

RUTH

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF RUTH

This book is called Ruth, not because she was the author of it, but because she is the principal subject of it. In the Syriac and Arabic versions, it is called the Book of Ruth the Moabitess, which describes her by the country of which she was. Her name, according to Hillerus ^{f1}, signifies beautiful, of a good aspect, the same with Calliope in Greek. As to the author of this book, some attribute it to Eli the priest, who seems to have been too soon to give an account of the birth of David; others to Gad or Nathan; some to Hezekiah, and others to Ezra; but what the Talmudists assert, which is most generally received, and most probable, is, that it was written by Samuel; so they say Samuel ^{f2} wrote his own book, Judges, and Ruth; and it is commonly said that this book is an appendix to that of the Judges, and the introduction to Samuel, and is fitly placed between them both. According to Eusebius ^{f3}, with the Hebrews, Judges and Ruth make one book they call Shophetim, or Judges; the principal design of it is to give the genealogy of David, whom Samuel had anointed to be king of Israel, and from whom the Messiah was to come, and who therefore may be said to be the aim and scope of it, as he is of all Scripture; and whereby it appears that he sprung both from Jews and Gentiles, and is the Saviour of both, and there is a good foundation for both to hope in him; and the call and conversion of Ruth the Moabitess may be considered as a shadow, emblem, and pledge of the conversion of the Gentiles. Many things besides may be learnt from this little book, as the different circumstances of good people in this life, and the particular providence of God respecting them. It furnishes out examples of bearing afflictions patiently, of industry, courteousness, kindness to strangers, and young converts; and none can doubt of the divine authority of this book, that considers the use made of it in the genealogies of Christ by the Evangelists Matthew and Luke.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO RUTH 1

This chapter treats of a family that removed from the land of Canaan to the land of Moab on account of a famine, where the father of it and his two sons died, and each of them left a widow, (^{<R001>}Ruth 1:1-5) the mother-in-law proposed to return to her own country, and set forward with her two daughters-in-law, whom, when they had gone a little way with her, she entreated to go back, and expostulated with them about it, (^{<R006>}Ruth 1:6-13), upon which one of them did, but the other, Ruth, the subject of this book, resolved to go the journey with her, (^{<R014>}Ruth 1:14-18) and they both came to Bethlehem, the former residence of her mother-in-law Naomi, who was greatly taken notice of by her old friends and acquaintance, to whom she related her present circumstances, (^{<R019>}Ruth 1:19-22).

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled*, etc.] So that it appears that this history is of time and things after the affair of Micah, and of the concubine of the Levite, and of the war between Israel and Benjamin; for in those times there was no king nor judge in Israel; but to what time of the judges, and which government of theirs it belongs to, is not agreed on. Josephus ^{f4} places it in the government of Eli, but that is too late for Boaz, the grandfather of Jesse, the father of David, to live. Some Jewish writers, as Jarchi, say it was in the times of Ibzan, who they say ^{f5} is the same with Boaz, but without proof, and which times are too late also for this history. The Jewish chronology ^{f6} comes nearer the truth, which carries it up as high as the times of Eglon, king of Moab, when Ehud was judge; and with which Dr. Lightfoot ^{f7} pretty much agrees, who puts this history between the third and fourth chapters of Judges, and so must belong to the times of Ehud or Shamgar. Junius refers it to the times of Deborah and Barak; and others ^{f8}, on account of the famine, think it began in the times the Midianites oppressed Israel, and carried off the fruits of the earth, which caused it, when Gideon was raised up to be their judge; Alting ^{f9} places it in the time of Jephthah; such is the uncertainty about the time referred to:

that there was a famine in the land; the land of Canaan, that very fruitful country. The Targum says this was the sixth famine that had been in the world, and it was in the days of Boaz, who is called Ibzan the just, and who was of Bethlehemjudah; but it is more probable that it was in the days of Gideon, as before observed, than in the days of Ibzan

and a certain man of Bethlehemjudah; so called to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun, (^{<4895>}Joshua 19:15) which had its name from the fruitfulness of the place, and the plenty of bread in it, and yet the famine was here; hence this man with his family removed from it:

and went to sojourn in the country of Moab; where there was plenty; not to dwell there, but to sojourn for a time, until the famine was over:

he and his wife, and his two sons; the names of each of them are next given.

Ver. 2. *And the name of the man was Elimelech*, etc.] Which signifies “my God is King”, as he was King over Israel. In the times of the judges, the government was a theocracy; the judges were raised up immediately by the Lord, and ruled under him; the Targum calls him a great man, and so Jarchi; and it is very likely he was, especially if it be true what is said the Jewish chronology ^{f10}, that he was the brother of Salmon, prince of the tribe of Judah; and it is certain that Boaz the son of Salmon was a kinsman of his, (^{<8811>}Ruth 2:1),

and the name of his wife Naomi; which signifies “sweet, pleasant”, very likely a comely person, and of a sweet disposition; a name of the same signification with Naamah, the sister of Tubalcain, (^{<0042>}Genesis 4:22) and according to the Talmudists she was Elimelech’s brother’s daughter; for they say ^{f11}, that Elimelech, Salmon, and the kinsman (spoken of in this book), and the father of Naomi, were all of them the sons of Nahshon, prince of the tribe of Judah; the same Jarchi observes on (^{<8812>}Ruth 1:22)

and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion; which seem to have their names from weakness and consumption, being perhaps weakly and consumptive persons; and it appears they both died young. It is a tradition of the Jews, mentioned by Aben Ezra, that these are the same with Joash and Saraph, who are said to have dominion in Moab, (^{<1342>}1 Chronicles 4:22) which is not likely:

Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah: Jarchi interprets Ephrathites by men of worth and esteem; and the Targum is,

“Ephrathites, great men of Bethlehemjudah”

but no doubt they were called so, because Ephratah was one of the names of Bethlehem, (^{Q159}Genesis 35:19 ^{Q160}Micah 5:2) so called from its fruitfulness; though Aben Ezra thinks it had its name from Ephratah the wife of Caleb; but it was so called in the time of Moses, as in the passage referred to:

and they came into the country of Moab, and continued there; unto their death; all excepting Naomi, who returned when she heard the famine was over.

Ver. 3. *And Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died*, etc.] According to Josephus^{f12}, after he had dwelt in the land ten years, and had married his two sons to Moabitish women; but, as Alshech observes, the text shows that while he was living they were not married to them, but after his death; and it is said of them only that they dwelt there about ten years; so that it is most probable that their father died quickly after he came into the land of Moab: and she was left, and her two sons; in a strange land, she without a husband, and they without a father.

Ver. 4. *And they took them wives of the women of Moab*, etc.] Not before they were proselyted to the Jewish religion, as Aben Ezra thinks, and which seems plainly to be the case of Ruth; at least she was so afterwards, if not before; and also of Orpah, as the same writer concludes from (^{Q115}Ruth 1:15) though others are of a different opinion, and some excuse their marriage, and others condemn it as unlawful, among whom is the Targumist, who paraphrases the words,

“and they transgressed the decree of the Word of the Lord, and took to them strange wives of the daughters of Moab;”

however it was so permitted by the Lord, and ordered in Providence, that from one of them the Messiah might spring:

and the name of the one was Orpah; she was married to Chilion; and Alshech gathers from hence that the youngest was married first before his brother:

and the name of the other Ruth the Targum adds,

“the daughter of Eglon, king of Moab;”

and that she was his daughter, or the daughter of his son, is a notion commonly received with the Jews^{f13} though without any just foundation; she was married to Mahlon, (~~ORHO~~Ruth 4:10), one Philo^{f14} asserts these two women to be own sisters, for what reason does not appear; and a Jewish writer^{f15} says they were both daughters of Eglon, king of Moab: and they dwelt there about ten years; that is, Mahlon and Chilion, who married these women; which is to be reckoned either from the time they came into the land, or from the time of their marriage; the latter seems to be the case from the connection of the words.

Ver. 5. *And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them,* etc.] As well as their father, in the land of Moab, after they had lived with their wives in it about ten years; the Targum is,

“because they transgressed the decree of the Word of the Lord, and joined in affinity with strange people, their days were cut off;”

or shortened:

and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband; deprived both of her husband and her sons, which was a great affliction, aggravated by her being in a strange country; many are the afflictions of the righteous.

Ver. 6. *Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab,* etc.] After the death of her two sons, and having heard of the ceasing of the famine in Israel, she had a desire to go into her own country, where she would have better opportunities of serving the Lord; and having no heart to stay in Moab, an idolatrous country, where she had lost her husband, and her two sons; and therefore prepared for her journey, and set forward, and her two daughters-in-law with her, to accompany her some part of the way; for it does not appear to be their intention, at least at first setting out, to go with her into the land of Canaan; and therefore it is only said, that they arose

that she might return, etc.

for she had heard in the country of Moab: which was near the land of Israel, the borders of it reaching to the salt sea; the Targum says she heard it by the mouth of an angel, but it is highly probable it was by common fame:

that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread; that he had been kind and gracious to the people of Israel, by granting them plenty of provisions; which might be their happy case after Gideon had vanquished the Midianites, who came yearly, and destroyed and carried off the fruits of the earth, which had caused a famine; (see ^{<0708>}Judges 6:3-6 8:28). It seems as if the famine had continued ten years, (see ^{<0804>}Ruth 1:4) nor need this be thought incredible, since there was a famine in Lydia, which lasted eighteen years ^{f16}.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was*, etc.] What part of Moab she had dwelt in, and now removed from, is not said; it is called the country or field of Moab, she returned from; hence some have thought, that she and her husband, and her sons, did not live in any of the cities of Moab, but in a field; either because the Moabites would not suffer them to dwell in their cities, only allowed them to pitch their tents in their fields; or they chose to dwell there, that they might as much as possible avoid conversation with them, and be preserved from their idolatry, and other corruptions:

and her two daughters in law with her; who, out of respect to her, accompanied her some part of the way, as relations and friends usually did:

and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah; they went along with her to the border of the land of Judah, in her return thither; for returning can only be said of her with any propriety, because her two daughters had never been there; that was not the country from whence they came, and therefore could not be said to return thither.

Ver. 8. *And Naomi said to her two daughters in law*, etc.] When they were come, as it is very probable, to the utmost limits of the land of Moab, and to the borders of the land of Israel:

go, return each unto her mother's house: the mother's house is mentioned, and not the father's, not because they had no father living; for it is certain Ruth had a father as well as a mother, (^{<0811>}Ruth 2:11) but because mothers are most affectionate to their daughters, and they most conversant together; and because women in those times had apartments to themselves, and who used to take their daughters to them when become widows; though such was the strong love of those young widows to their mother-in-law, that they chose rather to dwell with her, while she lived in Moab, than with their own mothers:

the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me; that is, with their husbands, who were dead; as the Targum is, that they refused to marry men after their death; or rather it respects their affectionate care of their husbands, and behaviour towards them when living, as well as the respect they showed to their memory, at and since their death; and also their filial duty to her, both before and since; and particularly, as the Targum expresses it, in that they had fed and supported her.

Ver. 9. *The Lord grant you,* etc.] Some make a supplement here, the Targum a perfect reward, Aben Ezra an husband; and so Josephus says ^{f17}, she wished them happier marriages than they had with her sons, who were so soon taken from them; but a supplement seems needless, for what follows is connected with the wish, and contains the sum of it:

that you may find rest; each of you:

in the house of her husband; that is, that they might each of them be blessed with a good husband, with whom they might live free from brawls and contentions, as well as from the distressing cares of life, having husbands to provide all things necessary for them, and so from all the sorrows and distresses of a widowhood estate:

then she kissed them; in token of her affection for them, and in order to part with them; it being usual then as now for relations and friends to kiss at parting:

and they lifted up their voice and wept; to think they must part, and never see one another more; their passions worked vehemently, and broke out in sobs, and sighs, and tears, and loud crying.

Ver. 10. *And they said unto her,* etc.] When they had eased themselves in cries and tears, and had recovered their speech:

surely we will return with thee unto thy people; to be proselyted, as the Targum; not only to dwell with them, but to worship with them.

