

Please know that God is well pleased that you care enough to study His Letter To Us, the Holy Bible.

These messages are taught for those who have their Spiritual eyes and ears open. However if yours are not open yet, they will be before finishing these Lessons. So please sharpen up, and with full attention study these Lessons.

Today we begin a study of David, which means in Hebrew, "Beloved." We will start with His Great Grandmother Ruth. Now in Biblical Hebrew there was no such word as Grandmother, Grand-father etc. Preceding generations were always referred to as "Fathers."

Now the genealogy of David, as stated in the Bible, is as follows:

A. M. 2236 Judah,
Pharez,
Ezron, called also Hezron,
Aram, called also Ram,
Amminadab,
Nahshon,
Salmon, who married Rahab,
Boaz, who married Ruth,
Obed, who begat Jesse,

A. M. 2919 David born

This chronology is from the time of Judah until David, a time period of six hundred and seventy years.

We will now begin with:

Ruth, Chapter 1

In the time of the judges Elimelech emigrated from Bethlehem in Judah into the land of Moab, along with his wife Naomi, and his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, because of a famine in the land (vv. 1, 2). There Elimelech died; and his two sons married Moabitish women, named Orpah and Ruth. But in the course of ten years they also died, so that Naomi and her two daughters-in-law were left by themselves (vv. 3-5). When Naomi heard that the Lord had once more blessed the land of Israel with bread, she set out with Orpah and Ruth to return home. But on the way she enticed them to turn back and remain with their relations in their own land; and Orpah did so (vv. 6-14). But Ruth

declared that she would not leave her mother-in-law, and went with her to Bethlehem (vv. 15-22).

1:1 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 sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

[When the judges ruled] We know not under what judge this happened; some say under Ehud, others under Shamgar.

[There was a famine] Probably caused by the destruction caused by the Philistines, Ammonites, etc., carrying off the grain as soon as it was ripe, or destroying it on the field.

The Targum* says: "God has decreed ten grievous famines to take place in the world, to punish the inhabitants of the earth, before the coming of Messiah the king. The first in the days of Adam; the second in the days of Lamech; the third in the days of Abraham; the fourth in the days of Isaac; the fifth in the days of Jacob; the sixth in the days of Boaz, who is called Abstan, (Ibzan,) the just, of Bethlehem-judah; the seventh in the days of David, king of Israel; the eighth in the days of Elijah the prophet; the ninth in the days of Elisha, in Samaria; the tenth is yet to come and it is not a famine of bread or of water, but of hearing the word of prophecy from the mouth of the Lord; and even now this famine is grievous in the World today."

2 And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem Judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

[Elimelech] Meaning: That is, God is my king.

[Naomi] Beautiful or amiable.

[Mahlon] Infirmary.

[Chilion] Finished, completed.

Ephrathites. The ancient name of Beth-lehem was Ephrath (Genesis 35:19; 47:7), which was continued after the occupation of the land by the Hebrews, even down to the time of the prophet Micah (Micah 5:2).

3 And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons

Elimalech - Means 'My God is king.'

Beth-lehem-judah - so called to distinguish it from a town of the same name in Zebulun. The family, compelled to emigrate to Moab through pressure of a famine, settled for several years in that country; and after the death of their father, the two sons married Moabite women. This was a violation of the Mosaic law (Deuteronomy 7:3; 23:3; Ezra 9:2; Nehemiah 13:23); and Jewish writers say that the early deaths of both the young men were divine judgments inflicted on them for those unlawful connections.

[Elimelech Naomi's husband died] Probably a short time after his arrival in Moab.

4 And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

[And Mahlon and Chilion died] The Targum* adds, And because they transgressed the decree of the Word of the Lord, and joined affinity with strange people, therefore their days were cut off. It is very likely that there is more here than conjecture.

6 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 how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them

bread.

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law. The aged widow, longing to enjoy the privileges of Israel, resolved to return to her native land as soon as she was assured that the famine had ceased, and made the necessary arrangements with her daughters-in-law.

