

Akdanut

Recited on the first day of Shavuot, immediately after the introductory blessing over the first aliyah, before the first aliyah's Torah reading is read:

✠

Allow me to begin saying some words:
I ask permission to speak and be heard.

Apprehensive and in awe I'll take note of two or three
of the creator's designs, who is with us at all times,

whose might is everlasting and cannot be described—
even were the heavens parchment and all the plants pens,

the ocean's waters gathered up as ink,
and everyone on earth authors and scribes.

Glorious is the master of heaven and the sovereignty of the earth
who rules it alone, having created this world,

without effort, never tiring,
with only the whoosh of a breath-like *hei*,

accomplishing it all in six days,
and in glory ascending the fiery throne.

אקדמות

Recited only on the first day of Shavuot, immediately after the introductory blessing over the first aliyah, before the first aliyah's Torah reading is read:

✠

אקדמות מלון ושוריות שותא,
אולא שקוללנא הורמן ורשותא.

פקבי תרי ותרית דאפתח פנקשותא,
פקבי דכרי וטררי עגרי לקישושותא.

פבורן עלקיין ליה ולא ספק פרישותא,
פיריל אלו רוקיעי קבי פלחורשותא.

דיון אלו נמי וקלמרי כנישותא,
דירי ארעא ספרי ורשמרי רשותא.

תדר מרי שמיא ושילטי פניפשותא,
תקנים עלקיאי ויודיאי ופכשיה פכפשותא.

ובלא לאו שקללנא, ובלא תשנותא,
ובאתא קוללנא, דלית ביה מששנותא.

זמין פל עידיבתיה פרהו יומי שותא,
זדורו לקרייה עלי, עלי כרפיה דאשותא.

blessing of the author: *Meir bar rabbi yitzhak, yigdal bi-torah u-v'ha-asin touvin, amen v'haazak ve-emitz*, "Meir bar Rabbi Isaac, may he grow in Torah and good deeds, amen, may he be strengthened!" There is a consistent rhyme throughout: each line concludes with a word ending in *tav-dalef* (the first and final letters of the alphabet), pronounced as *ta*. There is also a consistent meter. Akdamut is sung to a melody that is thought to be at least a thousand years old. The explanatory comments that follow are primarily based on the scholarly work of Jonah Frankel in *Mahzor Shavuot*. We have divided the poem into sections so that congregations can choose to recite only some parts of the *piyyut*.

AT ALL TIMES יקרישעותא עגרי לקישעותא. Literally, "to old age."

WITH A BREATH-LIKE "HEI" בארתא קלילא, דלית בה תשעותא. Literally, "with the sound of a letter that has no substance." The midrash (Genesis Rabbah 12:10) understands the word *b'hibaram* ("when they were created," Genesis 2:4) to be parsed as *b'hei b'ram*, "God created them [heaven and earth] by using the letter *hei*." The midrash reads: "*B'hibaram*: Rabbi Abbahu said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: With a *hei* [God] created them. Just as all the letters (of the alphabet) make a sound and the *hei* does not, so too did the blessed Holy One create the world without labor and effort." (Jeffrey Hoffman)

AKDAMUT. Many *piyyutin* were written in Aramaic to introduce the Torah reading. The custom probably originated in those communities that read the Torah in Hebrew while a translator spoke in Aramaic, the common language of the Western Middle East. This particular *piyyut* became a favorite of European congregations and is often recited with a distinctive tune. Jeffrey Hoffman argues that an important reason for its prominence is due to legends about its supposed authorship by a Jewish martyr. The poem's end, with its promise of the reward of the righteous, fits this legendary authorship. Thus the Torah reading is preceded by an encomium to Israel for their devotion to God and a description of the reward to the righteous.

The poem is arranged with the initial letters of each line forming a double alphabetical acrostic, followed by an acrostic spelling out the author's name with a concluding

ב

An army of tens of thousands who serve the Divine are newly born each and every day—so great are God’s ways.

While hordes of fiery seraphs adorned with six wings wait silently for the signal to sing—

which with no hesitation they grant each other—and then fill the world with the threefold holy verse.

And as if the sound came from God or the roar of the sea, opposite the cherubim, *ofanim* loudly rise in a wave

to see with their own eyes the Face, a bow in the sky—before rushing to go on their way.

In that place where God resides, never to be found, they bless God’s glory in every language spoken.

Then, all the heavenly army, in awe, shouts praise, acknowledging the one who rules, in each generation, always.

ב

חיל אֵלֵי אַלְפֵי וְרִבְוֵי לְשִׁמְתוֹתָא,
חֲדָתָיוּן בְּבוֹט לְאַפְרֵיךְ סַפְיָאָה טְרַשׁוֹתָא.
טַפְיֵי וְקוֹדְדֵי שְׁרִפְוֵי, כְּלוּל גַּפְיֵי שְׁתָּא,
סַעֲיָם עֵדִי וְתִיָּהֵב לְהוּי שְׁחִינְקוֹן פְּאֹדְשׁתָּא.