Ver. 11. *And Naomi said, turn again, my daughters,* etc.] Supposing this resolution of theirs only arose from a natural affection, and not from any love to the God or people of Israel; at least doubting whether it was so or not, and willing to try whether anyone, or both of them, were really from a principle of religion inclined to go with her; and desirous that they would

thoroughly consider what they did, lest they should repent and apostatize, and bring a reproach upon the true religion:

why will ye go with me? what reason can you give? this she said in order to get out of them if there was any real inclination in them to the true worship and service of God; though she keeps out that from her own questions put to them as follows, that it might come purely from themselves:

are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

is there any likelihood that I should ever have any sons to be instead of husbands, or really husbands to you? can it be thought that at my age, supposing I had an husband, or an husband's brother to marry me, that there is in me a natural power of conceiving and bearing children? this therefore can surely be no inducement to you to go along with me; for some, as Jarchi, think she refers to the law of a husband's brother marrying his widow, and raising up seed to him, which was known among the Gentiles before it was given to Israel; (see ^{<OR>}Genesis 38:8 ^{<ET>}Deuteronomy 25:5), to which Aben Ezra rightly objects, that that law respects a brother by the father's side, and not by the mother's only; to which may be added, that this law was not binding on a brother unborn, but on one that was living before the death of his brother; besides if this law had been in her mind, it would rather have furnished out an encouraging reason them to go with her, since there were kinsmen of her sons, to whom they might be married, as one of them afterwards was.

Ver. 12. *Turn again, my daughters, go your way,* etc.] This she repeated still to try their affections to her, and especially whether there was any real love to the God of Israel, his people, and worship, but still proceeds upon the same topic:

for I am too old to have an husband; and can never think of marrying again on account of age, nor can you surely ever think I should, at these years I am now arrived to:

if I should say I have hope; of marrying, and bearing children; suppose that:

if I should have a husband also tonight; be married to a man directly, suppose that:

and should also bear sons; conceive and bear, not female but male children, allow that; all which are mere suppositions, and, could they be

admitted, would not furnish out any reason why you should be desirous of going with me.

Ver. 13. *Would you tarry for them till they were grown?* etc.] It is not to be thought that they would tarry till she was married and had children, and then till these infants were grown up to men's estate, and be marriageable; for though Tamar tarried for Shelah, yet he was born, and of some years of age, though not a grown man, (^{GEN}Genesis 38:11,14)

would ye stay for them from having husbands? they were young widows, and it was fit they should marry again; and it could not be imagined that they would deny themselves having husbands, in expectation of any sons of hers:

nay, my daughters; I am well satisfied you will never tarry for them, nor deprive yourselves of such a benefit; it is unreasonable to suppose it:

for it grieveth me much for your sakes; that she could be of no manner of service to them, either to give them husbands, or to support and maintain them, should they go with her; or "I have exceedingly more bitterness than you"^{f18}; her condition and circumstances were much worse than theirs; for though they had lost their husbands, she had lost both husband and children: or it was more bitter and grievous to her to be separated from them, than it was for them to be separated from her; her affection to them was as strong, or stronger than theirs to her; or they had friends in their own country that would be kind to them, but as for her, she was in deep poverty and distress, and when she came into her own country, knew not that she had any friends left to take any notice of her:

that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me; in taking away her husband and children, and reducing her to a low estate, penniless and friendless; so poor, as it appears, that her daughter-in-law, when come to the land of Canaan, was obliged to glean for the livelihood of them both, as in the next chapter.

Ver. 14. *And they lifted up their voice, and wept again,* etc.] Not being able to bear the thought of parting, or that they must be obliged to it:

and Orpah kissed her mother in law; gave her the parting kiss, as the Jews^{f19} call it; and which was used by other people^{f20}; but not without affection to her, and took her leave of her, as her kiss testified, since it must be so; and being moved by her reasons, and having a greater inclination to her

own country than Ruth had; of the kiss at parting, (see ^{<0128>}Genesis 31:28 ^{<1193>}1 Kings 19:20)

but Ruth clave unto her; hung about her, would not part from her, but cleaved unto her in body and mind; forsaking her own people, and her father's house; neither the thought of them, nor of her native country, nor of not having an husband, or any likelihood of it, nor of poverty and distress, had any manner of influence upon her, but determined she was to go and abide with her.

Ver. 15. *And she said*, etc.] That is, Naomi to Ruth, after Orpah was gone:

behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods; meaning Orpah, who was the wife of her husband's brother, as the word used signifies; she was not only on the road turning back to her own country and people, but to the gods thereof, Baalpeor or Priapus, and Chemosh, (^{<0123>}Numbers 21:29 25:3) from whence Aben Ezra concludes, that she had been a proselyte to the true religion, and had renounced the gods of her nation, and retained the same profession while her husband lived, and unto this time, and now apostatized, since she is said to go back to her gods; and in this he is followed by some Christian interpreters ^{f21}, and not without reason:

return thou after thy sister in law: this she said, not that in good earnest she desired her to return, at least to her former religion, only relates, though not as approving of, the conduct of her sister, rather as upbraiding it; but to try her sincerity and steadfastness, when such an instance and example was before her.

Ver. 16. *And Ruth said, entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee*, etc.] Do not make use of any arguments to persuade me to go back: or "do not meet me", or "be against me" ^{f22}; do not meet me with objections, or be in my way, or an hinderance to me, in going along with thee; do not be against it, for to be against that was to be against her inclination, desires, and resolutions, and against her interest:

for whither thou goest I will go: let the country she was going to be what it would, though unknown to her, and though she should never see her own country any more:

and where thou lodgest I will lodge; though in ever so mean a cottage, or under the open air:

thy people shall be my people; whom I shall choose to dwell among, and converse with; whose religion, laws, and customs she should readily comply with, having heard much of them, their wisdom, goodness, and piety, of which she had a specimen and an example in Naomi, and by whom she judged of the rest:

and thy God my God; not Chemosh, nor Baalpeor, nor other gods of the Moabites, be they what they will, but Jehovah, the God of Naomi, and of the people of Israel. So a soul that is truly brought to Christ affectionately loves him, and heartily cleaves unto him, resolves in the strength of divine grace to follow him, the Lamb, whithersoever he goes or directs; and is desirous to have communion with none but him, and that he also would not be as a wayfaring man, that tarries but a night; his people are the excellent of the earth, whom to converse with is all his delight and pleasure; and Christ's God is his God, and his Father is his Father: and, in a word, he determines to have no other Saviour but him, and to walk in all his commands and ordinances.

Ver. 17. *Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried*, etc.] She was determined to abide with her unto death, and not only was desirous to die as she did, but where she should die; in the same country, cottage, and bed, and be laid in the same grave, in hope of rising together at the resurrection of the just; having no regard at all to the sepulchres of her fathers, which people in all ages and countries have been fond of being laid in, as an honour and happiness. So with the Greeks and Romans, not only relations, but intimate friends, and such as had a strong affection for each other, were sometimes buried in the same grave, as Crates and Polemon ^{f23}, Paris and Oenome ^{f24}, and others ^{f25}; (see ~~8020~~ Galatians 2:20 ~~5022~~ Colossians 2:12 3:1),

the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me; this is the form of oath she used for confirmation of what she had said, and to put an end to the debate on this subject; what she imprecates upon herself is not expressed, should she otherwise do than what she swears to; leaving Naomi to supply it in her own mind, and as being what was not fit to be named, and the greatest evil that could be thought to befall a perjured person.

Ver. 18. *When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her*, etc.] That she was strong in her resolutions, and steadfast in her determinations not to go back to her own country, but to go forward with

her; and nothing could move her from the firm purpose of her mind, which was what Naomi wanted to make trial of:

then she left speaking unto her: that is, upon that head of returning home; otherwise, no doubt, upon this a close, comfortable, religious conversation ensued, which made their journey the more pleasant and agreeable.

Ver. 19. *So they two went until they came to Bethlehem,* etc.] Went on their way directly till they came to it, without lingering or staying by the way, at least not unnecessarily, and not for any time; and they kept together, though Ruth was a younger woman, and could have gone faster, yet she kept company with her ancient mother, and was no doubt very much edified and instructed by her pious conversation; and it seems that they were alone, only they two; for as they had no camels nor asses to ride on, but were obliged to travel on foot, so they had no servants to wait upon them, and assist them in their journey, such were their mean circumstances:

and it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem; had entered the city, and were seen by some that formerly had known Naomi, or at least to whom she made herself known:

that all the city was moved about them; the news of their arrival was soon spread throughout the place, and the whole city rang of it; so the Septuagint version, “all the city sounded”; it was all the talk every where, it was in everybody’s mouth, that Naomi, who had been so long out of the land, and thought to be dead, and it was not expected she would never return again, was now come; and this drew a great concourse of people in a tumultuous manner, as the word signifies, to see her; and as it may denote a corporeal motion of them, so the inward moving and working of their passions about her; some having pity and compassion on her to see such a change in her person and circumstances; others treating her with scorn and contempt, and upbraiding her for leaving her native place, and not content to share the common affliction of her people, intimating that she was rightly treated for going out of the land at such a time into a strange country; and others were glad to see their old neighbour again, who had always behaved well among them; so the Syriac and Arabic versions, “all the city rejoiced”; many no doubt knew her not, and would be asking questions about her, and others answering them, which is commonly the case of a crowd of people on such an occasion:

and they said, is this Naomi? that is, the women of the place said so, for the word is feminine; and perhaps they were chiefly women that gathered about her, and put this question in a way of admiration; is this Naomi that was so beautiful, and used to look so pleasant and comely, and now so wrinkled and sorrowful, who used to dress so well, and now in so mean an habit! that used to be attended with maidens to wait on her, and now alone! for, as Aben Ezra observes, this shows that Elimelech and Naomi were great personages in Bethlehem formerly, people of rank and figure, or otherwise there would not have been such a concourse of people upon her coming, and such inquiries made and questions put, had she been formerly a poor woman.

Ver. 20. *And she said, call me not Naomi, call me Mara*, etc.] The one signifying “prosperity”, according to Josephus ^{f26}, and the other “grief”; but he is not always correct in his interpretation of Hebrew words, or to be depended on; by this indeed her different states are well enough expressed, and he rightly observes, that she might more justly be called the one than the other; but the words signify, the one “sweet” and pleasant, and the other “bitter”, (see ^{<0253>}Exodus 15:23), and the reason she gives confirms it:

for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me; had wrote bitter things against her, brought bitter afflictions on her, which were very disagreeable to the flesh, as the loss of her husband, her children, and her substance; (see Lam 3:15,19).

Ver. 21. *I went out full*, etc.] Of my husband and children, as the Targum; of children and riches, as Aben Ezra and Jarchi; wherefore some Jewish writers blame her and her husband for going abroad at such a time, and ascribe it to a covetous disposition, and an unwillingness to relieve the poor that came to them in their distress, and therefore got out of the way of them, on account of which they were punished, so Jarchi on (^{<000>}Ruth 1:1), (see ^{<0025>}Judges 2:15) but this is said without any just cause or reason that appears:

and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: deprived of her husband, children, and substance; she acknowledges the hand of God in it, and seems not to murmur at it, but to submit to it quietly, and bear it patiently:

why then call ye me Naomi; when there is nothing pleasant and agreeable in me, nor in my circumstances:

seeing the Almighty hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me? had bore witness that that was not a name suitable for her; or that she had sinned, and had not done what was well pleasing in his sight, as appeared by his afflicting her; she seemed therefore to be humbled under a sense of sin, and to consider afflictions as coming from the Lord on account of it, and submitted to his sovereign will; the affliction she means was the loss of her husband, children, and substance; (see ^{<18107>}Job 10:17 16:8).

Ver. 22. *So Naomi returned*, etc.] Aben, Ezra thinks this is to be understood of her returning at another time; but it is only an observation of the writer of this history, to excite the attention of the reader to this remarkable event, and particularly to what follows:

and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter in law with her, which returned out of the country of Moab; to Bethlehem, the birth place of the Messiah, and who was to spring from her a Gentile; and which, that it might be the more carefully remarked, she is called a Moabitess, and said to return out of the country of Moab:

and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest; which began on the second day of the feast of unleavened bread, on the “sixteenth” of Nisan, which answers to our March, and part of April, when they offered the sheaf of the firstfruits to the Lord, and then, and not till then, might they begin their harvest, (see Gill on “^{<18230>}Leviticus 23:10”), (see Gill on “^{<18234>}Leviticus 23:14”): hence the Targum here is,

“they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the day of the passover, and on that day the children of Israel began to reap the wave sheaf, which was of barley.”