Ephrathites. The ancient name of Beth-lehem was Ephrath (Genesis 35:19; 47:7), which was continued after the occupation of the land by the Hebrews, even down to the time of the prophet Micah (Micah 5:2).

[She had heard] By the mouth of an angel, says the Targum.*

[The Lord had visited his people] "Because of the righteousness of Ibzán the judge, and because of the supplications of pious Boaz."- Targum.*

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

Go, return each to her mother's house. In Eastern countries women occupy apartments separate from those of men, and daughters are most frequently in those of their mother.

With the dead - i.e., with my sons, your husbands, while they lived.

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

The Lord grant that you may find rest - enjoy a life of tranquility undisturbed by the cares, incumbrances, and vexatious troubles to

which a state of widowhood is peculiarly exposed.

Then she kissed them - the Oriental manner when friends are parting.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

Are there yet any more sons ... This alludes to the ancient custom (Genesis 38:26), afterward expressly sanctioned by the law of Moses (Deuteronomy 25:5), which required a younger son to marry the widow of his deceased brother.

12 Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

Turn again, my daughters, go your way. That Naomi should dissuade her daughters-in-law so strongly from accompanying her to the land of Israel may appear strange. But it was the wisest and most prudent course for her to adopt: First, because they might be influenced by hopes which could not be realized; Second, because they might be led, under temporary excitement, to take a step they might afterward regret; and third, because the sincerity and strength of their conversion to the true religion, which she had taught them, would be thoroughly tested.

13 Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

The hand of the Lord is gone out against me - i.e., I am not only not in a condition to provide you with other husbands, but so reduced in circumstances that I cannot think of your being subjected to privations

with me. The arguments of Naomi prevailed with Orpah, who returned to her people and her ['^alohiym], gods. But Ruth was clinging to her, and said, 'Thy God shall be my God.' These expressions of Ruth, are as much plural as that of Naomi in the preceding verse; and yet our translators have very properly rendered them in the singular, "God." The language indicates the most devoted affection; and even in the pages of Sterne, that great master of pathos, there is nothing which so calls forth the sensibilities of the reader as the simple effusion he has borrowed from Scripture-of Ruth to her mother-in-law (Chalmers). The name Ruth was a Moabite name Hebraicized; or perhaps, as some suppose, that Moabites may, in consequence of their descent from Lot, have spoken a Hebrew dialect.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

[And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law] The Septuagint** adds, Kai epestrepsen eis ton laon autes, And returned to her own people. The Vulgate,*** Syriac, and Arabic, are the same.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

[Gone back to her people, and to her gods] They were probably both idolaters; their having been proselytes is an unfounded conjecture. Chemosh was the grand idol of the Moabites. The conversion of Ruth probably commenced at this time.

16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

[And Ruth said] A more perfect surrender was never made of friendly feelings to a friend: I will not leave thee-I will follow thee: I will lodge where you lodge-take the same fare with which you meet; your people shall be my people-I most cheerfully abandon my own country, and determine to end my days in yours. I will also henceforth have no

god but thy God, and be joined with thee in worship, as I am in affection and consanguinity. I will cleave unto thee even unto death; die where thou die; and be buried, it possible, in the same grave. This was a most extraordinary attachment, and evidently without any secular motive.

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

[The Lord do so to me, and more] May he inflict any of those punishments on me, and any worse punishment, if I part from you till death. And it appears that she was true to her engagement; for Naomi was nourished in the house of Boaz in her old age and became the fosterer and nurse of their son Obed, Ruth 4:15-16.

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

[All the city was moved about them] It appears that Naomi was not only well known, but highly respected also at Beth-lehem; a proof that Elimelech was of high consideration in that place.

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

[Call me not Naomi] That is, beautiful or pleasant.

[Call me Mara] That is, bitter; one whose life is grievous to her.

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

[I went out full] Having a husband and two sons.

