said, "Let him return to his own house, but do not let him see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king's face.

2 Samuel 14:22 (NKJV)

She asks why Boaz is being so good to her. She is, at that point, ignorant of three things (1) Boaz already knew about her, (2) Boaz was a relative of hers, (3) Boaz was a Hebrew with the LORD God as his god, not a god of the Moabites.

Boaz now lets her know what he knows about her. *And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.* There is a very beautiful illustration here as Boaz recounts

Ruth's leaving Moab. Ruth may well never have met Boaz if his field servant had not welcomed her and showed her kindness. Jesus said,

... "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Luke 9:23 (NKJV)

Ruth had left her father and mother and her land and the hopes to remarry to follow Naomi. Then the servant directed her to the field in which to work where Boaz would find her. It is a picture of what happens every day. Some faithful Christian leads the way to a sinner who leaves that behind to be part of the Bride of Christ. Ruth left only to become, eventually, the bride of Boaz, a picture of our Savior. (Not only that but in the lineage of Jesus Christ.)

*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot **Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth,** Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.*

Matthew 1:1-6 (NKJV)

Rahab and Ruth were the only two women named in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Neither of them was a Hebrew (which may explain why they are mentioned).

"The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge." Boaz tells her that she may take her refuge "under the wings" of the LORD God. The Psalmist also wrote,

*He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler And from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, **And under His wings you shall take refuge;** His truth shall be your shield and buckler.*

Psalms 91:1-4 (NKJV)

The great C.H. Spurgeon wrote:

"The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust."-Ruth 2:12.

THIS was the language of Boaz, a man of substance and of note in Bethlehem, to a poor stranger of whom he had heard that she had left her kindred, and the idols of her nation, that she might become a worshipper of the living and true God. He acted a noble part when he cheered her, and bade her be of good courage, now that she was casting in her lot with Naomi and the chosen nation. Observe that he saluted her with words of tender encouragement; for this is precisely what I want all the elder Christians among you to do to those who are the counterparts of Ruth.

SPURGEON:..Sermon 1851 - Ruth's Reward; Or Cheer For Converts

Then she said, "Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken

kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants."

With regards to her words, the NAC has,

Ruth expresses her wish that his grace would continue. But such a response is odd after v. 10 and even less suited to the following causal clauses. Better still is the interpretation that turns the idiom around and treats its occurrence here as an expression of gratitude, which is exactly what one expects in this context. Modern English rarely uses the biblical idiom "I have found favor with you," preferring "You have been gracious to me." Accordingly, here the imperfect "I am finding favor with you" may be rendered "You are kind to me." Support for this interpretation is found in several other texts where the same idiom serves as an expression of thanks.

NAC, Ruth 2:13

In accord with the NAC above, the NIV translation is: "May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord," she said. "You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant--though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls."

The encounter of Boaz and Ruth opened the way for God to bless in an unexpected manner (2:14-23)

Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back. And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. "Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her." So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied. And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took 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 Boaz." Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives." Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'" And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field." So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

Ruth 2:14-23 (NKJV)

Dr. McGEE stated, "I want to ask again: Is Boaz interested in her? My, I'll tell you, he has fallen in love with this girl, and he'll make every effort now to make her his wife. We'll find that there was a big hurdle in the way."¹³

Well, that may be conjecture on Dr. McGee's part, but Boaz surely showed her the greatest hospitality. Do you remember Abraham?

¹³McGEE, Ruth 2:14

*Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. "Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. **"And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts.** After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."*

Genesis 18:1-5 (NKJV)

Having a meal with someone was a great sign of hospitality. Boaz most likely had a reason for this and, I suspect, Dr. McGee was right. I would certainly think that his reapers knew what was going on. You know, I think people think that sex is a three lettered word that should be avoided where the Bible is concerned. I think Boaz had hormones flowing in him like any other man and she got them stirring. There is nothing at all wrong with that. That is the way God made us. When God presented Eve to Adam, did he say, "What am I supposed to do with this ugly hag you have given me?" No! He said,

*"This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. **And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.***

Genesis 2:23-25 (NKJV)

K&D note regarding the meal,

"Dip thy morsel in the vinegar." Chomez, a sour beverage composed of vinegar (wine vinegar or sour wine) mixed with oil; a very refreshing drink, which is still a favourite beverage in the East

K&D, Ruth 2:14

" So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back. The term "parched grain" doesn't sound very good, but what is a bowl of Wheaties? It was the usual bill-of-fair during the reaping. The text indicates that she did not eat all she received, she kept some to take home - no doubt to Naomi.