So the Egyptians and Phoenicians, near neighbours of the Jews, went about cutting down their barley as soon as the cuckoo was heard, which was the same time of the year; hence the comedian ^{f27} calls that bird the king of Egypt and Phoenicia. This circumstance is observed for the sake of the following account in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO RUTH 2

In this chapter we have an account of Ruth's gleaning corn in the fields of Boaz, a relation of Naomi, (^{<RTH>}Ruth 2:1-3), and of Boaz coming to his reapers, whom he saluted in a very kind manner; and observing a woman gleaning after them, inquired of them who she was, and they informed him, (^{<RTH>}Ruth 2:4-9), upon which he addressed himself to her, and gave her leave to glean in his field, and desired her to go nowhere else, and bid her eat and drink with his servants, (^{<RTH>}Ruth 2:8-14) and gave directions to his servants to let her glean, and to let fall some of the handfuls on purpose, that she might gather them up, (^{<RTH>}Ruth 2:15-17) and then an account is given of her returning to her mother-in-law with her gleanings, to whom she related where she had gleaned, who was owner of the field, and what he had said to her, upon which Naomi gave her advice, (^{<RTH>}Ruth 2:18-23).

Ver. 1. *And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's*, etc.] That was her kinsman by her husband's side, who now lived at Bethlehem; and yet it does not appear that Naomi made any application to him for assistance in her circumstances, though well known to her, as the word used signifies; which might arise from her modesty, and being loath to be troublesome to him, especially as he was a relation, not of her own family, but of her husband's; but, what is more strange, that this kinsman had taken no notice of her, nor sent to her, who yet was a very generous and liberal man, and had knowledge of her coming, for he had heard of the character of Ruth, (^{<RTH>}Ruth 2:11,12) but perhaps he was not acquainted with their indigent circumstances:

a mighty man of wealth; a man of great wealth and riches, and of great power and authority, which riches give and raise a man to, and also of great virtue and honour, all which the word "wealth" signifies; to which may be added the paraphrase the Targumist gives, that he was mighty in the law; in the Scriptures, in the word of God, a truly religious man, which completes his character:

of the family of Elimelech; the husband of Naomi; some say that his father was Elimelech's brother, (see Gill on "⁽⁴⁸¹²⁾Ruth 2:2"),

and his name was Boaz; which signifies, "in him is strength", strength of riches, power, virtue, and grace; it is the name of one of the pillars in Solomon's temple, so called from its strength. This man is commonly said by the Jews to be the same with Ibzan, a judge of Israel, (⁽⁴⁷¹⁸⁾Judges 12:8 (see Gill on "⁽⁴⁷¹⁸⁾Judges 12:8"): he was the grandson of Nahshon, prince of the tribe of Judah, who first offered at the dedication of the altar, (⁽⁴⁴⁷²⁾Numbers 7:12), his father's name was Salmon, and his mother was Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, (⁽⁴⁰⁰⁵⁾Matthew 1:5). A particular account is given of this man, because he, with Ruth, makes the principal part of the following history.

Ver. 2. *And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi*, etc.] After they had been some little time at Bethlehem, and not long; for they came at the beginning of barley harvest, and as yet it was not over, nor perhaps for some time after this; and knowing and considering the circumstances they were in, and unwilling to live an idle life, and ready to do any thing for the support of her life, and of her ancient mother-in-law; which was very commendable, and showed her to be an industrious virtuous woman: she addressed her, and said:

let me now go to the field; she did not choose to go any where, nor do anything, without her advice and consent; so dutiful and obedient was she to her, and so high an opinion had she of her wisdom and goodness; she desired to go to the field which belonged to Bethlehem, which seems to have been an open field, not enclosed, where each inhabitant had his part, as Boaz, (⁽⁴⁸¹²⁾Ruth 2:3) though Jarchi interprets it of one of the fields of the men of the city; hither she asked leave to go, not with any ill intent, nor was she in any danger of being exposed, since it being harvest time the field was full of people: her end in going thither is expressed in the next clause,

and glean ears of corn after him, in whose sight I shall find grace; or "in" or "among the ears of corn"^{f28}; between the ears of corn bound up into sheaves, and there pick up the loose ears that were dropped and left. This she proposed to do with the leave of the owner of the field, or of the reapers, whom she followed; she might be ignorant that it was allowed by the law of God that widows and strangers might glean in the field, (⁽⁴⁸¹²⁾Leviticus 19:9,10 ⁽⁴²⁴⁹⁾Deuteronomy 24:19) or if she had been acquainted with it by Naomi, which is not improbable, such was her

modesty and humility, that she did not choose to make use of this privilege without leave; lest, as Jarchi says, she should be chided or reprov'd, and it is certain she did entreat the favour to glean, (~~OR~~Ruth 2:7)

and she said unto her, go, my daughter; which shows the necessitous circumstances Naomi was in; though perhaps she might give this leave and direction under an impulse of the Spirit of God, in order to bring about an event of the greatest moment and importance, whereby she became the ancestor of our blessed Lord.

Ver. 3. *And she went, and came,* etc.] That is, she went out of the house where she was, and out of the city, and came into the field; though, according to the Midrash ^{f29}, she marked the ways as she went, before she entered into the field, and then came back to the city to observe the marks and signs she made, that she might not mistake the way, and might know how to come back again:

and gleaned in the field after the reapers; when they had cut down and bound up the corn, what fell and was left she picked up, having first asked leave so to do:

and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech; the providence of God so ordering and directing it; for though it was hap and chance to her, and what some people call good luck, it was according to the purpose, and by the providence and direction of God that she came to the reapers in that part of the field Boaz, a near kinsman of her father-in-law, was owner of, and asked leave of them to glean and follow them.

Ver. 4. *And, behold, Boaz came to Bethlehem,* etc.] Into the field, to see how his workmen went on, and performed their service, and to encourage them in it by his presence, and by his courteous language and behaviour, and to see what provisions were wanting, that he might take care and give orders for the sending of them, it being now near noon, as it may be supposed; and though he was a man of great wealth, he did not think it below him to go into his field, and look after his servants, which was highly commendable in him, and which showed his diligence and industry, as well as his humility. So a king in Homer ^{f30} is represented as among his reapers, with his sceptre in his hand, and cheerful. Pliny ^{f31} relates it, as a saying of the ancients, that the eye of the master is the most fruitful thing in the field; and Aristotle ^{f32} reports, that a Persian being asked what fattened a horse

most, replied, the eye of the master; and an African being asked what was the best dung for land, answered, the steps of his master:

and said unto the reapers, the Lord be with you; to give them health, and strength, and industry in their work; the Targum is,

“may the Word of the Lord be your help:”

and they answered him, the Lord bless you; with a good harvest, and good weather to gather it in; and though these salutations were of a civil kind, yet they breathe the true spirit of sincere and undissembled piety, and show the sense that both master and servants had of the providence of God attending the civil affairs of life, without whose help, assistance, and blessing, nothing succeeds well.

Ver. 5. *Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers,* etc.] To direct them their work, what part each was to do, and to see that they did it well; to take care for provisions for them, and to pay them their wages when their work was done. Josephus^{f33} calls him *αγροκομος*, that had the care of the field, and all things relative to it; the Jews^{f34} say, he was set over two and forty persons, whom he had the command of:

whose damsel is this? to whom does she belong? of what family is she? whose daughter is she? or whose wife? for he thought, as Aben Ezra notes, that she was another man’s wife; the Targum is, of what nation is she? perhaps her dress might be somewhat different from that of the Israelitish women.

Ver. 6. *And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said,* etc.] Who had taken a great deal of notice of Ruth, and had conversed with her, and so was capable of giving answers to his master’s question:

it is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi, out of the country of Moab; perhaps he had not got knowledge of her name, and therefore only describes her by the country from whence she came; and by her coming from thence along with Naomi, when she returned from Moab, with whose name Boaz was well acquainted, and of whose return he had been informed; and perhaps had seen her in person, and even Ruth also, though he might have forgot her; the Targum makes the servant to add, that she was become a proselytess.

Ver. 7. *And she said*, etc.] These are the words of the servant continued, who goes on with the account of Ruth, and her conduct, since she had been in the field:

I pray you let me glean, and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: for though by the law of Israel she had a right, as a poor widow and stranger, to glean, yet as the owner of the field, and his servants, by his appointment, under him, might have power of fixing the time when such might glean, and of judging who were the proper persons to be admitted, Ruth in her great modesty and meekness did not choose to enter on this work without leave:

so she came; into the field and gleaned, having obtained leave:

and hath continued even from the morning until now; had been very diligent and industrious in gathering up the loose ears of corn among the sheaves, as she followed the reapers cutting down and binding up the corn in sheaves; she began pretty early in the morning, and had stuck close to it till that time, which may be supposed to be about noon, or pretty near it, for as yet it was not mealtime, (^{<RUT4>}Ruth 2:14). The Septuagint version is therefore very wrong, which reads

“from the morning until the evening,”

for that was not yet come, (^{<RUT7>}Ruth 2:17) but

she tarried a little in the house; not that she went home to the city, and stayed a little in the house of Naomi her mother, and then returned again, for she went not home until the evening, (^{<RUT7>}Ruth 2:17,18), but the meaning of the passage is, that she had been constant and diligent in gleaning all the morning, only a very little time that she was in the house, which was in the field; either a farm house of Boaz adjoining to the field; or rather a cottage or booth, as Aben Ezra interprets it, which was in the field, whither the reapers betook themselves when they ate their meals; or to shelter themselves under the shade of it, as Abendana, from the heat of the sun at noonday; and here Ruth set herself down awhile for a little rest, and ease, and refreshment; and some think she was here when Boaz came, and therefore took the more notice of her.

Ver. 8. *Then said Boaz unto Ruth*, etc.] Having heard what the servant said concerning her, he turned himself to her, and addressed her in the following manner:

hearest thou not, my daughter? meaning not what the servant had said, but hereby exciting her to hearken to what he was about to say to her. Noldius ^{f35} takes the particle to signify beseeching and entreating, and renders the words, “hear, I pray thee, my daughter”. Some from hence conclude that Boaz was a man in years, and Ruth much younger than he, and therefore calls her his daughter:

go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence; which she might be inclined to, lest she should be thought to be too troublesome to be always in one man’s field; but Boaz taking a liking to her, and willing to do her some favour, chose she should not go elsewhere:

but abide here fast by my maidens; not maidens that gleaned also as she did, poor maidens he permitted to glean; or that gleaned for the poor, and much less that gleaned for him; a person so rich and liberal as he was would never employ such for his advantage, and to the detriment of the poor; nor would it be admitted of it being contrary to the law as it should seem, and certain it is to the later traditions of the elders; for it is said ^{f36},

“a man may not hire a workman on this condition, that his son should glean after him; he who does not suffer the poor to glean, or who suffers one and not another, or who helps any one of them, robs the poor.”

But these maidens were such, who either gathered the handfuls, cut and laid down by the reapers, and bound them up in sheaves, or else they also reaped, as it seems from the following verse; and it was very probably customary in those times for women to reap, as it is now with us.

Ver. 9. *Let thine eyes be upon the field that they do reap, and go thou after them,* etc.] And gather up the loose ears of corn dropped and left by them:

have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? do her no hurt, or offer any incivility or rudeness to her, or even play any wanton tricks with her, as is too common with young persons in the fields at harvest time. This charge he now gave in her hearing, or however suggests that he would, and therefore she might depend upon it she should have no molestation nor any affront given her:

and when thou art athirst: as at such a season of the year, and in the field at such work, and in those hot countries, was frequently the case:

go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn; which they had fetched from wells and fountains in or near the city, and had put into bottles, pitchers, etc. for the use of the reapers and gatherers; we read of the well of Bethlehem, (~~12315~~ 2 Samuel 23:15) now she is ordered to go to these vessels, and drink when she pleased, without asking leave of any; and Boaz no doubt gave it in charge to his young men not to hinder her.

Ver. 10. *Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,* etc.] In great humility, and under a deep sense of the favour done her, and as showing the greatest respect, in a civil manner, she was capable of:

and said unto him, why have I found grace in thine eyes: how is it that one so mean and unworthy should have such favour shown?

that thou shouldest take knowledge of me; take such notice of her, show such affection to her, and bestow such kindness on her:

seeing I am a stranger? not a citizen of Bethlehem, nor indeed one of the commonwealth of Israel; but, as the Targum,

“of a strange people, of the daughters of Moab, and of a people who were not fit and worthy to enter into the congregation of the Lord.”