[The Lord hath brought me home again empty] Having lost all three by death. It is also likely that Elimelech took considerable property with him into the land of Moab; for as he fled from the face of the famine, he would naturally take his property with him; and on this Naomi subsisted till her return to Bethlehem, which she might not have thought of till all was spent.

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

[In the beginning of barley harvest.] This was in the beginning of spring, for the barley harvest began immediately after the passover, and that feast was held on the 15 th of the month Nisan, which corresponds nearly with our March.

The Targum* says, "They came to Beth-lehem on that day in which the children of Israel began to mow the sheaf of barley which was to be waved before the Lord." This circumstance is the more distinctly marked, because of Ruth's gleaning, mentioned in the succeeding chapter.

Footnotes:

TARGUM*

A Book of Translations of parts of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew language into Aramaic. The word Targum is related to a Hebrew term meaning "translation." These translations were sometimes literal and exact, but often were paraphrased. Many translators took the opportunity to comment upon the Hebrew texts. In a sense, some Targumim (plural) are a form of commentary on the Bible. Now by the time of Christ, Aramaic was the common language in Israel. During a synagogue service, one verse of the Hebrew text was read, followed by a translation and explanation in Aramaic. By the second or third century A.D., the common practice was to read only the Aramaic translation.

The best-known Targum was probably the Targum Onkelos which translated the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Old Testament, quite literally. The Targumim are helpful today in understanding ancient Jewish interpretations of the Old Testament. Because they are paraphrased, they cannot be used to identify original Hebrew texts.

SEPTUAGINT**

This version is commonly called the SEPTUAGINT, from septuaginta, the Latin word for 70 (LXX). This name was selected because of a tradition that the Pentateuch was translated into Greek by about 70 elders of Israel who were brought to Alexandria specially for that purpose.

When Christianity penetrated the world of the Greek-speaking Jews, and then the Gentiles, the Septuagint was the Bible used for preaching the gospel. Most of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament are taken from this Greek Bible. In fact, the Christians adopted the Septuagint so wholeheartedly that the Jewish people lost interest in it. They produced other Greek versions that did not lend themselves so easily to Christian interpretation.

VULGATE,***

The latin translation of the Holy Bible by Jerome about A. D. 400

Ruth, Chapter 2

2:1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

[A mighty man of wealth] We have already seen that some suppose Boaz to have been one of the judges of Israel; he was no doubt a man of considerable property.

2 And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

The word "glean" comes from the French glaner, to gather ears or kernels of grain. This was formerly a general custom in England and Ireland; the poor went into the fields and collected the straggling ears of grain after the reapers; and it was long supposed that this was their right.

Ruth ... said ... Let me now go to the field, and glean. The right of gleaning was conferred by a positive law on the widow, the poor, and the stranger (see Lev 19:9-10 Deut 24:21). But liberty to glean behind the reapers was not a right that could be claimed: it was a privilege granted or refused according to the good-will or favor of the owner.

3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

A part of the field belonging to Boaz. Fields in Palestine being unenclosed, the phrase signifies that portion of the open ground which lay within the landmarks of Boaz.

4 And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

The Lord be with you. This pious salutation between the master and his laborers strongly indicates the state of religious feeling among the rural population of Israel at that time, as well as the artless, happy, and unsuspecting simplicity which characterized the manners of the people. The same patriarchal style of speaking is still preserved in the East today.

5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

His servant that was set over the reapers - an overseer, whose special duty was to superintend the operations in the field, to supply provisions to the reapers, and pay them for their labor in the evening.

6 And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

7 And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

After the reapers among the sheaves. Various modes of reaping are practiced in the East. Where the crop is thin and short, it is plucked up by the roots. In other states it is cut with the sickle. Whether reaped in the one way or the other, the grain is cast into sheaves loosely thrown together, to be subjected to the process of threshing, which takes place for the most part immediately after the reaping. Field labors were begun early in the morning, before the day became oppressively hot.

She tarried a little in the house - i.e., the field tent, erected for the occasional rest and refreshment of the laborers.