And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. K&D points out,

These directions of Boaz went far beyond the bounds of generosity and compassion for the poor; and show that he felt a peculiar interest in Ruth, with whose circumstances he was well acquainted, and who had won his heart by her humility, her faithful attachment to her mother-in-law, and her love to the God of Israel,-a fact important to notice in connection with the further course of the history

K&D, Ruth 2:15

People who glean the field were to stay far back of the reapers but this was different for Ruth. Boaz even went so far as to say, *"Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."* The gleaners would get what the reapers accidentally dropped or dropped because it was not good. But Boaz instructs them to purposely drop some of what they reaped so it would be easier for Ruth to get what she needed. Dr. McGee noted, *"Boaz was a man*

of the Law. Because he knew what it said, he instructed his men not to go back and pick up a sheaf if they happened to drop one”¹⁴

By the end of the day, when it was time to get the grain out of the stalks, Ruth had gleaned an unusually large amount. She *beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley*. Since you do not normally buy cereal by the Ephah, I will tell you that it was about half a bushel (about 4 gallons of it). That would be enough to last for several days. This was a lot to glean in one day!

Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied. As noted before, she had saved part of her lunch to give to Naomi. Naomi also took a great interest in the amount of barley Ruth had gleaned that day.

Naomi asked her three questions which, in effect, were one in the same.

- *“Where have you gleaned today?”*
- *“Where did you work?”*
- *“Blessed be the one who took notice of you.”*

The third is not a direct question but one which would evoke an answer from Ruth. It was obvious to Naomi that someone had taken a special interest in her and she wanted very much to know who it was.

Ruth was obedient and answered *her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, “The man’s name with whom I worked today is Boaz.”* Naomi knew who Boaz was. Her response was, *Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!”* And Naomi said to her, *“This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives.”* JFB write,

Hebrew, “one of our redeemers,” on whom it devolves to protect us, to purchase our lands, and marry you, the widow of his next kinsman. She said, “one of them,” not that there were many in the same close relationship, but that he was a very near kinsman, one other individual only having the precedence

JFB, Ruth 2:20

This “near kinsman” is described below.

Certain obligations were laid on the kinsman. In the case of an untimely death of a husband without a son, the law of levirate marriage becomes operative—that is, the husband’s brother was obligated to raise up a male descendant for his deceased brother and thus perpetuate the deceased’s name and inheritance. The living brother was the dead brother’s goel—his redeemer

HBD, “kinsman”

When you read the Scriptures, you need to pay close attention to them. *Ruth the Moabitess said, “He also said to me, ‘You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’”* And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, *“It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young*

¹⁴McGEE, Ruth 2:15

women, and that people do not meet you in any other field." The text says, "Ruth the Moabitess " Why? We are almost at the end of chapter two. Everyone knows where Ruth was from. When we find a statement like this, we need to ask why? Why are we reminded here? The NKJV is usually quite good but it fails here. What Ruth actually said was, "stay close by my servants." The word does not indicate the sexuality of the servants and, in the next verse, Naomi says to go out with his "young women." Do you remember what Ruth had told Naomi? She said "Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God."¹⁵ This Moabite girl was to become one of the Hebrew workers in the field. She was still a Moabite, that change had not yet come, but she did become a part of Naomi's people and Naomi said that it was well she did.

Now, why did Naomi say it was good for her to be in any other person's field? I am not sure but I really like the way Dr. McGee puts it.

That took [the harvest] about six weeks. For six weeks, every afternoon, you'd see coming into Bethlehem -- not wise men, not yet; not shepherds, not yet; not Joseph and Mary yet -- Boaz and Ruth. Boaz is in love with Ruth. I think he looked like a dying calf in a thunderstorm. And the little town of Bethlehem is gossiping, good gossip, "Our most eligible bachelor has fallen." And I'm sure that Naomi with whom Ruth lived could look out the window and see them coming in every afternoon. She knows something needs to be done about this, because actually Ruth is in a most unique position. Boaz is in love with her, and he wants to redeem her

McGEE, Ruth 2:21

I am not sure what a "dying calf in a thunderstorm" looks like. I shall have to ask Dr. McGee that when I see him up yonder. I also tend to think the term "good gossip" is an oxymoron. No gossip is good. But the fact is that the people would be seeing this and thinking about what Boaz might do. Ruth was to stay in Boaz's field so as to not break this wonderful relationship. You know, many a fine marriage has been ruined because on of the spouses decided to reap in another's field for a time. She is not married but I would guess she was as good as married in Boaz's and Naomi's mind. Perhaps in Ruth's mind as well.



Ruth returns with food

¹⁵Ruth 1:16

CHAPTER THREE

**IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE, GOD TOOK A POTENTIAL SCANDAL AND MADE
IT THE WAY OF GRACE (3:1-18)**

Naomi proposed a daring strategy in her matchmaking effort (3:1-5)

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? "Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. "Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. "Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do." And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."