Ver. 11. *And Boaz answered and said unto her,* etc.] Alshech thinks, that he lift up his voice that all that stood by might hear:

it hath fully been showed me; either by Naomi, or rather by some persons of Boaz’s Naomi and acquaintance, that had conversed with Naomi and related to Boaz what passed between them, by which he was fully informed of the following things mentioned by him; though the above writer supposes, that it was showed him by the Holy Ghost:

all that thou hast done to thy mother in law since the death of thine husband; how that, instead of going home to her father and mother, she continued with her; how tenderly she used her; what strong expressions of love she had made unto her; what care she had taken of her, and how she had fed and nourished her, as the Targum, and now was gleaning for her support, as well as her own:

and how thou hast left thy father and mother; in a literal sense, to go along with her mother-in-law, to assist her in her journey, and see her safe to the

end of it: and in a figurative sense her idol gods, as in (^{<2477>}Jeremiah 2:27) so the Midrash ^{f37}:

and the land of thy nativity; the land of Moab, where she was born, and where her kindred, relations, and friends lived, dear and engaging to her:

and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore; but by hearsay, and what she learned of them from her husband and mother-in-law, even the people of Israel; to whom she was come to be a proselyte, and dwell among them, as the Targum.

Ver. 12. *The Lord recompence thy work*, etc.] The Targum adds, in this world; meaning the kind offices she had performed, and the good service she had done to her mother-in-law; nor is God unrighteous to forget the work and labour of love, which is shown by children to their parents; and though such works are not in themselves meritorious of any blessing from God here or hereafter, yet he is pleased of his own grace to recompence them, and return the good into their bosom manifold, it being acceptable in his sight:

and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel; the Targum adds, in the world to come; which is called the reward of the inheritance, (^{<51934>}Colossians 3:24) a reward not of debt, but of grace; and that will be a full one indeed, fulness of joy, peace, and happiness, an abundance of good things not to be conceived of, (see ^{<6108>}2 John 1:8),

under whose wings thou art come to trust; whom she professed to be her God, and whom she determined to serve and worship; whose grace and favour she expected, and to whose care and protection she committed herself: the allusion is either to fowls, which cover their young with their wings, and thereby keep them warm and comfortable, and shelter and protect them, (see ^{<1917>}Psalm 36:7 57:1) or to the wings of the cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat, (^{<1250>}Exodus 25:20) and the phrase is now adopted by the Jews to express proselytism; and so the Targum here,

“thou art come to be proselyted, and to be hid under the wings of the Shechinah of his glory,”

or his glorious Shechinah.

Ver. 13. *Then she said, let me find favour in thy sight, my lord*, etc.] Or rather, since she had found favour in his sight already: the words are to be

considered, not as a wish for it, but as acknowledging it, and expressing her faith and confidence, that she should for time to come find favour in his sight, and have other instances of it; for so the words may be rendered, “I shall find favour”^{f38}, for which she gives the following reasons:

for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid; had spoken in her commendation, and wished her all happiness here and hereafter; said kind and comfortable words to her, to her very heart, as in (^{2301B}Isaiah 40:2) which were cheering, refreshing, and reviving to her:

though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens; not worthy to be one of them, or to be ranked with them, being meaner than the meanest of them, a poor widow, and a Moabitish woman; the Septuagint and Syriac versions leave out the negative particle, and read, “I shall be as one of thine handmaids”.

Ver. 14. *And Boaz said, at mealtime come thou hither*, etc.] This looks as if she was now in the booth, or house in the field, where the reapers used to retire to eat their food, or rest themselves, or take shelter from the heat of the sun. This meal was very likely dinner, the time of which was not yet come, but would soon, and to which Boaz invited Ruth:

and eat of the bread; his servants did, that is, partake of the provisions they should have; bread being put for all. So Homer^{f39} speaks of a large ox slain for such a meal for the reapers, besides the “polenta” afterwards mentioned, which the women prepared, and who uses the same word for it the Septuagint does here: “to dip thy morsel in the vinegar”; which was used because of the heat of the season, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra remark, for cooling and refreshment; and such virtues Pliny^{f40} ascribes to vinegar, as being refreshing to the spirits, binding and bracing the nerves, and very corroborating and strengthening; and it is at this day used in Italy, it is said, in harvest time, when it is hot; where they also use wine mixed with vinegar and water, as Lavater says^{f41}; and who from a learned physician^{f42} observes, that reapers, instead of wine, use vinegar mixed with a great deal of water, which they call household wine, allayed with water; to which if oil and bread be put, it makes a cooling meal, good for workmen and travellers in the heat of the sun; and the Targum calls it pottage boiled in vinegar. The Romans had an “embamma”, or sauce, made of vinegar, in which they dipped their food^{f43}; and Theocritus^{f44} makes mention of vinegar as used by reapers: in the Syriac version it is bread dipped in milk;

and in the Arabic version milk poured upon it. The Midrash ^{f45} gives an allegorical sense of these words, and applies them to the Messiah and his kingdom, and interprets the bread of the bread of the kingdom, and the vinegar of the chastisements and afflictions of the Messiah, as it is said, “he was wounded for our transgressions”, etc. (^{<281B>}Isaiah 53:5) which, by the way, is a concession that the prophecy in that chapter relates to him:

and she sat beside the reapers; the women reapers; she did not sit along with them, or in thee midst of them, in the row with them, as ranking with them, but on one side of them, which was an instance of her great modesty:

and he reached her parched corn; either Boaz himself, or he that was set over the reapers. This parched corn seems to be the new barley they were reaping, which they fried in a pan and ate. Galen says ^{f46}, the parched corn which is best is made of new barley moderately dried and parched; and that it was the custom of some to drink the same with new sweet wine, or wine mixed with honey, in the summertime, before they went into the bath, who say they feel themselves by this drink freed from thirst. But this seems to be a kind of food, what is sometimes called “polenta”, which is barley flour dried at the fire, and fried after it hath been soaking in water one night; so Lavater says, they dry the barley, having been soaked one night in water, the next day they dry it, and then grind it in mills; some dress new barley beaten out of green ears, and make it while moist into balls, and being cleansed, grind it; and thus dressed with twenty pound of barley, they put three pound of linseed, half a pound of coriander seed, and of salt, all being dried before, are mingled in a mill; and if to be kept, are put into new earthen vessels with the meal and bran: but a later writer ^{f47} takes this “Kali”, rendered parched corn, not to be anyone certain species, but something made of corn and pulse, as lentiles, beans, etc. and especially fried or parched vetches, of all which together was this kali or pulse; and he refutes the notion of some, who take it to be “coffee”, since that has only been in use since the beginning of the sixteenth century, and at first in Arabia; and is not of the kind of pulse, but is the fruit of a certain tree, of which a liquor is made, something to drink; whereas this was food, and was ate, as follows, (see ^{<117B>}2 Samuel 17:28)

and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left; she had such a plentiful share given her, that she had more than she could eat, and was obliged to leave some, and which it seems she carried home to her mother-in-law, (^{<182B>}Ruth 2:18).

Ver. 15. *And when she was risen up to glean,* etc.] After she had ate sufficiently, and refreshed herself, she rose up from her seat to go into the field and glean again; which shows her industry:

Boaz commanded his young men; the reapers, or who gathered the handfuls, and bound them up in sheaves:

saying, let her glean even among the sheaves; this she had requested of the reapers when she first came into the field, and it was granted her, (~~RUTH~~ Ruth 2:7) but this, as it was granted by Boaz himself, so was still a greater favour; and there is some difference in the expression, for it may be rendered here, “among those sheaves”^{f48}, pointing to a particular spot where might be the best ears of corn, and where more of them had fallen:

and reproach her not; as not with her being a poor woman, a widow, a Moabitish woman, so neither with being a thief, or taking such corn she should not, or gleaning where she ought not.

Ver. 16. *And let fall some of the handfuls on purpose for her,* etc.] That is, when they had reaped an handful, instead of laying it in its proper order, to be taken up by those that gathered after them, or by themselves, in order to be bound up in sheaves, scatter it about, or let it fall where they reaped it:

and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not for taking them, as if she did a wrong thing.

Ver. 17. *So she gleaned in the field until even,* etc.] An instance of her great diligence and industry, attending to this mean employment constantly from morning tonight:

and beat out that she had gleaned: she did not bind up her gleanings in a bundle, and carry it home on her head, as gleaners with us do, but she beat it out with a staff in the field, where she gleaned it, and winnowed it, very probably in the threshingfloor of Boaz; by which means what she had gleaned was brought into a lesser size and weight, and was a lighter burden to carry home:

and it was an ephah of barley; or three seahs of barley, as the Targum; which, according to Bishop Cumberland^{f49}, was six gallons, and three pints, and three solid inches: an omer is said to be the tenth part of an ephah, and, made into bread, was as much as a man could eat in one day,

(^{<1216>}Exodus 16:16,36), so that Ruth got enough in one day, for herself and her mother-in-law, which would last five days at least. This was a great deal for one woman to pick up, ear by ear, in one day; and must be accounted for, not only by her diligence and industry, but by the favour shown her by the reapers, under the direction of Boaz, who suffered her to glean among the sheaves, and let fall handfuls for her to pick up.

Ver. 18. *And she took it up*, etc.] The ephah of barley, into her arms, or on her shoulders:

and went into the city; the city of Bethlehem;

and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: she set it down before her, and she looked at it with admiration, that she should glean so much in one day:

and she brought forth; not Naomi, as Josephus ^{f50} represents it, who understood it as if she brought forth some food her neighbours had brought her, part of which she kept for Ruth, though he takes it in the other sense also; but the meaning is, that Ruth brought forth out of a scrip, as the Targum adds; besides the ephah of barley she set before her, she brought some victuals out of a bag:

and gave to her, that she had reserved after she was sufficed; not that she ate of the barley, and her mother-in-law also; and then she gave her the rest to lay up against another time, as some interpret it; but the remainder of the food which Boaz gave her at dinner time, which she could not eat, (^{<1824>}Ruth 2:14) she reserved for her mother, and now gave it to her; an instance of that piety commended by the apostle, (^{<5181>}1 Timothy 5:4).

Ver. 19. *And her mother in law said unto her, where hast thou gleaned today?* etc.] In what part of the field of Bethlehem? or on whose land, that she had gleaned so much? not that she suspected that she had got it in an illicit manner, but supposed she had been directed by the providence of God to a spot of ground where there was good gleaning; of that she had met with some hand, that had dropped ears of corn plentifully in her favour:

and where wroughtest thou? which is the same question repeated in other words, and shows that gleaning is a work, and a hard work too, closely followed, to be stooping and picking up ears of corn a whole day together:

blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee: she knew, by the quantity of corn she brought home, that she must have had kindness shown her by somebody; and especially she knew it by the food she brought home, and therefore pronounced the man blessed, or wished him happiness, before she knew who he was; though perhaps she might guess at him, or conjecture in her mind who it was that had taken notice of her:

and she showed her mother in law with whom she had wrought: that is, with whose reapers, men and maidens, she had wrought, whom she followed in gleaning, they working in one sort of work, and she in another, yet in the same field:

the man's name with whom I wrought today is Boaz; that is, in whose field, and with whose servants, she wrought; for Boaz wrought not himself, unless this can be understood of her eating and drinking with him; but the other sense is best.

Ver. 20. *And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, blessed be he of the Lord*, etc.] Or the Lord bless him with all kind of blessings, temporal and spiritual; and as he has blessed him already, may he be blessed more and more:

who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead; he had been kind to Elimelech and to his sons, who were now dead, and he continued his kindness to the reliefs of them, Naomi and Ruth, who were living, and was kind to them for the sake of the dead; and showing kindness to them expressed his respect to the memory of the dead:

and Naomi said unto her; continued her speech to her, and added to what she had said:

the man is near of kin to us; a near relation of ours, meaning by her husband's side: yea,

one of our next kinsmen; the nearest we have, there was but one nearer than he: the word for kinsman here is "Goel", a redeemer; for to such who were in the degree of kindred as Boaz was, and he that was nearer still than he to them, belonged the right of redemption, and therefore were called by the name of "Goel", a redeemer, as Ben Melech observes; they had a right to avenge the blood of the slain, to redeem their houses and possessions, if sold or mortgaged, and their persons by marrying them, and raising up seed to a deceased brother, or kinsman.