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearst thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

Abide here fast by my maidens. The reaping was performed by women, while the assortment of sheaves was the duty of men-servants. The same division of harvest labor obtains in Syria still. Boaz not only granted to Ruth the full privilege of gleaming after his reapers, but provided for her personal comforts.

9 Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

Go unto the vessels. Gleaners were sometimes allowed, by kind and charitable masters, to partake of the refreshments provided for the reapers. The vessels alluded to were skin bottles filled with water; and the bread was soaked in vinegar (Ruth 2:14), a kind of poor, weak wine, sometimes mingled with a little olive oil, very cooling, as would be required in harvest-time. This grateful refection is still used in the harvest field (see Robinsons' 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 394).

10 Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

[Then she fell on her face] Prostrated herself, as was the custom in the East when inferiors approached those of superior rank. The Targum adds to the conversation between Ruth and Boaz: "How, says she, have I obtained grace in thy sight, that thou should acknowledge me who am a stranger and one of the daughters of Moab, of whom it is said, The unclean shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord? And Boaz, answered, It has been certainly told me by the word of the wise, that what the Lord has decreed, he had not decreed concerning the women but the men. And it has been surely said to me by prophecy, that kings and prophets shall proceed from thee because of the good which thou hast done," etc.

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shown me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art

come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

12 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.

[The Lord recompense thy work] The dutiful respect which you have paid to your husband, and your tender and affectionate attachment to your aged mother-in-law.

13 Then she said, Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

[Not like unto one of thine handmaidens..] I am as unworthy of your kindness as one of your own maid-servants, and yet you show me distinguished kindness.

14 And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

He reached her parched grain - some of the new grain, roasted on the spot, and fit for use after being rubbed in the hands-a favorite viand* in the East. He gave her so much, that after satisfying her own needs she had some (Ruth 2:18) left for her mother-in-law.

15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not:

[Let her glean even among the sheaves] This was a privilege; for no person should glean till the sheaves were all bound, and the shocks set up.

16 And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.

[Let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her.] The gleaners in the East glean with much success; because a great quantity of grain is scattered in the reaping, as well as in their manner of carrying it.

One may judge, then, of the large quantity which Ruth would gather, in consequence of the liberal orders given to the servants. These extraordinary marks of favor were not only given from a kindly disposition, but from regard to her good character and devoted attachment to her venerable relative. Besides, the law of Moses directed very liberal treatment of the poor at the seasons of harvest and ingathering of the crops; and Boaz, who was a pious man, had fully imbibed the spirit of the law.

17 So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

And beat out that she had gleaned. When the quantity of grain was small, it was beat out by means of a stick. This process is frequently seen at the present day on the same fields by women who beat out with a stick handfuls of the grain which they have glosed (Robinsons' 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 385).

An ephah - supposed to contain about a bushel.

18 And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

[And gave to her that she had reserved] As Ruth had received a distinct portion at dinner-time, of which she had more than she could eat, Ruth 2:14; it appears she brought the rest home to her mother-in-law, as is here related.

19 And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz.

20 And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

The man is ... one of our next kinsmen - Hebrew, 'one of our redeemers,' on whom it devolves to protect us, to purchase our lands, and marry you, the relict 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.

21 And Ruth the Moabite said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

All my harvest - both barley and wheat harvests. The latter was at the end of May or the beginning of June.

22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.

It is good ... that thou go out with his maidens - a prudent recommendation to Ruth to accept the generous invitation of Boaz, lest, if she were seen straying into other fields, she might not only run the risk of rude treatment, but displease him by seeming indifferent to his kind liberality. Moreover, the observant mind of the old matron had already discerned, in all Boaz' attentions to Ruth, the germs of a stronger affection, which she wished to increase.

23 So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.

She kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest. The reaping of barley commenced the harvest (2 Samuel 21:9), and that of wheat followed almost without any interval.