Ruth 3:1-5 (NKJV)

Then . . . When? "Then" is not a very specific term. The fact that Boaz was still winnowing barley would indicate that this is a continuation of the previous conversation - maybe continued the next day or week, but soon after. Again, I ask, why does it say "Naomi her mother-in-law?" We all know that by now. I believe it is there as a reminder of the following:

"The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

Ruth 1:9 (NKJV)

As a mother-in-law, she had asked the Lord to find for them a husband. Now, with Ruth, she was able to help out with that request. She asks, *"My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?"* "The Message" translation has, *"My dear daughter, isn't it about time I arranged a good home for you so you can have a happy life?"* The Hebrew word מנוח (menoah) is found in four other places in the Old Testament One of these is below.

*The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the jackals,
And the wild goat shall bleat to its companion;
Also the night creature shall rest there,
And find for herself **a place of rest.***

Isaiah 34:14 (NKJV)

I suppose Naomi was like most mothers - wanting a good husband for their daughters. There is nothing wrong with that, I think it is a God-given trait.

Now Naomi gets a bit more specific. *"Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative?"* The Hebrew word here does not, in of itself, mean "relative," but, in this context, it is the proper translation. Now this is a bit curious. Ordinarily, a mother would not seek a near relative to marry her daughter. Here it is of significance to her.

"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. "And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. "But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' "Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' "then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' "And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

Deuteronomy 25:5-10 (NKJV)

This passage describes what is referred to as the *LEVIRATE LAW* From the Latin *levir* meaning "husband's brother." A widespread practice in the ancient Near East assigning family responsibility to the husband's brother in case of disaster. The Mosaic law provided for the continuation of a man's name should he die before fathering a male child. According to Deuteronomy 25:5-10, the deceased's brother was to marry the widow. The first male child born to this union was to carry the name of the dead man." ¹⁶

It is interesting to note that most of the provisions of the Mosaic law are adhered to (or supposed to be) today. "Thou shalt not murder," "Thou shalt not covet," etc. but this law is unique to Israel. It was God's way of ensuring a continuous genealogy in Israel. Since Boaz was a relative, here was a way to arrange a marriage - well, almost.

Naomi gives instructions which seem very strange to us. *Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. "Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. "Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do."* This passage, to the American mind, is a puzzle. It sounds like something out of a second class Hollywood film.

Some commentators suggest that what Ruth did presented an opportunity for immorality. But nothing in the passage supports this. Her mother-in-law had complete confidence in the integrity of the kinsman-redeemer. Boaz could be trusted to act responsibly. And Ruth was recognized by everyone as "a woman of noble character" (v. 11). The uncovering of the feet was a ceremonial act that was completely proper. Probably the scene took place in the dark so that Boaz had the opportunity to reject the proposal without the whole town knowing about it.-

BKC, Ruth 3:7

The instructions, "until he has finished eating and drinking," would give some to understand that he went to bed in a drunken stupor. This is not the case. It was customary to "eat and drink" in the evening. The NAC has,

¹⁶HOLMAN, "Levirate"

In v. 7 the narrator describes what Ruth observed at the threshing floor. First, she watched Boaz eat and drink until he "was in good spirits." The idiom . . . , literally "a heart is good," describes a sense of euphoria and well-being. No doubt Boaz was satisfied with the work that was accomplished this day, but he probably also was feeling the effects of the wine. But unlike Lot in Genesis 19, there is no reason to interpret this as a drunken stupor.

NAC, Ruth 3:7

Before proceeding with this, there is a practical note I should make. Take this passage:

"and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do."

It may be understood in many ways. For people whose occupation has been that of a prostitute, it would have one connotation. For people who have led very chaste lives, it would mean something altogether different. People with dirty minds are far more apt to interpret an act as being bad than those with clean minds.

When Boaz was asleep, she was to "uncover his feet and lie down at his feet." This had a particular meaning in Israel. We find it nowhere else in the Old Testament but consider the what we shall see soon: *"And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman."* When Boaz awoke from his sleep, he did not say, "What on earth are you doing, lying at my feet?" That would be the natural response unless it was understood to mean something, namely a proposal of marriage.

Surprise! We see time and again that women are taken in marriage without them having much to do with it. There are still "arranged marriages" in that part of the world. But, it was not so in all cases. Here is a case where the woman did the proposing. I can not but wonder if Boaz did not expect something like this.

So, Ruth did exactly as she was told by Naomi. Not only did she follow her instructions to the letter, the Lord arranged the evening to conform to Naomi's plan. Some may object to this conclusion so I will say, in any case, He did not prevent it!

The character of both Boaz and Ruth was demonstrated in the encounter at the threshing floor (3:6-13)

So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. And he said, "Who are you?" So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative." Then he said, "Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. "And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. "Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. "Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you--good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning."

Ruth 3:6-13 (NKJV)

So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. Ruth was very obedient. God's people are not always so obedient.