Ver. 21. *And Ruth the Moabitess said, he said unto me also,* etc.] Besides the favours he has shown me already, he has given me reason to expect more, for he has given me this strict order:

thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest; both barley harvest and wheat harvest; his will was, that she kept following them, and gleaned after them, as long as both harvests lasted. The Septuagint version is, “with my maidens”, and which agrees with (~~the~~ Ruth 2:8), where the order of Boaz is expressed, and with the instructions of Naomi in the next verse, who so understood it; but if we understand it of young men here, there is no contradiction; for both young men and maidens wrought together in the same field, either in reaping or binding up; so that if she kept fast by the one, she also would do the same by the other.

Ver. 22. *And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law,* etc.] Observing the charge Boaz had given her, she thought fit to advise her upon it:

it is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens; that is, go out in the morning with them, set out from Bethlehem when they went to work, and so continue with them all the day:

that they meet thee not in any other field; the meaning is, either that men might not meet her in another field alone, or rush upon her at once and unawares, and reproach her, or beat her, or indeed force her; or else that the servants of Boaz might not meet her, or see her in another field, and report it to their master, who would be offended at her; and take it as a slight of his kindness to her; which latter seems rather to be the sense.

Ver. 23. *So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean,* etc.] Accepting the kindness of Boaz, and attending to the advice of her mother-in-law, as well as using all diligence to get a livelihood for her mother and herself; in which she was a wonderful instance of dutiful affection, humility, and industry: and so she continued

unto the end of barley harvest, and of wheat harvest; which latter began at Pentecost, as the former did at the passover; and, according to the Midrash^{f51}, from the beginning of the one, to the end of the other, were three months; though it may be, they were gathered in sooner: indeed from the passover to Pentecost were seven weeks, which was the difference between the beginning of one harvest, and the beginning of the other:

and dwelt with her mother in law; which is to be understood either of her coming home at night, after she had been gleaning all day, and lodging with her mother-in-law, which was her constant custom during both harvests; or that after the harvests were ended, she continued to dwell with her mother-in-law; which seems to be added for the sake of carrying on the history in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO RUTH 3

In this chapter we have a proposal of Naomi to Ruth, with advice and directions to get Boaz for her husband, (^{<R1>}Ruth 2:1-4). Ruth's obedience to the instructions she gave her, (^{<R2>}Ruth 2:5-7), the notice Boaz took of her, and the conversation that passed between them, (^{<R3>}Ruth 2:8-13) the dismissal of her in the morning to her mother-in-law with a gift, to whom she returned, and acquainted her with what had passed, (^{<R4>}Ruth 2:14-18).

Ver. 1. *Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her*, etc.] After the harvests were over, and so gleaning likewise; when Naomi and Ruth were together alone in their apartment, the mother addressed the daughter after this manner:

my daughter, shall I not seek for thee, that it may be well with thee? that is, in the house of an husband, as in (^{<R5>}Ruth 1:9) her meaning is, to seek out for an husband for her, that she might have an house of her own to rest in, and an husband to provide her; that so she might be free from such toil and labour she had been lately exercised in, and enjoy much ease and comfort, and all outward happiness and prosperity in a marriage state with a good husband. This interrogation carries in it the force of a strong affirmation, may suggest that she judged it to be her duty, and that she was determined to seek out such a rest for her; and the Targum makes her way of speaking stronger still, for that is,

“by an oath I will not rest, until the time that I have sought a rest for thee.”

Ver. 2. *And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast?* etc.] He was, and her question supposes and concludes it, and which she observes, that Ruth might take notice of it, and encouragement from it; and the rather, since she had been admitted into the company and conversation of his maidens; and which was more, though not mentioned, into the company and conversation of himself, and whom Ruth knew full well; and who being, Naomi thought, the next nearest kinsman, and obliged

by the law in (^{<f51b>}Deuteronomy 25:5) to marry Ruth, with which view his relation is mentioned:

behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the threshingfloor; which afforded a fit opportunity of meeting with him, being at night, and out of the city, from his own house, and alone, and after a feast for his reapers and threshers of corn, seems, from (^{<8007>}Ruth 2:7) as it was usual to have threshingfloors in an open place without the city, so to winnow at them, whereby the chaff was more easily separated from the corn, and that, in the evening, when in those countries there were the strongest breezes of wind to carry it off; hence the Targum here has it,

“behold, he is winnowing the barley floor with the wind, which is in the night.”

For before the invention and use of fans in winnowing, it was only done by the wind carrying off the chaff, as the oxen trod the corn, for it was done in the threshingfloor, as here: hence Hesiod^{f52} advises that the threshingfloors should be *χωρῷ ἐν εὐαεῖ*, in a place exposed to wind; and so Varro^{f53} observes, the floor should be in the higher part of the field, that the wind might blow through it; to this manner of winnowing Virgil^{f54} has respect. Nor was it unusual for great personages, owners of farms and fields, to attend and overlook such service. Pliny^{f55} reports, that Sextus Pomponius, father of the praetor and prince of the hither Spain, presided over the winnowing of his reapers; so Gideon, another judge Israel, was found threshing wheat, (^{<0061>}Judges 6:11).

Ver. 3. *Wash thyself, therefore*, etc.] Thy flesh, as Ben Melech, that she might appear clean and neat, and free from all spots, and every thing that might occasion a disagreeable aspect, or an ill scent, and so be acceptable to the man proposed:

and anoint thee; not with aromatic ointments, as great personages, both men and women, used as Aben Ezra notes, but with common oil, Ruth being a poor widow that she might look sleek and smooth:

and put thy raiment upon thee; that is, her best raiment; for it cannot be supposed that she was now without clothes; or else her ornaments as the Targum; her mother-in-law advises her to put off her widow’s weed, the time of mourning for her husband being perhaps at an end, and put on her ornamental dress she used to wear in her own country, and in her husband’s lifetime. Jarchi interprets it of her sabbath day clothes:

and get thee down to the floor; to the threshingfloor where Boaz was winnowing, and which it seems lay lower than the city of Bethlehem:

but make not thyself known unto the man; some understand it, that she should not make herself known to any man, not to any of the servants of Boaz; who, though they knew her before, when in the habit of a gleaner, would not know her now in her best and finest clothes, unless she made herself known to them; but rather Boaz is meant, to whom it was not advisable to make herself known; and who also, for the same reason, though he might see her at supper time, might not know her because of her different dress: and the rather he is particularly intended, since it follows,

until he shall have done eating and drinking; when Naomi thought it would be the fittest time to make herself known unto him in order to gain the point in view, marriage with him.

Ver. 4. *And it shall be, when he lieth down*, etc.] On the threshingfloor, under the open air, in order to sleep, and take rest:

that thou shall mark the place where he shall lie; the spot he shall lie on, and the direction in which he shall lie, whether east, west, etc. that when the light shall be taken away, and the darkness of the night come on, she might pretty easily find the place where he lay:

and thou shall go in and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; go into the threshingfloor, or to the place where he lay down and gently lay aside the covering upon his feet, whether a blanket, or rug, or his own long clothes, with which his feet were wrapped, and then lay herself down at his feet; this seems to be advised to, in order to give him a hint that there was somebody at his feet. This may seem to us to be strange advice, and not consistent with the character of pious and virtuous women, which they both bore, and with that modesty they otherwise seem to be possessed of; to clear this, let it be observed, that this man was, as Naomi thought, the next kinsman, and so in right of the law in (^{GEN}Deuteronomy 25:5), was the husband of Ruth, and therefore might take such a freedom with him as she did; and it seems by the same law as if the woman was to make the demand of marriage, which may serve to reconcile the carriage of Ruth to her character: besides, what things in one age, and in one nation, are reckoned immodest, are not so accounted in another age, and in another nation; add to this the age and gravity of Boaz, and the well known virtue of Ruth to Naomi, she might think herself quite safe in the advice she gave: and yet

after all, it must be owned, it is somewhat difficult to account for her simplicity and wisdom in it; since she could not be sure that sin and folly would not be committed, considering the infirmity of human nature; or that such a behaviour in Ruth would not alienate the affection of Boaz from her, and cause him to consider her as a light and loose woman, and unfit to be his wife:

and he will tell thee what thou shall do; being a judge of Israel, and expert in the law, he would inform her whether he was the next kinsman, and had the right of redemption or not, and what methods must be taken, and what rites used, in order to her marriage with him, or another person.

Ver. 5. *And she said unto her*, etc.] Having the highest opinion of her piety and prudence, and being confident she would never advise her to what was contrary to true religion and virtue:

all that thou sayest unto me I will do; observe every instruction and direction she gave her, and attend strictly to every circumstance pointed out to her, as she did; the word for “unto me” is one of those instances, the Masora observes, is not written but read; the letters of the word are not in the text, only the vowel points, the reason of which cannot well be said; what the Midrash^{f56} gives can never satisfy.

Ver. 6. *And she went down unto the floor*, etc.] From the city of Bethlehem, from her mother-in-law’s house there, to the threshingfloor of Boaz, which was at some distance from it, and lower:

and did according to all that her mother in law bade her; both before she went, and after: she washed and anointed herself, and put on her best clothes before she went down, and when she was there took care not to make herself known to any, especially to Boaz, and marked the place where he lay down after he had supped.

Ver. 7. *And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry*, etc.] Having ate and drank freely, though not to excess; and innocent mirth was always allowed in the time of harvest, and of the vintage, and of gathering the fruits of the earth, (see ^{<0927>}Judges 9:27 ^{<0903>}Isaiah 9:3) or “his heart was good”; he was in a good frame and disposition of mind, praising God for his goodness to him, and to his people; so the Targum,

“and his heart was good, and he blessed the name of the Lord who had received his prayer, and removed the famine from the land of Israel:”

he went to lie down at the heap of corn; in the threshingfloor, which had either been threshed out, or lay in sheaves to be threshed out: however, it seems probable that he had laid himself down on some of the straw of the corn threshed out, with his clothes on, covering his feet with the lower part of his garment; it being usual in those countries to wear long garments, which served to sleep in by nights, as well as to cover them by day; nor was it thought mean and unworthy of persons of note to sleep in such a place, and in such a manner as this ^{f57}. And it might be chosen for coolness in those hot countries. Jarchi thinks it was to preserve his corn from thieves; though it might be because it was late ere the festival was over, and too late to go home, and besides he was ready for his business the next morning:

and she came softly; with stillness and quietness, as Jarchi, making as little noise as possible; or secretly, as the Targum, that no one might see her, and have knowledge of what she did:

and uncovered his feet; turned up the skirt of the garment that was upon his feet, or removed whatever covering was laid on them:

and laid her down; not on the side of him, which would have seemed immodest, but at his feet, perhaps across them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass at midnight*, etc.] So long Boaz slept without knowledge of any person being at his feet, and so long Ruth had lain there; but awaking, and perceiving something at his feet, which pressed them, it made him look about and feel, and so affected him,

that the man was afraid; though a man, and a man of spirit, he was afraid, a panic seized him, not knowing but it might be a spectre, a spirit, or a demon, as Jarchi; and such an instance we have in history ^{f58} of an apparition, which seemed to put off clothes, and place itself in a bed where a man lay, etc.

and turned himself; to see who it was:

and, behold, a woman lay at his feet; which he knew by putting his hand upon her head, as Jarchi thinks, and so knew her by her headdress, or veil;

or rather by her voice, as Aben Ezra, and who supposes the moon might shine, and he might be able to discern she had no beard, as well as also discover her by her clothes.

Ver. 9. *And he said, who art thou?* etc.] He spoke quick and short, as one displeased, or however surprised and frightened, just coming out of sleep, and in the night:

and she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid; that had gleaned in his fields with his maidens, and with whom he had conversed there, and knew her by name:

spread therefore thy skirt over thy handmaid; which seems to account for the reason of her uncovering his feet, or turning up the skirt of his garment that was upon them; not through wantonness and immodesty, but to direct him, when opportunity offered, to spread it over her as a token of his taking her in marriage, and of her being under his care and protection, and of her subjection to him; so the Targum,

“let thy name be called upon me to take me for a wife,”

Whether the custom now used with the Jews at marriage, for a man to cast the skirt of his “talith”, or outward garment, over the head of his spouse, and cover it, was in use so early, is questionable; and yet something like it seems to have been done, as this phrase intimates, and to which there is an allusion in (²³⁶⁸Ezekiel 16:8). So Jarchi,

“spread the skirt of thy garments to cover me with thy talith, and this is expressive of marriage;”

and Aben Ezra says, it intimates taking her to him for wife; though as the word signifies a wing, the allusion may be to the wings of birds spread over their young, to cherish and protect them, which are acts to be done by a man to his wife:

for thou art a near kinsman; as she had been informed by Naomi, to whom the right of redemption of her husband’s estate belonged, and in whom it lay to marry her, and raise up seed to his kinsman, her former husband.