Now Ruth seems to have been a woman of a very amiable mind: she was modest, and she was industrious, and most probably an attractive woman; and all these things served to attract the attention of Boaz, and to engage his affection. Her attachment also to her mother-in-law could not fail to secure his esteem. All these things worked together in the course of Providence, to bring about a matrimonial connection, which in its issue was intimately connected with the salvation of a lost world; for, from this very line, Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, sprang; and Ruth showed herself as worthy to be one of His progenitors as the Virgin Mary was to be His mother.

Ruth, Chapter 3

3:1 Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

2 And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

[He winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor.] The winnowing process is performed by throwing up the grain, after being trodden down, against the wind with a shovel. The threshing-floor, which was commonly on the harvest-field, was carefully leveled with a large cylindrical roller, and consolidated with chalk, that weeds might not spring up, and that it might not chop with drought. The farmer usually remained all night in harvest-time on the threshing-floor, not only for the protection of his valuable grain, but for the winnowing. That operation was performed in the evening, to catch the breezes which blow after the close of a hot day, and which continue for the most part of the night. This duty at so important a season the master undertakes himself: and accordingly of ancient manners, Boaz, a person of considerable wealth and high rank, laid himself down to sleep on the barn floor, at the end of the heap of barley that he had been winnowing.

3 Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

[Wash thyself, therefore] She made Ruth put on her best dress, that Boaz might, in the course of the day, be the more attracted by her person, and be the better disposed to receive her as Naomi wished.

4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

[Go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down.] Singular as these directions may appear to us, there was no impropriety in them, according to the simplicity of rural manners in Beth-Lethem. In ordinary circumstances these would have seemed improper to the world; but in the case of Ruth, it was a method doubtless conformable to prevailing usage, of reminding Boaz of the duty which devolved on him as the kinsman of her deceased husband. Boaz probably slept upon a mat or skin; Ruth lay crosswise at his feet—a position in which Eastern servants frequently sleep in the same chamber or tent with their master; and if they want a covering, custom allows them that benefit from part of the covering on their master's bed. Resting, as the Orientals do at night, in the same clothes they wear during the day, there was no indelicacy in a stranger, or even a woman, putting the extremity of this cover over her.

5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

[When Boaz had eaten and drunk] The Targum* adds, "He blessed the name of the Lord, who had heard his prayer, and removed famine from the land of Israel."

[Went to lie down] As the threshing-floors of the Eastern nations are in general in the open air, it is very likely that the owner or some confidential person continued in the fields till the grain was secured, having a tent in the place where the grain was threshed and winnowed. Boaz seems to have acted thus.

8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

[The man was afraid, and turned himself] The verb yilaapeet, which we

render he turned himself, has puzzled even the Targumist*, who translates the clause thus: "The man trembled, and his flesh became like a (boiled) turnip through fear." It is fully evident Boaz had no intimation of the present proceedings. To this verse the Targumist* adds much; he says, "Boaz subdued his concupiscence, and acted toward her as Joseph did to the Egyptian wife of his master, and as Pelatiel, the son of Laish the pious, did to Michal, the daughter of Saul, the wife of David, who put a sword between Michal and himself, because he would not approach her."

9 And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.

[Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; because thou art a near kinsman.] She had already drawn part of the mantle over her; and she asked him now to do it, that the act might become his own. To spread a skirt over one is, in the East, a symbolical action denoting protection. To this day in many parts of the East to say of any one that he put his skirt over a woman is synonymous with saying that he married her; and at all the marriages of the modern Jews and Hindus one part of the ceremony is for the bridegroom to put a silken or cotton cloak around his bride (see Roberts' 'Oriental Customs,' on this passage, where it is shown that the same practice is used among the Hindus).

10 And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

[Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter]... Continued widowhood was regarded by the Jews as an indication of more than ordinary piety.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.

12 And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

[There is a kinsman nearer than I.] It is very likely that Naomi was not acquainted with this circumstance. Some have supposed that there was a brother of Elimelech remaining, who was nearer than Boaz, who is supposed to have been only a nephew; the former, therefore, must have a prior right to marry Naomi in ancient Hebrew Tradition, because he was a closer relative of her..

