


# unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

*v92*

*Ruth*

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# Ruth

**1** During the time that judges ruled *Israel*, there was a famine
in that country. A man from the town of Bethlehem in
the region of Judah *in the country of Israel* left there and went
to live for a while in the country of Moab. His wife and his
two sons went with him. 2 The man's name was Elimelech
and his wife's name was Naomi. The names of his two sons
were Mahlon and Kilion. All of them were part of the clan of
Ephrathah, from Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the land
of Moab and stayed there. 3 Then Naomi's husband, Elimelech,
died, and Naomi had only her two sons with her. 4 *Eventually,*
the sons married women from Moab. The name of one woman
was Orpah, and the name of the other woman was Ruth. But
after Naomi and her sons had lived in Moab for about ten
years, 5 Mahlon and Kilion also died. So then Naomi was alone
without her husband or her two sons.

6 *One day* while Naomi was in Moab, she heard someone
say that Yahweh had helped his people *in Israel* and that now
they had plenty of food. So she got ready to return *to Bethlehem*
with her daughters-in-law. 7 She and her two daughters-in-law
left the place where she had been living and they started to
walk along the road back to Judah. 8 Then Naomi said to her
two daughters-in-law, "Each of you should turn around and
go back to live with your mother. I am asking Yahweh to be
as faithful to you as you have been to your dead husbands
and to me. 9 I am asking Yahweh to allow each of you to have
another husband with whom you will have a secure home."
Then she kissed each of them, and they cried aloud. 10 They
each said, "No! We will return with you to your relatives."

11 But Naomi said, "No, my daughters. Return home. It will
not do any good for you to come with me! It is not possible
for me to have more sons who could become your husbands.
12 You should go back, my daughters. It is too late for me to
have another husband. Even if I thought that I could have
another husband, and was married even tonight and had more
sons, 13 you would not wait until they grew up! You could not
remain unmarried until then! No, my daughters, Yahweh has
done very bad things to me, causing me to grieve very much.
But your lives do not need to be as bad as mine."

14 Then Ruth and Orpah cried loudly again. Orpah kissed her
mother-in-law *goodbye and left*, but Ruth stayed with Naomi.
15 Naomi said to her, "Look! Your sister-in-law is going back to
her relatives and to the god that she worshiped *previously*! Go
back with her!" 16 But Ruth replied, "No! Please do not insist
that I abandon you and stop taking care of you! Wherever
you travel, I will travel too. Wherever you live, I will live too.
Your relatives will be my relatives, and I will worship the God
whom you worship. 17 Wherever you die, there I will die, and
they will bury me there. May Yahweh punish me severely if
I leave you even after we die." 18 When Naomi realized that
Ruth had firmly resolved to go with her, Naomi stopped urging
Ruth to return home.

19 So the two women continued walking until they came
to the town of Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem,
many people in the town began talking loudly about them.
Many women of the town exclaimed, "It is hard to believe that
this is Naomi!" 20 Naomi said to them, "You should not call
me Naomi anymore, since it means 'pleasant.' Instead, call me
Mara, because it means 'bitter.' God Almighty has made my
life very bitter. 21 When I left, I had everything I could want,
but Yahweh has brought me back with nothing. Do not call me
Naomi. Yahweh has opposed me. Almighty God has treated
me badly."

22 So that is how Naomi returned home along with her
daughter-in-law Ruth, the woman from Moab. When they
arrived in Bethlehem, it was the season for people there to
begin harvesting their crops of barley.

**2** There was a man *there* who was a relative of Naomi's *dead*
husband, Elimelech. He was rich and important, and a
member of the same clan to which Elimelech belonged. The
man's name was Boaz. 2 Ruth (the woman from Moab) said to
Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the grain that the
harvesters leave behind. I will go behind any harvester who
allows me to do so." Naomi replied, "Go ahead, my daughter."
3 So Ruth went. When she got to the fields, she followed the
harvesters and picked up grain. The part of the field that she
was working in just happened to belong to Boaz, Elimelek's
relative.

4 Just then, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem! He greeted the
harvesters, "May Yahweh be with you!" They replied, "May
Yahweh bless you!"

5 Then Boaz *saw Ruth, and* asked his foreman, "Who is that
young woman related to?" 6 The foreman replied, "She is the
young woman from Moab who accompanied Naomi when
she returned from there. 7 The woman said to me, 'Please let
me pick up the grain that the men who are harvesting leave
behind.' *I allowed her to do so.* She has worked since early this
morning until recently, when she rested for a short time under
the shelter." 8 Then Boaz *walked over to where Ruth was and*
said to Ruth, "Young lady, please listen to me. You do not need
to go to any other field or anywhere else to gather grain. You
should stay right here with my servant girls. 9 Watch where
the men are harvesting and follow along behind my servant
girls. I have told the men *who are harvesting* not to molest you.
Whenever you are thirsty, go and get some water to drink
from the jars that the men have filled."