Ver. 10. *And he said, blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter,* etc.] Instead of calling her an immodest woman for laying herself down at his feet, and a bold impudent woman, she being poor, to ask marriage of him; and instead of being angry with her, and chiding and reproving her for

disturbing and frightening him in the night, he blesses her, and pray's to God to bless her, and prosper her in what she had engaged, and in a kind and loving manner calls her his daughter:

for thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning; that is, to her husband's family; she had shown much love to her husband living and dying, and to her mother-in-law, in leaving her country and kindred to come with her into a strange country, and in labour to support her, as she had done, all which was great kindness; to which the Targum adds, her being proselyted; but the kindness she now showed exceeded all the former, in that she was desirous, according to the law of God, to build up her husband's family, to marry the next near kinsman, even though an old man, to raise up seed to the name and memory of her husband:

inasmuch as thou followedst not the young men, whether poor or rich; the phrase of following young men is not to be understood of committing fornication with them, as the Targum explains it, but of marriage to them: she shunned their company and conversation, and did not put herself in the way of being caressed and addressed by them, and refused everything of that sort; and did not choose to follow any young man, rich or poor, as a bride follows her husband when married to him. Now Boaz mentions this as an instance of her virtue, and of her great respect to her husband's family, that a woman of such amiable qualities, virtuous, young, and beautiful, who doubtless might have been married to a young man in her own country, or in Israel, but chose to marry the nearest of kin in her husband's family, to perpetuate his name and memory; the Jews say^{f59} Boaz was now eighty years of age, and Ruth forty.

Ver. 11. *And now, my daughter, fear not*, etc.] Either of being forced and defiled, to which he had exposed herself by lying down at a man's feet, or of being reproached as an immodest woman for so doing, or of being despised as a poor woman, and of not succeeding in her suit and enterprise:

and I will do to thee all that thou requirest; which could be done according to the law of God, and without injury to another person after mentioned:

for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman; or righteous, as the Targum; a good woman, possessed of grace and virtue, having every agreeable qualification to recommend to the marriage state;

and therefore, should they come to the knowledge of the step taken to obtain it, will never reproach thee for it, nor blame me for marrying a person, though poor, of such an excellent character, which, by her conduct and behaviour, was universally established. It is in the original text, “all the gate of my people”^{f60}; meaning either all the people that pass through the gate of the city, that is, all the inhabitants of it, or the whole court of judicature, the elders of the city, that sit in judgment there, as was usual in gates of cities, (see ^{<R00E>}Ruth 4:1,9). So the Targum,

“it is manifest before all that sit in the gate of the great sanhedrim of my people that thou art a righteous woman”

Ver. 12. *And now it is true, that I am thy near kinsman*, etc.] Her husband and he being brothers’ sons, so own cousins:

howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I, who was, the Jews say^{f61}, the brother of her husband’s father, and so his uncle, which was a nearer relation than an own cousin.

Ver. 13. *Tarry this day*, etc.] Or lodge here tonight, where she was; this he said not from any design upon her, but for her own safety and honour, that she might not be exposed to danger or disgrace, by returning home at such an unseasonable time of night. The first letter in the word for “tarry” is larger than usual in the Hebrew text; which may be done to raise the attention of the reader, to observe it as a thing very singular, that a widow should lodge with a man without any diminution of her chastity; so Buxtorf^{f62} says, that hereby attention is noted, even the honesty of Boaz ordering Ruth to lodge without a man, and wait until a nearer kinsman, according to the law, should come, and promising that on failure thereof he would be the lawful redeemer; but Dr. Lightfoot^{f63} observes, that as there is a special mark over a word in the story of Lot’s eldest daughter lying with her father, (^{<O1E8>}Genesis 19:34) and a special mark on this word here, in the story of Ruth going to Boaz his bed, seems to relate one to the other, and both together to point at the great providence of God in bringing light out of darkness, Ruth, a mother of Christ, out of the incest of Lot:

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; by marrying Ruth, and redeeming her husband’s estate, which if he did, it would be all very well, and right according to law; and it would be very well for Ruth, as Aben Ezra and Abendana interpret it; seeing, as they observe, that kinsman was a

very respectable man, a man of great esteem and worth, a man of wealth and authority, and she would be well matched to him. Some think, as the same writers observe, that the word “Tob”, translated “well”, is the name of the kinsman, the same with Tobias; so R. Joshua says ^{f64}, that Salmon (who was the father of Boaz), and Elimelech (the father of Ruth’s husband), and Tob (this near kinsman), were brethren:

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 liveth: that is, he swore he would marry her, and redeem the inheritance, if the other would not; for the phrase, “as the Lord liveth”, is the form of an oath, it is swearing by the living God; so the Targum,

“I say with an oath before the Lord, that as I have spoken unto thee, so will I do:”

lie down until the morning; and take some sleep and rest, and be at ease in mind, depending upon the performance of what I have promised.

Ver. 14. *And she lay at his feet until the morning,* etc.] In the same place where she first lay herself down:

and she rose up before one could know another, because of the darkness, as the Targum, it not being yet break of day:

and he said, let it not be known that a woman came into the floor, to whom he spoke these words is not said, perhaps to Ruth, whom he might call to arise so early as she did, before one could know another, and distinguish a man from a woman; and so sent her away, and bid her be cautious, as much as in her lay, that it might not be known she had been there; for though they were both conscious of their purity and chastity, yet it became them to be careful of their good name, and to prevent scandal upon them, or hinder the nearer kinsman from doing his part, who might refuse upon hearing that Boaz and Ruth had been together; or this was said to his young men, as the Targum adds, charging them to let no one know of it; which is not so likely: it is the sense of some Jewish writers ^{f65}, that Boaz said this in his heart, in an ejaculatory prayer to God, entreating that affair might be a secret, that it might not be known that a woman had been in the floor that night, lest the name of God should be blasphemed, and he and Ruth be wrongfully reproached.

Ver. 15. *Also he said*, etc.] Which seems to confirm the first sense, that what he had said before was to Ruth, beside which he also said to her what follows:

bring the vail which thou hast upon thee, and hold it; by which it appears that he rose also thus early, since he ordered her to bring her vail to him, and hold it with both her hands, while he filled it from the heap of corn: this vail was either what she wore on her head, as women used to do, or a coverlet she brought with her to cover herself with, when she lay down; the Septuagint renders it a “girdle”, that is, an apron she tied or girt about her; which is as likely as anything: and when she held it, he measured six measures of barley; what these measures were is not expressed; the Targum is six seahs or bushels, as the Vulgate Latin version, but that is too much, and more than a woman could carry; unless we suppose, with the Targum, that she had strength from the Lord to carry it, and was extraordinarily assisted by him in it, which is not very probable; rather six omers, an omer being the tenth part of an ephah, and so was a quantity she might be able to carry:

and laid it upon her; upon her shoulder, or put it on her head, it being, no doubt, as much as she could well bear, and which required some assistance to help her up with it:

and she went into the city; of Bethlehem, with her burden; or rather he went^{f66}; for the word is masculine, and to be understood of Boaz, who accompanied her to the city, lest she should meet with any that should abuse her; and so the Targum expresses it,

“Boaz went into the city.”

Ver. 16. *And when she came to her mother in law*, etc.] To Naomi, in Bethlehem:

she said, who art thou, my daughter? it being near dusk, she could not discern her, or perhaps she put the question before she opened the door and saw her; though one would think, if Ruth had called to her, she would have known her voice: rather therefore the particle may be rendered, “what” or “how”^{f67}, instead of “who”; and the sense be, what had befallen her? what success had she had? how had things gone with her? was she married or not? or rather, had she got a promise of it? or was it likely that she should be married? with which the answer agrees:

and she told her all that the man had done to her; what kindness he had shown her, what promises he had made to her, that either he, or a nearer kinsman, would marry her, and redeem her husband's estate.

Ver. 17. *And she said, these six measures of barley gave he me*, etc.] Which she laid down before her, which was a proof of his kindness to her, that she was acceptable to him, and had well sped; of these six measures, (see ⁴⁰⁸¹⁵Ruth 3:15) which by some are allegorically interpreted of six blessings that should be bestowed upon her, as the spirit of wisdom, understanding, etc. as (²³¹¹²Isaiah 11:2) so Jarchi; or of six persons that should spring from her, as David, Daniel, and his companions, and the King Messiah, as the Targum:

for he said unto me, go not empty unto thy mother in law; which, as it expressed a regard to Naomi, and a compassionate concern for her support, so would give her assurance of the success Ruth met with, she would relate to her.

Ver. 18. *Then, said she, sit still, my daughter*, etc.] Keep at home, say nothing of this affair to any person, be easy about it, take no other steps in it, wait the issue of it:

until thou know how the matter will fall; not that she thought it was a chance matter, a fortuitous and contingent event with respect to God; for all decrees come from heaven, as Aben Ezra on the text says, and particularly marriages are decreed in heaven, and come about according to such decrees; so the Targum,

“sit, my daughter, with me, in the house, until the time thou shall know how it is decreed from heaven:”

for the man will not be at rest until he have finished the thing this day; which she concluded, partly from his known integrity and faithfulness, diligence and industry, and partly from his affection to Ruth, and her interest in it; for she perceived, she had got his heart, both by what he had said to her, and by the present he had sent by her, and she was satisfied he would not be easy until he knew whether he should have her or not.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO RUTH 4

This chapter relates how an offer was made to the nearest kinsman of Ruth to redeem her, and the field her husband left, which he refused to do, (^{<RUB>}Ruth 4:1-8), upon which Boaz redeemed both, and married Ruth before the elders of the city as witnesses, and who congratulated him and her on that occasion, (^{<RUB>}Ruth 4:9-12), to whom a son was born, called Obed by the neighbours, (^{<RUB>}Ruth 4:13-17) and the chapter is concluded with the genealogy of David, who sprung from him, (^{<RUB>}Ruth 4:18-22).

Ver. 1. *Then went Boaz up to the gate*, etc.] In the middle of the day, as Josephus ^{f68} says, to the gate of the city, where people were continually passing and repassing to and from the country, and where he was most likely to meet with the person he wanted to see and converse with, and where courts of judicature were usually held, and where it was proper to call one to determine the affair he had in hand; so the Targum,

“and Boaz went up to the gate of the house of judgment of the sanhedrim:”

and set him down there; waiting for the person or persons passing by, with whom he chose to speak:

and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; the kinsman that was nearer than he, of whom he had spoke to Ruth, that if he would not redeem her, he would; a “behold” is prefixed to this, to observe the providence of God that ordered it so, that he should come that way just at the time Boaz was sitting there, and waiting for him; who perhaps was going into his field to look after his threshers and winnowers, as Boaz had been:

unto whom he said, ho, such an one; calling him by his name, though it is not expressed; which the writer of this history might not know, or, if he did, thought it not material to give it, some have been of opinion that it is purposely concealed, as a just retaliation to him, that as he chose not to raise up seed to his kinsman, to perpetuate his name, so his own is buried

in oblivion; though it might be done in his favour, that his name might not be known, and lie under disgrace, for refusing to act the part he ought according to the law to have done; hence the plucking off the shoe, and spitting in his face, were done to such an one by way of contempt and reproach. The words are “*peloni almoni*”, words used by the Hebrews of persons and places, whose names they either could not, or did not choose to mention, which two words are contracted into “*palmoni*” in (^{70B}Daniel 8:13). The name of this man was “*Tob*” or “*Tobias*”, according to some Jewish writers, (see Gill on “^{70B}Ruth 3:13”), to him Boaz said,

turn aside, and sit down here; and he turned aside, and sat down; instead of going right forward, as he intended, about his business, he turned on one side as he was desired, and sat down by Boaz.