13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD lived: lie down until the morning.

[As the Lord lived] Thus he bound himself, by an oath to take her to wife if the other should refuse.

14 And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15 Also he said, Bring the vial that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.

[Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. Eastern veils are large sheets-those of ladies being of red silk; but the poorer or common class of women wear them of blue, or blue and white, striped linen or cotton. They are wrapped round the head, and fall down over the shoulders, enveloping the whole person (see Rogers' 'Domestic Life in Palestine,' p. 46; Graham's Jordan and Rhine, p. 195).

16 And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

Six measures of barley - Hebrew, six seahs; a seah contained about two gallons and a half, six of which must have been rather a heavy load for a woman.

18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he has finished the thing this day.

[Until thou know how the matter will fall] That is, whether he who is nearer of kin than Boaz will take thee to wife; do not return again till this thing is determined. Boaz lost no time to bring this to an issue, as we shall see in the following chapter.

Footnote:

(TARGUM*)

A Book of Translations of parts of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew language into Aramaic. The word Targum is related to a Hebrew term meaning "translation." These translations were sometimes literal and exact, but often were paraphrased. Many translators took the opportunity to comment upon the Hebrew texts. In a sense, some Targumim (plural) are a form of commentary on the Bible.

Now by the time of Christ, Aramaic was the common language in Israel. During a synagogue service, one verse of the Hebrew text was read, followed by a translation and explanation in Aramaic. By the second or third century A.D., the common practice was to read only the Aramaic translation.

The best-known Targum was probably the Targum Onkelos which translated the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Old Testament, quite literally. The Targumim are helpful today in understanding ancient Jewish interpretations of the Old Testament. Because they are paraphrased, they cannot be used to identify original Hebrew texts.

4:1 Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

[He took ten men] Probably it required this number to constitute a court. How simple and how rational was this proceeding!

1. The man who had a law suit went to the city gates.
2. Here he stopped till the person with whom he had the suit came to the gate on his way to his work.
3. He called him by name, and he stopped and sat down.
4. Then ten elders were called, and they came and sat down.
5. When all this was done, the appellant preferred his suit.
6. Then the appellee returned his answer.
7. When the elders heard the case and the response of the appellee, they pronounced judgment, which judgment was always according to the custom of the place.
8. When this was done, the people who happened to be present witnessed the issue. And thus the business was settled without lawyers or legal casuistry.

A question of this kind, in one of our courts of justice, in these enlightened times, would require many days, previous preparation of the attorney, and several hours, arguing between counselor Botherum and counselor Borum, till even an enlightened and conscientious judge would find it extremely difficult to decide whether Naomi might sell her own land, and whether Boaz or Peloni might buy it! O, glorious uncertainty of modern law!

3 And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's:

[Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, sells a parcel of land] She was reduced to want; the immediate inheritors

were extinct; and it was now open for the next heir to purchase the land, and thus preserve the inheritance in the family according to the custom of Israel.

4 And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.

[I thought to advertise thee] Both Dr. Kennicott and Father Houbigant have noticed several corruptions in the pronouns of this and the following verses; and their criticisms have been confirmed by a great number of MSS. since collated. The text corrected reads thus: "And I said I will reveal this to thy ear, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, tell me, that I may know; for there is none to redeem it but thou, and I who am next to thee. And he said, I will redeem it. And Boaz said, In the day that you redeem the land from the hand of Naomi, thou wilt also acquire Ruth, the wife of the dead, that you may raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance." Ruth 4:4-5.-See Kennicott's Dissertations, Vol. I, p. 449; Houbigant in loco; and the *Variae Lectiones* of Kennicott and De Rossi. This is Boaz's statement of the case before the kinsman, and before the people and the elders.

[I will redeem it.] I will pay down the money which it is worth. He knew not of the following condition.

5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

[Thou must buy it also of Ruth] More properly, You will also acquire Ruth. You can not get the land without taking the wife of the deceased; and then the children which you may have shall be reputed the children of Mahlon, your deceased kinsman.