*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. **Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water;** thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, **"Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod;** and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." This was the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was hallowed among them.*

Numbers 20:7-13 (NKJV)

Moses, in a fit of anger, did not follow the Lord's directions exactly. As a result, he was not allowed to enter the land of promise. That was a strong reprimand for Moses! But Ruth did exactly as she was instructed.

And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. The text says his heart was "cheerful." As noted before, the way you take that will depend on your own background. "Cheerful" is יטב (yitab), a very common Hebrew word, "be good, well, glad, pleasing"¹⁷ His "heart was good." It was the way you feel at the end of a day that has gone really well for you. I have not really ascertained how she laid down relative to his feet. Some would say that she crawled under Boaz's covering at his feet and continues to crawl up along side of him. That is what some people would think. But let's go on!

Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. I will not repeat my comments on the phrase "Now it happened." It happened as God (and Naomi) had intended it to happen. Note it does not say she was lying alongside of him, she was down alongside his feet. What startled Boaz is not stated. Perhaps he had a dream inspired by God which cause him to wake. On the other hand, it could be as sometimes happens around our place - the smell of a skunk wafts in! He woke up and there was Ruth at his feet. He knew instantly what that meant.

Who are you?" This was certainly a natural thing to say in such a case (it was dark so he could not see her face). *So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative."* She identified herself and asked him to take her "under his wing." We have seen such an expression before (page #16). William L. Cushing wrote the following about 1906:

Under His wings I am safely abiding,

¹⁷BDB, יטב

*Though the night deepens and tempests are wild,
Still I can trust Him; I know He will keep me,
He has redeemed me, and I am His child.*

-----Refrain-----

*Under His wings, under His wings,
Who from His love can sever?
Under His wings my soul shall abide,
Safely abide forever.*

This describes Ruth's position. It is most unfortunate that most translations do not use "wing." Strangely, "The Message" translation, which is supposed to be a loose translation and not terribly accurate, has "wing" as does the NKJV. It reads, *She said, "I am Ruth, your maiden; take me under your protecting wing. You're my close relative, you know, in the circle of covenant redeemers-you do have the right to marry me."* Taking a woman under a man's wing was to the Israelites as a young man kneeling in front of woman to propose was when I was young. It is an outright proposal of marriage.

Then he said, "Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. Boaz was introduced in Chapter two as a landowner with many servants. I would like to know whether or not he was still handsome. In any case, Ruth had not chosen a man of her own age or a man who was really handsome, she wanted Boaz. Her only reason for this was love.

Alas, there is always one "fly in the ointment!" *And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman.* He says he will do "all that you request." What more was there to respond to than to marry her. He was a near relative, a kinsman-redeemer, and was supposed to marry her. So he gives her the bad news. . *"Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I.* It was not for him to marry her but this other relative who was closer than he.

So, what can be done? There was a way out of this problem. *Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you--good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives!* Her only chance was that this closer relative would not want her. While that might be considered an insult, it was what Ruth would really want - so she could have Boaz. So, we have to wait for tomorrow to see what happens. Fortunately, this is not a "soap opera" where you will have to tune in tomorrow, we can proceed.

The blessing of God began to be given to Ruth and Naomi through Boaz (3:14-18)

So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." Also he said, "Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it." And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley, and laid it on her. Then she went into the city. So when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "Is that you, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her. And she said, "These six ephahs of barley he gave me; for he said to me, 'Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.' " Then she said, "Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day."

So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. She would leave before anyone saw her. Some people would say she was following Paul's advice.

Abstain from every form of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (NKJV)

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (KJV)

The advice, as it is found in the KJV is not what many people think it is. Some will say "you should not do this!" You should not do that!" "Why" Because someone may misinterpret what you are doing and think it is bad. That is not what Paul says, he says to stay away from things which are known to be evil.

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

What may only appear to be bad also falls under this warning. However, "while believers should abstain from actions which will knowingly offend others, it is not always possible to abstain from everything which may appear evil to a narrow and foolish judgment

BKC, 1 thessalonians 5:22

In this case, however, it was good for Ruth to slip away unnoticed lest she be accused of something she had not done. Thus Boaz says to her, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." This is not all he said, in his typical spirit of good, he said, "Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it." And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley, and laid it on her. She took this home to Naomi to provide for her. I am reminded of Jesus as He hung on the cross and said,

Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

John 19:27 (NKJV)

Jesus wanted to make sure his mother was cared for. Boaz wanted to make sure that Ruth's mother was cared for. She did as he asked. *Then she went into the city. So when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "Is that you, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her. And she said, "These six ephahs of barley he gave me; for he said to me, 'Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'* The BKC says at this point concerning the grain for Naomi,