10 Then she knelt before him *in respect* with her forehead
touching the ground. She exclaimed, "Why are you being so
kind to me? I did not think that you would pay any attention
to me, since I am a foreigner!" 11 Boaz replied, "People have
told me everything that you have done for your mother-in-law
since your husband died. They told me that you left your
parents and your homeland, and that you came here to live
among people whom you did not know previously. 12 I pray
that Yahweh will fully repay you for what you have done.
Yes, may Yahweh, the God of Israel, the one whom you are
trusting to protect you, reward you in full."

13 She replied, "Sir, I hope I will continue to please you.
You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, your
servant, and yet I am not even *worthy to be* one of your servant
girls!"

14 When it was time to eat, Boaz said to Ruth, “Come over
here *and get some food*. Take some of this bread and dip it
in the vinegar and eat it.” So she *came and* sat down with
the harvesters. Then he gave her some roasted grain. She ate
all *the food* that she wanted and had some left over. 15 After
she stood up to go back to work, Boaz ordered his workers,
“Even if she gathers some grain near the bundles of grain *that
you have cut*, do not tell her to stop doing that. 16 Even more
than that, I want you to pull out some stalks of grain from the
bundles and leave them *on the ground* for her to pick up—and
do not scold her.”
17 So Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening. Then
she threshed the barley that she had gathered*, to separate the
kernels from the stalks*. The barley kernels were enough to fill
a large basket. 18 She carried it back to town and showed her
mother-in-law how much she had gathered. Ruth also gave
her mother-in-law the roasted grain that she had left over
after she had eaten all that she had wanted *at lunchtime*. 19 Her
mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you gather all this grain
today? In whose field did you work? I pray that God will bless
the man who was so kind to you.” Then Ruth told her about
the person with whom she had worked. She said, “The name
of the man who owns the field where I worked today is Boaz.”
20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May Yahweh bless him!
Yahweh has continued to act faithfully toward *us* who are still
living, and to *our husbands* who have died.” Then Naomi said,
“That man is a close relative *of Elimelek*. In fact, he is one of
those responsible for taking care of our family.”
21 Then Ruth, the woman from Moab, said, “He also told
me to stay with his workers until they are done bringing in all
his grain from the field.”
22 Naomi replied to her daughter-in-law Ruth, “My daughter,
it will be good for you to go *to his field* with his servant girls,
because if you go to someone else’s field, someone might
assault you.”
23 So Ruth worked alongside of Boaz’s servant girls. She
gathered heads of grain until the workers had finished harvesting
both the barley and the wheat. *During that time,* she continued
to live with Naomi.

**3** One day, Naomi said to Ruth, “My daughter, I want
to arrange for you to have a secure home with a good
husband. 2 Now, you have been working with Boaz’s servant
girls. As you know, he is a close relative of ours. So listen
carefully. Tonight he will be at the place where they thresh
the barley. He will be separating the grain from the chaff.
3 Bathe yourself and put on some perfume. Put on your full
outer cloak. Then go down to the place where they thresh the
grain. But do not let him know that you are there until he has
finished his *evening* meal. 4 When he lies down *to sleep*, pay
attention to where he lies down. Then go *over to him*, uncover
his feet, and lie down *there*. *When he wakes up,* he will be the
one to tell you what to do *next*.”
5 Ruth replied, “I will do everything that you have told me
to do.” 6 So she went down to the place where people thresh
the grain. There she did everything that her mother-in-law
had told her to do.
7 *This is what happened:* When Boaz finished eating and
drinking, he was feeling good. He went over to the far end of
the grain pile, lay down there*, and went to sleep*. Then Ruth
stealthily approached him. She took the covering off his feet
and lay down *there*. 8 In the middle of the night, he woke up
suddenly. He sat up and was amazed to find a woman lying
at his feet! 9 He asked her, “Who are you?” She replied, “I am
your servant, Ruth. Since you are the one responsible for my
dead husband’s family, please make me secure by marrying
me.”
10 Boaz replied, “May Yahweh bless you, my dear! Previously,
you were very faithful to your mother-in-law, but you are acting
even more faithfully now by not chasing after a young man
to marry, whether rich or poor. 11 Now, my dear, I will do
everything that you asked. Do not be afraid, because everyone in
this town knows that you are an honorable woman. 12 However,
while it is true that I am one of Elimelek’s close relatives and,
therefore, could be responsible *for you and Naomi*, there is
another man who is a closer relative than I am. *He is the one
who is actually responsible for you.* 13 You stay here for the rest
of the night. Tomorrow morning I will tell this man about you.
If he says that he will take care of you, fine, he can marry you.
But if he is unwilling to take care of you, I solemnly promise
that, as surely as Yahweh lives, I will marry you and take care
of you myself. So stay here until it is morning.”
14 Then Boaz added, “It would be best if no one knew that a
woman came here.” So she lay at his feet until early morning
and got up *to leave* before *it was light enough that* people would
be able to recognize her. 15 Then Boaz said to her, “Bring your
shawl over here and hold it out.” When she did that, he poured
a generous amount of barley into it and put it on her back.
Then he went into town.
16 When Ruth arrived home, her mother-in-law asked her,
“How did things turn out for you, my daughter?” Then Ruth
told her all that Boaz had said and done for her. 17 She also said
to Naomi, “He gave me all this barley, saying, ‘I do not want
you to return to your mother-in-law with nothing.’” 18 Then
Naomi said, “My daughter, just wait here until we see what
happens. That man will work hard on this matter until he has
resolved it today.”