6 And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.

[I cannot redeem it for myself] The Targum* gives the proper sense of this passage: "And the kinsman said, On this ground I cannot redeem it, because I have a wife already; and I have no desire to take another, lest there should be contention in my house, and I should become a corrupter of my inheritance. Do thou redeem it, for thou hast no wife; for I cannot redeem it." This needs no comment. But still the gloss of the Targum has no foundation in the law of Moses. See the law, Deuteronomy 25:6-9.

7 Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel.

[A man plucked off his shoe] The law of such a case is given at large in Deuteronomy 25:5-9. It was simply this: If a brother, who had married a wife, died without children, the eldest brother was to take the widow, and raise up a family to the brother deceased; and he had a right to redeem the inheritance, if it had been alienated. But if the person who had the right of redemption would not take the woman, she was to pull off his shoe and spit in his face; and he was ever after considered as a disgraced man. In the present case the shoe only is taken off, probably because the circumstances of the man were such as to render it improper for him to redeem the ground and take Ruth to his wife; and because of this reasonable excuse, the contemptuous part of the ceremony is omitted.

8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

All that was Chilion's and Mahion's, of the hand of Naomi. Although the widow of Chilion was still living, no regard was paid to her in the disposal of her husband's property. From her remaining in Moab she was considered to have either been married again, or to have renounced all right to an inheritance with the family of Elimelech.

10 Moreover Ruth the Moabites, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

Ruth the Moabites ... have I purchased to be my wife. This connection Boaz not only might form, since Ruth had embraced the true religion, but he was under a legal necessity of forming it.

11 And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephrath, and be famous in Bethlehem:

[We are witnesses.] It is not very likely that any writing was drawn up. There was an appeal made to the people then present, whether they had seen and understood the transaction; who answered, We have witnessed it. If any minutes of court were kept, then the transaction was entered probably in some such words as these: "On-day of-, Boaz bought the land of Elimelech from Naomi his widow, and took Ruth, her daughter-in-law, to wife;- , who had the nearest right, refusing to buy the land on the conditions then proposed."

12 And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

[Like the house of Pharez] This was very appropriate; for from Pharez, the son of Judah, by Tamar, came the family of the Beth-lehemites and that of Elimelech.

13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

[So Boaz took Ruth] The law of Moses had prohibited the Moabites, even to the tenth generation, from entering into the congregation of the Lord: but this law, the Jews think, did not extend to women; and even if it had, Ruth's might be considered an exempt case, as she had been already incorporated into the family by marriage; and left her own country, people, and gods, to become a new convert to the true God in the land of Israel.

14 And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourished of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loved thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

[Better to thee than seven sons] If Naomi had had even a numerous family of sons, it is most likely that they would have been scattered to different quarters from her, and settled in life; whereas Ruth cleaved to her, and it was by her affectionate services that Naomi was preserved alive.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

[Naomi took the child] This might do for Naomi, but it was bad for the child. A child, unless remarkably healthy and robust, will suffer considerably by being nursed by an old woman, especially if the child sleep with her. The aged gain refreshment and energy by sleeping with the young; and from the same means the young derive premature decrepitude. The vigor which is absorbed by the former is lost by the latter. It is a foolish and destructive custom to permit young children, which is a common case, to sleep with aged aunts and old grandmothers. Bacon's grand secret of the cure of old age, couched in

so many obscure and enigmatical terms, is simply this: Let young persons sleep constantly with those who are aged and infirm. And it was on this principle that the physicians of David recommended a young healthy girl to sleep with David in his old age. They well knew that the aged infirm body of the king would absorb a considerable portion of healthy energy from the young woman.

17 And the women her neighbours gave it 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.

[The neighbors gave it a name] That is, they recommended a name suitable to the circumstances of the case; and the parents and grandmother adopted it.