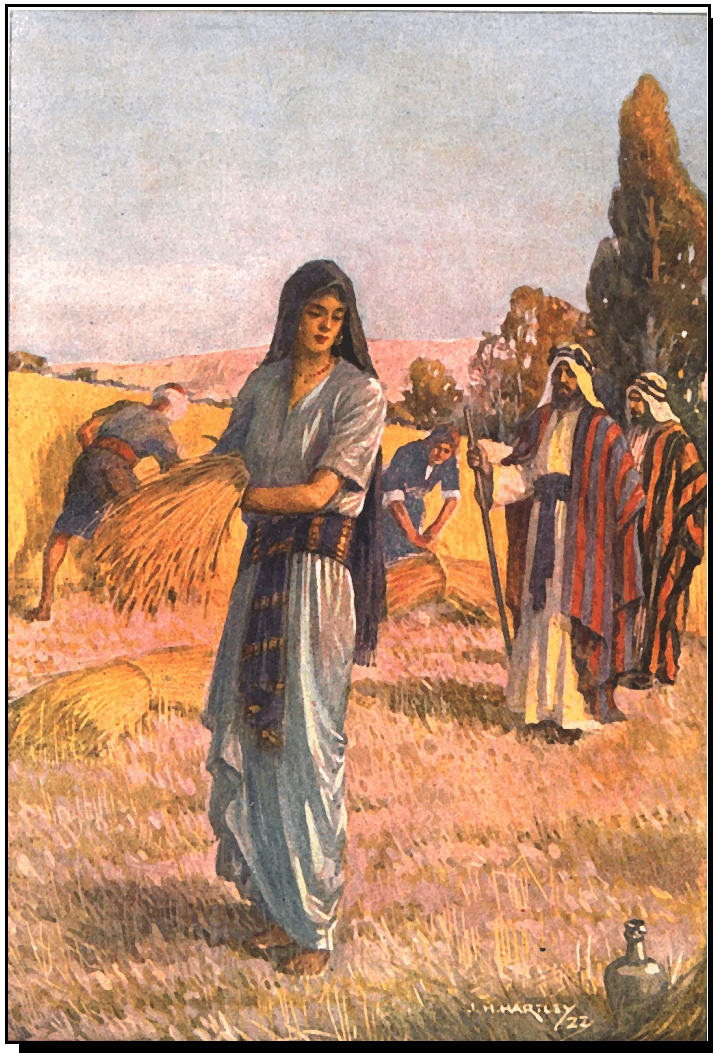
The "measure" was probably the seah (one-third of an ephah or about 10 pounds). Thus six seahs would equal about 60 pounds. Ruth was a strong woman to be able to carry such a heavy load. Probably Boaz placed the burden on her head.

BKC, Ruth 3:15

Women in those days really used their heads (sorry about the pun). Never-the-less, it was a plentiful amount of barley. (It was far too much for people like me who don't like barley).

Naomi understood what all this signified. "Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day." She understood what Boaz

was about to do that day. So Ruth was to stay home and wait to see how things turned out. You can bet that she was very anxious to know how it went. That is one advantage you and I have over her. When we give our hearts to Jesus Christ, we do not have to wait and see if he accepts us. It is instantaneous. We do, however, have to wait before we come before Him face to face when He takes us home.



Ruth gleaning in the field of Boaz

CHAPTER FOUR

**THROUGH BOAZ, THE "KINSMAN REDEEMER," GOD "FILLED" THE
"EMPTINESS" OF NAOMI AND DEMONSTRATED HIS PRESENCE THROUGH
THE BLESSING OF HIS PEOPLE (4:1-22)**

Boaz became "kinsman redeemer" (4:1-6)

Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." So he came 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 close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. "And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.' " And he said, "I will redeem it." Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance." And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

Ruth 4:1-6 (NKJV)

We turn now to what Boaz did that day. *Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold . . .* As I have noted before, I do not care for translations such as "behold" as if something strange had happened. The Lord had arranged for this. The Message translations "before long."

He sat there at the gate of the city. They did not have newspapers or radio or TV (Thank goodness for them) in those days. If you wanted to hear or tell some news, you went to the gate of the city where its inhabitants were continually going in and out. It was not long before, *the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by.* Rather than "close relative" here it would be better to translate גאל (goel) as "redeemer" At this point, Boaz was not Ruth's "redeemer" because this other man, being a closer relative, was her redeemer. Again, this was not a "chance" meeting. Boaz knew this man would come by and God did not disappoint him.

So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." The man responded to Boaz and "turned aside" (סור (sur). He stopped from what he was intending to do in order to converse with Boaz whom he undoubtedly knew. He then ישב (yeshab) "sat down" The word implies settling oneself down for a period of time. He wanted to hear what Boaz had to say.