Ver. 2. *And he took ten men of the elders of the city*, etc.] Who were such, not merely in age but in office, who were the heads of thousands, fifties, and tens; ten of whom were a quorum to do business in judiciary affairs, to determine such matters as Boaz had propose, as to whom the right of redemption of a brother and kinsman’s widow, and her estate, belonged, and who were the proper witnesses of the refusal of the one to do it, and of the other’s doing it and from hence the Jews ^{f69} gather, that the blessing of the bride and bridegroom at their marriage is not to be done by less than ten persons:

and said, sit down here, and they sat down; and so made a full court.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto the kinsman*, etc.] That is, Boaz said to the kinsman he called to, and who sat down by him before the ten elders that were present:

Naomi, that is come again out of the land of Moab, selleth a parcel of land; meaning, that she was determined upon it, and was about to do it, and would do it quickly, and he had it in commission to propose it to a purchaser:

which was our brother Elimelech’s; not in a strict sense, but being akin to the kinsman and himself, and having been a neighbour of them all, and an inhabitant of the place, he is called their brother; though some Jewish writers ^{f70} say, that he was in a strict sense a brother of Boaz and this kinsman, and that Tob, Elimelech, and Boaz, were brethren, and so Tob was reckoned the nearest kinsman, and had the first right to redeem,

because he was the elder brother but this does not seem likely; (see Gill on “~~(RUB)~~ Ruth 3:13”).

Ver. 4. *And I thought to advertise thee*, etc.] To give him notice of it; or “I said” ^{f71}; he said in his heart and mind, purposing to do it; or he said it to Ruth, promising her that he would do it:

saying, buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people; or before those that sat there, even the elders, as witnesses of the purchase:

if thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: for it was redeemable by a near kinsman according to the law, even when said to another, in (~~(RUB)~~ Leviticus 25:25),

but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; what to do in this affair, whether to redeem it or not:

for there is none to redeem it besides thee, and I am after thee; he was the first, and Boaz was the next near kinsman, to whom the right of redemption belonged:

and he said, I will redeem it: he chose to make the purchase, he liked the land, which he probably full well knew, and it might lie near his own, and make a good addition to it; and as the widow was determined, and under a necessity to sell, he might expect to have it at a cheap rate; all which might induce him at once to agree to be the purchaser.

Ver. 5. *Then said Boaz*, etc.] In order to try the kinsman, whether he would abide by his resolution, he acquaints him with what he had as yet concealed:

what day thou buyest the field of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead; the wife of Mahlon, who was dead, the eldest son of Naomi, and so his widow, Ruth the Moabitess, had the reversion of the estate; wherefore the purchase must be made of her as well as of Naomi, and the purchase could not be made of her without marrying her; which, though no law obliged to, yet it seems to be a condition of the purchase annexed to it by Naomi, that she would sell it to no man, unless he would consent to marry Ruth, for whose settlement she had a great concern, having been very dutiful and affectionate to her; which is clearly intimated in the next clause:

to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance; and so Naomi had another end to answer thereby, not only to provide a good husband for her

daughter-in-law, but to perpetuate the name of her son, agreeably to the design of the law in (^{<REX>}Deuteronomy 25:5).

Ver. 6. *And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself*, etc.] On such a condition, because he had a wife, as the Targum suggests; and to take another would, as that intimates, tend to introduce contention into his family, and make him uncomfortable; so Josephus says ^{f72}, he had a wife and children, for that reason it was not convenient for him to take the purchase on such a condition:

lest I mar my own inheritance; he considered, that as he had a wife and children already and as he might have more by marrying Ruth, his family expenses would be increased, and his estate diminished; and what would remain must be divided among many, and this estate in particular go to Ruth's firstborn, whereby his own inheritance would be scattered and crumbled, and come to little or nothing; add to all which, he might suppose that her ancient mother Naomi would be upon his hands to maintain also:

redeem thou my right for thyself which I am ready to give up to thee, for thou hast no wife, as the Targum expresses it:

for I can not redeem it; in the circumstances I am, and upon the condition annexed to the purchase.

Ver. 7. *Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming*, etc.] It is a custom, and not a law, that seems here referred to, when an estate was bought and sold; not the law in (^{<REX>}Leviticus 25:25), though that respects the redemption of an estate by a near kinsman, yet no such manner was enjoined as here practised afterwards, made mention of; nor the law in (^{<REX>}Deuteronomy 25:5) which does not concern the redemption of estates, nor a kinsman's marrying the widow of a deceased kinsman, but a brother's marrying the widow of a deceased brother, and the rites and ceremonies there enjoined upon refusal are different from those here used; though Josephus ^{f73} is express for it, that the law is here referred to; but this is not only concerning purchase of estates, but "concerning changing" also one field for another as Aben Ezra interprets it: "for to confirm all things"; the following custom was observed for the confirmation of any bargain whatever, whether by sale or barter, and where there was no marriage in the case:

a man plucked off his shoe and gave it to his neighbour; signifying thereby, that he yielded his right to him in the thing sold or bartered; the

Targum says, he plucked off the glove of his right hand, which perhaps was then in use, when the Targumist wrote, and answered the same purpose; and, according to Jarchi, it was a linen cloth, veil, or handkerchief, that was used, and delivered by the one to the other; and of this way of buying writes Elias^{f74}; at this day, says he, we purchase by a linen cloth or handkerchief called “sudar”, which is a garment; and this two witnesses take, and explain before them the words of their agreement, and each of the witnesses stretches out the skirt of the garment, and those that take upon them to confirm every matter, touch the skirt of their garments; and this is called purchasing by “sudar”, or the linen cloth:

and this was a testimony in Israel; a witness to, or a confirmation of the bargain made; but who gave the shoe, whether the kinsman or Boaz, is not certain from the text; and about which the Jewish writers are divided, as Jarchi observes.

Ver. 8. *And therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, buy it for me*, etc.] Which is repeated to show he gave his full consent to it, that he should make the purchase of it if he pleased, and which he confirmed by the following rite:

so he drew off his shoe; thereby signifying that he relinquished his right to the purchase of the estate, and ceded it to him; the Targum has it,

“and Boaz drew off the glove off his right hand, and bought it of him;”

and so Aben Ezra,

“and Boaz drew off his shoe, and gave it to his kinsman,”

as if this was some acknowledgment for yielding his right unto him; and about this there is a great dissension among the Jewish writers^{f75}; one says it was the shoe of Boaz that was plucked off; another says it was the shoe of the kinsman; which latter seems most correct: and it may be observed, that this custom is different from what is enjoined (^{f76}Deuteronomy 25:6-11) there the woman was to pluck off the shoe of him that refused to marry her, but here the man plucked off his own shoe, who chose not to redeem; nor is there mention of spitting in his face; nor does it appear that Ruth did the one or the other; though Josephus^{f76} affirms it, and says, that she both plucked off his shoe, and spit in his face; neither of which are mentioned.

Ver. 9. *And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people,* etc.] Who were present at the gate of the city, or in court:

ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's; all the land which belonged to him, who was the husband of Naomi, and the father of Ruth's husband, whose estate Boaz now bought, paying the value for it to Naomi:

and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's; the two sons of Elimelech, who, had they been living, would have enjoyed their father's estate; but they being dead, it devolved on the mother, and after her on the widows, who must therefore agree to the sale of the estate, as Ruth did, (see ^{<R015>}Ruth 4:5). Of Orpah no notice is taken, because she returned to her own land; and besides Mahlon, the husband of Ruth, was the elder brother, and therefore had the first right to the inheritance; but as it was in the hands of Naomi now, the purchase was made of her principally, and therefore Boaz is said to purchase it

of the hand of Naomi; to whom the money was paid, and who delivered the estate to him.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife,* etc.] Which was the condition on which the purchase of the land was, that whoever bought that should take her for his wife; nor did Boaz do evil in marrying her, though a Moabitess. Moab was not one of the nations with whom marriage was forbidden; and though it was a Heathenish and idolatrous nation, and so on that account it was not fit and proper to marry with such, yet Ruth was become a proselytess; nor was this contrary to the law in (^{<R218>}Deuteronomy 23:3), since, according to the sense the Jews give of it, it respects men, and not women, and such men who otherwise were capable of bearing offices in the congregation;

“an Ammonite, and a Moabite (they say ^{f77}) are forbidden, and their prohibition is a perpetual one, but their women are free immediately:”

to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance; the name of Mahlon, Ruth's former husband, to whom the inheritance would have come had he lived; the raising up of his name is not upon a son of hers by Boaz, for her firstborn was called Obed, and not Mahlon, and is always spoken of as the son of Boaz, and not of Mahlon, but upon his inheritance, having bought his wife along with it, which the register of the purchase

would show, and so cause his name to be remembered; and, as Jarchi says, when Ruth went in and out upon the estate or inheritance, they would say, this was the wife of Mahlon, and so through her his name would be made mention of:

that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of this place; might not be quite forgotten both in the city and in the court, and be remembered no more:

ye are witnesses this day; this is repeated, that they might answer to it, as they do in the next verse.

Ver. 11. *And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, we are witnesses,* etc.] Both of the purchase of the estate by Boaz being legally made, and of the marriage of Ruth to him, the condition of the bargain:

the Lord make the woman that is come into thine house; not into his house, strictly and literally taken, the place of his habitation; for both he and she were now at the gate of the city, and as yet she was not introduced into his house; but by his marriage of her she was brought into his family, and was become a principal part of it, being his wife. This is a wish, prayer, or benediction of the elders, of one in the name of the rest, congratulating the married couple, and wishing them well; and particularly that the woman Boaz had married before them, as witnesses, might be

like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: the two wives of Jacob; the Targum adds, with twelve tribes; for though some of the tribes sprung from their maids, which they gave to Jacob, yet the children born of them were reckoned theirs by a moral estimation, as some express it. Rachel is set before Leah, though the youngest, and had the fewest children, because she was his first wife in his intention, and according to the covenant made with her father, though imposed upon and deceived; and she was his more lawful wife, and his most beloved one. By the children of these two, and their maidens, the house or family of Israel was built up, and became a great nation, consisting of twelve tribes, very numerous:

and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem; two names of one and the same place, (^{<0359>}Genesis 35:19 ^{<3RD>}Micah 5:2). These words seem to be directed to Boaz, particularly praying that he might continue to do worthy and virtuous actions, as well as increase in wealth

and riches, power and authority, and retain his name and fame, and grow in credit and reputation among his fellow citizens.

Ver. 12. *And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah*, etc.] Of whose tribe the Bethlehemites were, and were also of the house or family of Pharez, as appears from (^{<RB08>}Ruth 4:18), etc. who was born to Judah of Tamar, one of another nation, as Ruth was, and from whom sprung a very numerous family, one of the five families of Judah; and they wish that the family of Boaz, by Ruth, might be as numerous; and if Boaz was the same with Ibzan, as the Jews say, though that wants proof, he had a very numerous offspring, thirty sons and thirty daughters, (^{<RB08>}Judges 12:8,9)

of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman; by which it is plain Ruth was present, for they do, as it were, point to her, and that she was a young woman, though a widow: the Jews say she was forty years of age, as observed in (^{<RB08>}Ruth 3:10) and the elders wish and pray he might have a numerous family of the children the Lord would give him by her; and this might be the rather expected of her, as being a young woman, yet only as the gift of God, as children are, (^{<RB08>}Psalm 127:3).

Ver. 13. *So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife*, etc.] Without any other rites or ceremonies than what are here expressed; for as yet the rites and ceremonies now in use with the Jews ^{f78}, in marriages had not obtained: and when he went in unto her; which is a modest expression of the conjugal duty performed him:

the Lord gave her conception; for this is of God, let the circumstance of the person, as to age, be as it may:

and she bare a son; at the year's end, as Josephus ^{f79} relates,

Ver. 14. *And the women said unto Naomi*, etc.] The inhabitants of Bethlehem, as they fell into her company; or perhaps these were the women that were called to the labour of Ruth, and attended the birth of the child:

blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman; a grandchild born to her that day. In Moab she was bereaved of her husband and of two sons; but now she is not left without a relation, a kinsman, and a redeemer, for which the women blessed God, and stirred her up to do the same. Alshech observes, that the women said, blessed be the Lord, because

from him would spring the Messiah of the Lord, as did. Some refer this to Boaz, to whom the name of kinsman, or redeemer, more properly belonged; and who appeared to have done the office and duty of such an one, by redeeming the estate of his kinsman, and marrying his widow, the effect of which was, that a son was born, who would be heir of the estate; but the text speaks of what was done that day, and what is after said in the next verse all relates to the child born:

that his name may be famous in Israel; some refer this to the name of God, by whose providence this was brought about; others to Boaz, who was well spoken of for his charity, integrity, and humility, shown in redeeming the estate, and taking Ruth to wife; or rather it refers to the newborn child, of whom they express their hope and confidence, that when he came to man's estate would be very famous and honourable in Israel, being a worthy and virtuous man himself, and the progenitor of such illustrious persons as Jesse, David, etc. and even of the Messiah.