[They called his name Obed] `Owbeed, serving, from `aabad, he served. Why was this name given? Because he was to be the nourisher of her old age, Ruth 4:15. And so he must be by lying in her bosom, even if services in future life were wholly left out of the question. These neighbors of Naomi were skillful people. See the note at Ruth 4:16. Other meanings, of which I am not ignorant, have been derived from these words; those who prefer them have my consent.

[He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.] And for the sake of this conclusion, to ascertain the line of David, and in the counsel of God to fix and ascertain the line of the Messiah, was this instructive little book written.

18 Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,

[Now these are the generations] The Targum* gives a copious paraphrase on this and the following verses. I shall insert the principal parts in their proper places.

19 And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

[Hezron begat Ram] He is called Aram here by the Septuagint,* and

also by Matthew, Matthew 1:3.

20 And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,

[Amminadab begat Nahshon] The Targum adds, "And Nahshon was chief of the house of his father in the tribe of Judah."

[Nahshon begat Salmon] In the Hebrew it is Salmaah, which Houbigant thinks was an error of an ancient scribe, before any final letters were acknowledged in the Hebrew alphabet: for then the word would be written Salmown, which a scribe, after final letters were admitted, might mistake for Salmaah, and so write it, instead of Salmown, the waw (w w) and final nun (/ n) in conjunction (/o- -own) bearing some resemblance to h- -h (in Hebrew block letters).

The Targum* calls him "Salmah the Just; he was the Salmah of Bethlehem and Netopha, whose sons abolished the watches which Jeroboam set over the highways; and their works and the works of their father were good in Netopha."

21 And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

[And Salmon begat Boaz] The Targum* goes on, "And Salmon begat Absan the judge; he is Boaz the Just, on account of whose righteousness the people of the house of Israel were redeemed from the hands of their enemies; and at whose supplication the famine departed from the land of Israel."

22 And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

[And Obed begat Jesse] "Who," says the Targum,* "also is called Nachash, because neither iniquity nor corruption was found in him, that he should be delivered into the hands of the angel of death, that he might take away his soul from him. And he lived many days until the counsel was remembered before the Lord, that the serpent gave to live the wife of Adam, that she should eat of the tree; by eating of the fruit of which they became wise, to distinguish between good and evil: and by that counsel all the inhabitants of the earth became guilty of

death; and by this iniquity Jesse the Just died.

[And Jesse begat David] To this no comment is added by the Targumist, as the history of this king is found in the following book.

The ten persons whose genealogy is recorded in the five last verses, may be found, with a trifling change of name, in the genealogical list in Matthew 1:3-6, as forming important links in the line of the Messiah. To introduce this appears to have been the principal object of the writer, as introductory to the following books where the history of David, the regal progenitor and type of the Messiah, is so particularly detailed.

For the account of the birth of Pharez and his brother Zarah, the reader is requested to refer to Genesis 38:12-30, and to the notes there; and for several particulars in the genealogy itself, to the notes on Matt 1 and Luke 3, where the wisdom, goodness, and providence of God, in the preservation of this line, are particularly noticed.

FOOTNOTES:

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quite literally. The Targumim are helpful today in understanding ancient Jewish interpretations of the Old Testament. Because they are paraphrased, they cannot be used to identify original Hebrew texts.

SEPTUAGINT**

This version is commonly called the SEPTUAGINT, from septuaginta, the Latin word for 70 (LXX). This name was selected because of a tradition that the Pentateuch was translated into Greek by about 70 elders of Israel who were brought to Alexandria specially for that purpose.

When Christianity penetrated the world of the Greek-speaking Jews, and then the Gentiles, the Septuagint was the Bible used for preaching the gospel. Most of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament are taken from this Greek Bible. In fact, the Christians adopted the Septuagint so wholeheartedly that the Jewish people lost interest in it. They produced other Greek versions that did not lend themselves so easily to Christian interpretation.

Well, that completes the Book of Ruth. Have a great week **Anna**, and know that God is well pleased that you are studying His Holy Word! Amen. For the support of the work, you can send your seed offering. Shalom