The news was that *"Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.* Wait a minute, we thought this was to be about Ruth, not a real estate transaction! But let us continue. He informed the man, *"And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.'* This man had the right as a "kinsman-redeemer" to buy the land back for Naomi and Ruth. But, if he did not want the land, then Boaz, being next in line, could do so.

The man jumped at the opportunity. *And he said, "I will redeem it."* He would buy back the land. Well, this ends the book of Ruth. This man bought back the property for Naomi and that's that! Well, not quite. There was a "string attached" to the deal. Boaz had to go to the "bottom line" of the transaction.

"On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance." The deal included not only the land, but the daughter-in-law Ruth as well. If he wanted the land, he had to take Ruth, as a wife, along with it. That was part of the law regarding the "kinsman-redeemer." The BKC says, "But then Boaz explained that when the nearer kinsman redeemed the land, he must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess. Apparently at the death of Elimelech the property had passed to Mahlon so Mahlon's widow Ruth was included in the redemption responsibility. A son, to whom the property would belong, should be raised up to perpetuate the family name."¹⁸

Sometimes a man did not want to do this. He wanted any child and possessions to be his, not the relative. In one case we have the following note. I will give it to you in the "raw" for of The Message.

So Judah told Onan, "Go and sleep with your brother's widow; it's the duty of a brother-in-law to keep your brother's line alive." But Onan knew that the child wouldn't be his, so whenever he slept with his brother's widow he spilled his semen on the ground so he wouldn't produce a child for his brother. God was much offended by what he did and also took his life.

Genesis 38:8-10 (MSG)

Apparently they knew something about birth control way back then. However, it was not necessary to go to these extremes, so extreme that God would take his life. Since there was another who could, and would, serve as the redeemer, there was an easier way out. *The close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."* He gave this great opportunity to Boaz.

Before the assembled witnesses, Boaz fulfilled the custom of levirate marriage and received the blessing of witnesses (4:7-12)

Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel. Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." So he took off his sandal. And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. "Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day." And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. "May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman."

Ruth 4:7-12 (NKJV)

¹⁸BKC, Ruth 4:4

and Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer was the father of Hushah. These were the sons of Hur, the firstborn of **Ephrathah the father of Bethlehem**. And Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.

1 Chronicles 4:4-5 (NKJV)

but the most important is below.

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Micah 5:2 (NKJV)

They had asked a blessing that she would be like the two women who bore the twelve tribes. Their blessing is also in regards to Bethlehem, formerly called Ephrathah, from which would spring the Messiah. Their blessing did not go unheard!

"May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman. We read the first part of this incident back on page #7, where the Lord took a man because he would not fulfill the levirate vow. But the rest of this story continues.

And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also. Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house. . . . And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry." So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Please determine whose these are--the signet and cord, and staff." So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again.

Genesis 38:8-11 & 24-26 (NKJV)

Through trickery, Tamar became pregnant by Judah. The connection here is found in Chronicles.

And **Tamar, his daughter-in-law, bore him Perez and Zerah**. All the sons of Judah were five. The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. The sons of Zerah were Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara--five of them in all. The son of Carmi was Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the accursed thing. The son of Ethan was Azariah. Also the sons of Hezron who were born to him were Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai. Ram begot Amminadab, and Amminadab begot Nahshon, leader of the children of Judah; Nahshon begot Salma, and **Salma begot Boaz**;

1 Chronicles 2:4-11 (NKJV)

So the final connection is that which placed Boaz in the family line of David and, eventually, the

Messiah!

God "filled" the "emptiness" of Naomi through a son born to Ruth and Boaz, a son who was none other than the grandfather of the great King David (4:13-22)

So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel! "And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him." Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him. Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron; Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

Ruth 4:13-22 (NKJV)

This book concludes with the normal conclusion of a Levirate Marriage, the birth of a son. He was named Obed ("serving") In accordance with the blessings of the city people, she did, indeed become blessed. Ruth was one of two women in the Bible that have books named after them (the other being Esther). She is one of two non-Israelite women to be in the family line of David and hence the Messiah (Rahab being the other). I suppose one could end this study with the words, "And they lived happily ever after." We are not told that, it might be assumed.

One might observe a fact here. A Moabite girl with a dead husband and not a lot to hope for, left that condition because, as she said "Your God shall be my God!" God blesses that kind of commitment and, in this case, He surely did!



"Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!
John 4:35 (NKJV)

APPENDICES

THE NARRATIVE SEQUENCES.

From "*Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*"

by Thomas O. Lambdin

Peculiar to Hebrew among the Semitic languages, the narrative sequences, as we shall call them, involve a complementary use of the two verbal conjugations, the perfect and the imperfect. The translation values given for the perfect (§44) and imperfect (§91) are in no way altered by the following discussion as long as the verb in question does not stand in one of the sequences we shall describe.