**4** Meanwhile, Boaz went up to *the place inside* the town gate
*where people conducted their official business*. He sat down
there. Just as he had hoped, the man responsible for Naomi’s
family came along, the man whom Boaz had mentioned earlier.
Boaz called out to him by name and said, “Come over here and
sit down.” So the man came over and sat down. 2 Boaz then
gathered ten of the older, well-respected men from the town
and said *to them*, “Please sit here *so you can witness our business*.”
So they sat down. 3 Then Boaz said to the man responsible for
Naomi’s family, “The part of the field that belonged to our
relative Elimelek is for sale. Naomi, who recently returned
from Moab, is selling it. 4 I thought that I should tell you *about
it* and suggest that you buy *the field* while the people who
are sitting here are listening, including these leaders of our
people. If you want to buy it back into the family, then do
so. But if you do not want to buy it back, then let me know,
because you are the closest relative to Elimelek, and I am
next after you.” The man replied, “No, I will buy it!” 5 Then
Boaz told him, “When you buy the land from Naomi, you will
also need to marry Ruth, our deceased relative’s widow from
Moab, in order that she may have a son who will inherit the
property and who will continue Elimelek’s family line.” 6 Then

the nearer relative said, “Then I cannot buy it back myself. If
I did that, I would ruin my own son’s inheritance. You may
be responsible for the land and the woman instead of me. I
cannot do it.”
7 (At that time in Israel, people had a different way of
redeeming *land* or exchanging *goods between them*. In order
to make these matters legally binding, one man would take
off one of his sandals and give it to the other man. That was
the way people in Israel made final what they had agreed to
do.) 8 So after the relative said to Boaz, “You buy the field
yourself,” he took off one of his sandals *and gave it to Boaz*.
9 Then Boaz said to the respected men and to all the other
people who were there, “Today you have all seen that I have
bought from Naomi all the property that belonged to Elimelek,
Kilion, and Mahlon. 10 I am also taking Ruth, Mahlon’s widow
from Moab, to be my wife. This is in order that she may
give birth to a son. Everyone will consider this son to be a
descendant of Elimelek. This son will inherit the property and
carry on Elimelek’s family name among his relatives and here
in his hometown. Today you have seen and heard these things
and can speak of them to anyone who asks about them.”
11 All the respected men, and the others who were sitting
at the town gate, agreed, and they said, “Yes, we have seen
and heard. We pray that Yahweh will allow this woman, who
will be coming into your home, to be like Rachel and Leah,
the two who bore our ancestors and started our people, Israel.
May you become great in the clan of Ephrathah and famous
here in Bethlehem! 12 We pray that your family will be like
the family of your ancestor Perez, son of Judah and Tamar,
because of the many descendants that Yahweh will give to you
and this young woman.”
13 So Boaz married Ruth and had sexual relations with her.
Yahweh enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth
to a son. 14 The women of Bethlehem said to Naomi, “Praise
Yahweh for giving you a man to preserve your family today.
We pray to Yahweh that people throughout Israel will greatly
respect him. 15 Your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who
has been better to you than if you had seven sons, has given
birth to him. Therefore, he will make you feel young again,
and he will take care of you when you become old.”
16 Then Naomi picked up the baby and held him closely
and became a second mother to him. 17 The women who were
living nearby said, “It is as though Naomi now has a son!”
They named him Obed. Later, Obed became the father of Jesse,
who became the father of *King* David. 18 Here is a list of the
descendants of Perez: Perez’s son was Hezron. 19 Hezron’s son
was Ram. Ram’s son was Amminadab. 20 Amminadab’s son
was Nahshon. Nahshon’s son was Salmon. 21 Salmon’s son was
Boaz. Boaz’s son was Obed. 22 Obed’s son was Jesse. Jesse’s
son was *King* David.