Ver. 15. *And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life*, etc.] Of the joys, pleasures, and comforts of it, which she had been deprived of through the death of her husband and her two sons, ever since which she had lived a sorrowful life; all the comfort she had was from her daughter-in-law, and now a grandchild being born to her of her would be a means of restoring comfort to her mourning sorrowful spirit, and give her pleasure in those years in which she did not expect any:

and a nourisher of thine old age; that would when grown up feed her, support her, and supply her with all necessaries of life, being heir to a large and rich estate:

for thy daughter in law which loveth thee; Ruth the wife of Boaz, who had shown her love, in leaving her own country and kindred, to come along with her into a strange land, and who had laboured for her support in it, and still retained the same affection for her:

which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him: either which had been so in the time of her widowhood, as the Targum; or rather which was so now, being the wife of so rich a person, and having now brought forth a son, heir to the estate, who would be more capable of doing for her than if she had seven sons living, having no other than their paternal estate.

Ver. 16. *And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom*, etc.] As a token of her most tender love and affection for it; this it is probable she did quickly after the birth of it:

and became a nurse unto it; that is, after the mother had suckled and weaned it, then she took it from her, and brought it up.

Ver. 17. *And the women her neighbours gave it a name*, etc.] Josephus says ^{f80} Naomi gave it, by the advice of her neighbours; very probably on the eighth day when he was circumcised, and the neighbours were invited on that occasion, at which time it seems it was usual to give names to children, (see ^{<019>}Luke 1:59). The Romans gave names to females on the eighth day, to the males on the ninth; hence the goddess Nundina had her name ^{f81}; the Greeks generally on the tenth, sometimes on the seventh ^{f82}: it was commonly the province of the father to give the name, and sometimes his neighbours and nearest friends were called, and in their presence the name was given, and by any of them he should choose in his stead ^{f83}:

saying, there is a son born to Naomi; to her family, and even to herself, being born of her who had been wife to her eldest son; and this was to her as instead of him, and was as he to her; so Aben Ezra compares this with (^{<020>}Exodus 2:10) and moreover, this child was born, as the neighbours presaged, for the great comfort and advantage of Naomi, to be her supporter and nourisher in her old age, (^{<045>}Ruth 4:15)

and they called his name Obed; which signifies “serving”, as Josephus ^{f84} rightly observes, though he does not always give the true sense of Hebrew words: this name was given, not in remembrance of the service his mother was obliged to, before marriage with Boaz; but rather on the account of the service that he would be of to Naomi, as they hoped and believed; though the reason of it, as given by the Targum, is not to be overlooked, which interprets it,

“who served the Lord of the world with a perfect heart;”

and so they might have some respect to his being hereafter a servant of the Lord:

he is the father of Jesse, and the father of David: so Jesse is called the Bethlehemite, (^{<041>}1 Samuel 16:1), being of the city of Bethlehem, of which city Boaz was when his son Obed was born, who was the father of Jesse; of whom was David king of Israel, and from whom sprung the Messiah, for

whose sake this book was written, that his genealogy might clearly appear; and of which use it is made by the Evangelists Matthew; and Luke.

Ver. 18. *Now these are the generations of Pharez,* etc.] The son of Judah, by Tamar before mentioned, (^{<0412>}Ruth 4:12 ^{<0329>}Genesis 38:29), for the intention of this genealogy is to confirm the truth of Jacob's prophecy, of Shiloh the Messiah coming from the tribe of Judah, (^{<0410>}Genesis 49:10) and therefore it begins with Pharez, well known to be the son of Judah, and ends with David, whose son the Messiah was to be, as is owned by all Jews and Gentiles that believe the divine revelation:

Pharez begat Hezron; who was one of those that went down with Jacob into Egypt, being born in the land of Canaan, (^{<0472>}Genesis 47:12) called Esrom in (^{<0103>}Matthew 1:3 ^{<0133>}Luke 3:33).

Ver. 19. *And Hezron begat Ram,* etc.] Called Aram by the Septuagint, and so in (^{<0103>}Matthew 1:3 ^{<0133>}Luke 3:33),

and Ram begat Amminadab; in whose name there is no variation, neither in the book of Chronicles nor in the Evangelists; both these, as well as the next, were born in Egypt.

Ver. 20. *And Amminadab begat Nahshon,* etc.] The prince of the tribe of Judah, as the Targum adds; and so he was when the Israelites were come out of Egypt, and were in the wilderness at the time of the dedication of the altar, (^{<0472>}Numbers 7:12) called Nahsson, (^{<0104>}Matthew 1:4 ^{<0132>}Luke 3:32), and Nahshon begat Salmon; or, as in the Hebrew text, Salmah, and in (^{<0111>}1 Chronicles 2:11), Salma; and yet in the verse following Salmon, as we read it.

Ver. 21. *And Salmon begat Boaz,* etc.] Of Rahab the harlot, whom he married, (^{<0105>}Matthew 1:5) the very same person that makes a principal part of this book, and whom the Targum here takes to be the judge Ibsan, (see Gill on "^{<0101>}Ruth 1:1").

and Boaz begat Obed; of Ruth; of whom see the preceding verses.

Ver. 22. *And Obed begat Jesse,* etc.] The Bethlehemite, the father of David: and Jesse begat David; the Targum adds, the king of Israel; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions add, the king; from whence it is by some concluded that this book was written by Samuel, not only after the birth of David, but after he had been anointed king by him: here being but four

generations mentioned, from the coming of the Israelites into Canaan, to the birth of David, which was three hundred and sixty years, each of the four persons, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse, must beget a son when one hundred years old and upwards; and which is not at all incredible, as appears by instances in later times, and therefore not at all improbable, that in those ancient times men of sobriety and good constitutions should have children at such an age.

FOOTNOTES

ft1 -- Onomastic. Sacr. p. 211.

ft2 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 13. 2.

ft3 -- Eccl. Hist. 1. 6. c. 25.

ft4 -- Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 1.

ft5 -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 91. 1. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 8. 2.
Jarchi & Abendana in loc.

ft6 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 12. p. 33.

ft7 -- Works, vol. 1. p. 48.

ft8 -- Rambachius in loc. & Majus in ib. so Biship Patrick. Lampe Hist.
Eccl. 1. 1. c. 5. p. 22.

ft9 -- Theolog. Hist. loc. 2. p. 84.

ft10 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 12. p. 34. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 8. 1.

ft11 -- T. Bab Bava Bathra, fol. 91. 1.

ft12 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 1.)

ft13 -- T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 23. 2. Sotah, fol. 47. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 105. 2.
Horayot, fol. 10. 2. Zohar in Deut. fol. 109. 2.

ft14 -- Apud Drusium in loc.

ft15 -- Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 8. 1.

ft16 -- Herodot Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 94.

ft17 -- Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 1.

ft18 -- $\mu\kappa\mu$ dam yl rm “amaritudo mihi (est) valde prae nobis”,
Montanus, Rambachius; so Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator,
Drusius.

ft19 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 70. fol. 62. 4. Shemot, sect. 5. fol. 94. 4.

- ft20 -- “----discedens oscula nulla dedi”. Ovid. ep. 3. ver. 14.
- ft21 -- Clericus & Rambachius.
- ft22 -- **y b y g t** | “ne occurras mihi”, Vatablus, Rambachius; “ne obstes me”, Tigurine version; “ne aduerseris mihi”, V. L. Drusius; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft23 -- Laert. in Vita Cratet.
- ft24 -- Strabo. Geograph. l. 13. p. 410.
- ft25 -- Vid. Kirchman. de Funer. Roman. l. 3. c. 14. p. 433.
- ft26 -- Antiqu. l. 5. c. 9. sect. 2.
- ft27 -- Aristoph. in Avibus, p. 565.
- ft28 -- **μ y l b b ε ν τ ο ι ς σ τ α χ υ σ ι**, Sept. “in spicis”, Montanus, Drusius, Piscator; “inter spicas”, De Dieu, Rambachius.
- ft29 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 31. 4. Vid. Jarchi & Alshech in loc.
- ft30 -- Iliad. 18. ver. 556, 557.
- ft31 -- Nat. Hist. l. 18. c. 6.
- ft32 -- De Administrat. Domestic. l. 1. c. 6.
- ft33 -- Antiqu. l. 5. c. 9. sect. 2.
- ft34 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 32. 1.
- ft35 -- Ebr. Concord. part. p. 257. No. 1150.
- ft36 -- Misnah Peah, c. 5. sect. 6.
- ft37 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 32. 3.
- ft38 -- **j a m a** “inveniam gratiam”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft39 -- Iliad. 18. ver. 559, 560.
- ft40 -- Nat. Hist. l. 23. c. 1.
- ft41 -- In loc.
- ft42 -- Christophor. “a Vega de arte Medendi”, l. 2. apud ib.
- ft43 -- Salmuth in Pancirol, par. 2. tit. 2. p. 83.

- ft44 -- Idyll, 10. ver. 13.
- ft45 -- Melrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.
- ft46 -- De Aliment. Facult. 1. 1. apud Lavater. in loc.
- ft47 -- Neumann. apud Rambachium in loc.
- ft48 -- **μyrmh yb** “inter ipsos manipulos”, Tigurine version, Rambachius.
- ft49 -- Of Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 3. p. 64.
- ft50 -- Antiqu 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 2.
- ft51 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. so Alshech in loc.
- ft52 -- Opera & Dies, l. 2. ver. 221.
- ft53 -- De re Rustica, l. 1. c. 41.
- ft54 -- “Cum graviter tunsis”, etc. Georgic. l. 3. Vid. Homer. Iliad 5. ver. 499. & Iliad, 13. ver. 588, etc.
- ft55 -- Nat. Hist. l. 22. c. 25.
- ft56 -- Midrash Ruth, ut supra. (fol. 33. 3.)
- ft57 -- “Nec pudor in stipula”, etc. Ovid. Fast. l. 1.
- ft58 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 9.
- ft59 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 31. 4. & 34. 2.
- ft60 -- **ym rçł k** “tota porta populi mei”, Montanus; so Vatablus, Tigurine version.
- ft61 -- Midrash Ruth, ut supra. (31. 4. & 34. 2) Jarchi in loc.
- ft62 -- Tiberias, c. 14. p. 38.
- ft63 -- Works, vol. 1. p. 48.
- ft64 -- In Midrash Ruth, ut supra. (fol. 31. 4. & 34. 2.)
- ft65 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 34. 14. so some in Abendana in Miclol Yophi in loc.
- ft66 -- **abyw** “et ingressus est”, Tigurine version. Drusius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

- ft67 -- **ta ym** “quid egisti?” V. L. “quid tibi?” Tigurine version; so R. Jonah in Aben Ezra, & Abendana in loc. “quomodo tu filia mea?” Nold. p. 602. No. 1626.
- ft68 -- Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft69 -- Misnah Megillah, c. 4. sect. 3. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 7. 1. Midrash Ruth, fol. 35. 1.
- ft70 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 34. 2.
- ft71 -- **ytrma ynaW** “et ego dixi”, Pagninus, Montanus, etc.
- ft72 -- Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft73 -- Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 4.
- ft74 -- Tishbi, p. 207. See Leo Modena’s History of the Rites, etc. of the present Jews, part 2. c. 6.
- ft75 -- Midrash Ruth, fol. 35. 2.
- ft76 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 4.)
- ft77 -- Misn. Yebamot, c. 8. sect. 3.
- ft78 -- Vid. Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 39. Leo Modena’s History of the Rites of the present Jews, part 4. c. 3.
- ft79 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 4.)
- ft80 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. 1. 5. c. 9. sect. 4.)
- ft81 -- Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 1. 2. c. 25.
- ft82 -- Harpocraton & Suidas in voce **εβδομενομηνου**, Scholiast. in Aristoph. Aves, p. 565. & Euripid. & Aristot. in ib.
- ft83 -- Vid. Sperling. de Baptism. Ethnic. c. 14. & 15.
- ft84 -- Ibid.