(a) The Perfect + Imperfect sequence is used mainly for past tense narration and is extremely common throughout the O.T.. The mark of this sequence is a special form of the conjunction, ו (wa) + doubling, joining the verbs in the sequence. Such sequences may continue for dozens of clauses, each of which, if it is a part of the main narrative, begins with the verb in the imperfect with the conjunction prefixed:

. . . ו (wa) XXXX The man arose and sought. . .

. . . ו (wa) XXXX He stood and called. . .

The subject need not be the same in each clause:

ו (wa) XXXX He sat down near the temple and the people called to him and he hearkened unto their voice. . .

The form of the conjunction is illustrated by

ו (wa) XXXXX and he wrote

ו (wa) XXXXX and she wrote,

ו (wa) XXXXX and I wrote

ו (wa) XXXXX and they (m.) wrote

ו (wa) XXXXX and they (f.) etc. wrote

ו (wa) XXXXX and we wrote

All past tense narrative in which each verb is temporally or logically consequent upon the preceding verb employs this sequence. The imperfects so used take on the tense value of the perfect and are said to be converted. The "perfect" value of the form wa + imperfect became so commonplace that it may be employed even without a perfect to begin the sequence:

ו (And) The man wrote the words.

The conjunction used in the narrative sequences is called the waw-conversive or the waw-consecutive, after its function.

Because every Hebrew narrative, then, contains a series of clauses beginning with "and" plus a verb, it is obviously impossible to translate literally and have acceptable English. The student should make generous use of subordinating constructions, such as adverbial clauses and participial modifiers, in his English translation, taking care only to preserve the proper logical or temporal sequence of the Hebrew.

The bottom line in the above discussion is that there are a lot of "ands" in the KJV (and sometimes in the NKJV which should be left untranslated).

SOME NOTES ON HEBREW VERBS

The Hebrew verb has but two principal tenses: Perfect and Imperfect. Other tenses are Imperative (commands), infinitive and participle. None of the verb has any implied “time” associated with them (i.e. past, present, and future). One might expect the Perfect Tense to be used for things that had been “perfected (made complete) and hence past time. Likewise, if something is imperfect because it has not been finished, or not even started, this tense would be used for Present or Future. While this is often the case, it is not always so. It would be too complicated to explain the grammatical functions here. This does explain, however, why in places, particularly in the Psalms, one translation will use past tense, while another uses present tense and yet a third will use future tenses.

The interesting thing about the Hebrew verb is that, by adding or changing a letter or two, the verb can take on a significantly different meaning. This is illustrated in the table below.

	SIMPLE	INTENSIVE	CAUSITIVE
ACTIVE	QAL STEM קטל “he killed”	PIEL STEM קטל “he brutally killed	HIPHIL STEM הקטיל “he made (someone) kill”
PASSIVE	NIPHAL STEM נקטל “he was killed”	PUAL STEM קטל “he was brutally killed”	HOPHAL STEM הקטל “he was made to kill”
REFLEXIVE	NIPHAL STEM נקטל “he killed himself”	HITHPAEL STEM התקטל “he brutally killed himself”	HISHTAPHEL STEM השתקטל “he made himself kill”

Some of the words may look alike in the table because I have no way of adding the accent marks. The important point is that, while the Hebrew language has a rather limited vocabulary, it overcomes this by being able to use a single word (especially the verbs) in a number of different ways.

THE MEANING OF HEBREW NAMES

I suppose all names have a meaning. My name, Wayne, is a variation of wain - a wagon. But I do not make wagons. There was no particular reason for my name to have any significance in this way. This is not true, many of the Hebrew names have significance. Unfortunately, we can not always determine what the name means as many Hebrew words (or names) have a wide range of meaning, depending on the context. Since names are not usually used "in context," it is often hard to give a precise meaning.

In some case, the meaning of a name is easy to find because the text tells us what it means.

And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses (Moshe), saying, "Because I drew ("moshed") him out of the water."

Exodus 2:10 (NKJV)

It is interesting that, although his name in Hebrew is "Moshe," the Jews refer to him by the Greek form of the name (i.e. Moses).

Now, as to the meaning of Hebrew names. Are they really supposed to have some sort of meaning? In this study on Ruth, we were given the name of Naomi's sons, Mahlon and Chilion. These are Mahlon = מַחֲלוֹן (machlon) which means "cease, consume, determine, end, fail"¹⁹ and Chilion = כִּלְיוֹן (kilyon) = "waste away, be exhausted, fail, lit. of fading grass"²⁰ There are other possible meanings but we shall take these. Both have the idea of being feeble or weak. They must have had some sort of weakness because they both had untimely deaths.

Now, why would their names indicate their fate of an early death? Why would parents give children names like this? The reason why there is often some connection between the name and the person is that in a Hebrew family, the child was not "officially named" until his bar Mitzpah (or her bath Mitzpah) at the age of thirteen. By that time it would have been possible to see that these two boys were weak in body. I have always wondered what they called them before this time - "hey kid!"

Also, God changed some peoples names. The case of Jacob is a well known one. *So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."* Genesis 32:27-28 (NKJV)

¹⁹Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

²⁰Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon

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EXPANDED DESCRIPTION OF REFERENCES

Bible Translations

KJV = King James Version

NKJV = New KJV

NASB = New American Standard Bible

NIV = New International Version.

MESSAGE = The Message (From the mysterious Old Testament stories to the straightforward teachings of Jesus and the encouraging early church letters, Eugene Peterson's modern paraphrase unfolds like an exciting novel. It will invigorate your heart, challenge your mind . . . and forever change your life. Attractive and durable, it features gilt-edged pages and a ribbon marker. 2272 pages, genuine leather, NavPress.

Other works

BDB = Brown, Driver & Briggs.: A trio of eminent Old Testament scholars: Francis Brown, D.R. Driver, and Charles Briggs spent over twenty years researching, writing, and preparing The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon. Since it first appeared in the early part of the twentieth century, the BDB Lexicon has been considered the finest and most comprehensive Hebrew lexicon available to the English-speaking student. Based upon the classic work of William Gesenius, the "father of modern Hebrew lexicography," the BDB Lexicon gives not only dictionary definitions for 8764 words, but relates each word to its Old Testament usage and categorizes its nuances of meaning. The Lexicon's exhaustive coverage of Old Testament Hebrew words, as well as its unparalleled usage of cognate languages and the wealth of background sources consulted and quoted, render the BDB Lexicon an invaluable resource for all students of the Bible.

BKC = "Bible Knowledge Commentary": The Bible Knowledge Commentary answers these and other questions about the Scriptures, discussing the Bible verse by verse and often phrase by phrase. The Bible Knowledge Commentary - popular in style and scholarly in content - will deepen your understanding of God's written Word.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary is an easy-to-understand, careful exposition of the Scriptures by the Dallas Theological Seminary Faculty. Based on the New International Version, it is a perfect tool for any pastor, layperson, Bible teacher, and serious Bible student. The beginner will find it easy to understand, while the experienced scholar will find it consistently thorough and reliable.

With The Bible Knowledge Commentary in Bible Explorer, you can simply click on any verse in the Bible to get fresh, clear insights on the Scripture. You can search through this extensive commentary for the occurrence of any word, phrase, or Bible verse. You'll have unlimited access to an invaluable treasure of Bible knowledge from some of the world's foremost Bible scholars.

HBD or HOLMAN = "Holman Bible Dictionary" The Holman Bible Dictionary is clearly everything a Bible dictionary should be—a vast storehouse of easy-to-use information. Definitions far beyond mere explanations, and a wealth of in-depth articles underscore the theological significance of Bible passages.

The product of over 6 years of work by hundreds of people, the Holman Bible Dictionary manages to be readable and easy to use, yet take advantage of the finest modern Bible scholarship without heavy technical language. It includes extensive cross-referencing of

related articles, and quotes from 6 different Bible translations.

JFB = "Jamieson, Fausset and Brown" : This is the one volume edition of one of the most highly regarded and popular commentaries. First published in 1864, it is a testament to its enduring reputation of being trustworthy, conservative, devout, and practical that it has been in print continuously since then. It covers every chapter in the Bible with a marvelous balance of learning and evangelical devotion, and is suitable for laypeople as well as pastors and students.

K&D = "Keil & Delitzsch" = A ten volume commentary on the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)

McGEE = This acclaimed Commentary by Dr. J. Vernon McGee has been heard by millions on his "Thru the Bible" radio program, and has been translated into many languages. Dr. McGee uniquely presents the teachings of the Bible in a simple, scholarly way that is inspired yet practical and eminently understandable. The simplicity of his approach and the scope of his work is unique in this generation. Bible truths come alive through the relaxed sincerity of his comments and anecdotes.

NAC = "New American Commentary" : General Editor: E. RAY CLENDENEN, Associate General Editor, OT: KENNETH A. MATHEWS, Associate General Editor, NT: DAVID S. DOCKERY

SPURGEON : METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE PULPIT, Sermons of Charles Haddon Spurgeon-Spurgeon's Collected Sermons (Met. Tabern. Pul.)

TWOT = "Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament" This extensive work (frequently referred to by the abbreviation TWOT) was written by 46 Old Testament scholars, and contains over 1,400 articles of theologically significant words and 400 definitions of other words. The articles focus on theological meanings, and are brief and non-technical. Each article includes an extensive bibliography. First published in 1980. In Bible Explorer, every TWOT number is cross-referenced to the appropriate Strong's number, making finding a TWOT definition easy and fast.