קְבֻלְלוּן דְּדוֹן מִן דְּדוֹן שְׁרֵי דְּלֵא בְּשִׁשְׁתָּא,
יָקֵר מְלֵי כְּלֵאֲרַעָא לְחַלּוֹתֵי קְדוֹשְׁתָּא.
פְּקֵל מִן קְדָם שְׂדֵי פְּקֵל מִי כְּפִישׁוֹתָא,
פְּרוּבֵינְךָ קְבֻלְ גַּלְגַּלֵּינְךָ מְרוֹמְמֵינְךָ פְּאֹדְשׁתָּא,
לְמַדְוֵי בְּאַנְפָּא עֵין פְּנוֹת גְּבוּרֵי קִישְׁתָּא,
לְכַלְאַתְר דְּמִשְׁתַּלְחֵינְךָ זְרוּיִין פְּאִשְׁוֹתָא.
מְבֻרְכֵינְךָ פְּרוּרֵי יָקֵרִיָּה פְּכַלְלֵשׁוֹן לְחַדִּישׁוֹתָא,
מְאַתְר פְּרִית שְׂכִינְתָּתָא, דְּלֵא אַרְיֵךְ פְּחִישׁוֹתָא.
נְהָם כְּלֵחֵיל מְרוֹמָא מְקַלְסֵין בְּחִשְׁשׁתָּא,
נְרוּרָא מְלִכּוֹתֵיהּ, לְדֵר וְדֵר לְאַפְרִישׁתָּא.

NEWLY BORN אַלְפֵי וְרִבְוֵי לְשִׁמְתוֹתָא, according to an opinion in the Babylonian Talmud, angels are created anew each day, recite their praise of God, and then disappear (Hagggah 14a).

THREEFOLD HOLY SONG קְבֻלְלוּתֵי קְדוֹשְׁתָּא The words of the Kedushah—“Holy, holy, holy is Adonai! Tzvaot, the whole world is filled with God’s glory”—is recited by the angels closest to the divine throne each morning.

THE CHERUBIM פְּרוּבֵינְךָ This stanza is based on Ezekiel’s vision of the heavens: “When they moved, I could hear the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, or the sound of the Almighty, a tumult like the din of an army” (1:24). After the description of the angelic beings, Ezekiel sees God enthroned: “Like the appearance of the bow that shines in the clouds on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the surrounding radiance” (1:28). This first chapter of the Book of Ezekiel is read as the *haftarah* on the first day of Shavuot.

THE HEAVENLY ARMY מְבֻרְכֵינְךָ פְּרוּרֵי The poet now returns to the army of angels mentioned at the beginning of this section. They are the lowest level of angels and offer their praise last.

ו The sanctification is so ordered, that should an angel miss its singular time, it ceases to exist, never completing the task assigned.

But God's congregation is held dear, for twice each day they offer praise when light dawns and when the sun goes away.

They are distinguished as God's portion, to do God's will, and describe God's wonders with words they pray.

God wants and desires the effort expended;

their prayers are accepted, their petition effected,

forming a crown, as promised, for the giver of life to the world, near the precious *tefillin*, worn by their creator,

and which—with true judgment and wisdom—is inscribed with the greatness of Israel who affirm God as one.

ו

The praise of the world's master, just expressed,

I would address to the kingdoms who rule on earth,

who shall come and assemble like ocean's waves—disconcerted by the wonders and signs—they ask:

“Who is your lover, beautiful to behold,

for whose sake you die in the lion's den?”

continued

ו כִּדְרֵיךָ בְּהוֹן קְדוֹשְׁתִּימָה, וְכִד תִּלְכָּא שְׁעִיתָא, סִימָימָא דְלְעֵלָם, וְאֹהֵי לֹא לְשַׁבּוּתָתָא.

עֵדֵב יָקֵר אִתְחַסְתְּמִימָה תְּבִיבִין דְּבִקְעִיתָא,

עֲבִידָא לִיָּה תְּחִיבָא פֻדְרָה וּשְׁקִיעִיתָא.

פְּרִישְׁוֹן לְמַתְנִימָה, לְמַעַבְד לִיָּה רְשׁוּתָא,

פְּרִישְׁתִּי שְׁבַחְהִיָּה יְהוּוֹן פְּשְׁעִיתָא.

אַבִּי וְחַמְדֵּי וְרַגְגֵּי דְלֵאֲוֹן פְּלַעֲוִיתָא,

אַלּוּתְהוֹן פְּכוּן מְקַבְּל וְהִיָּיא בְּשׁוּתָא.

קְסִיגְרָא לְהִי עֲלֵמָא פְּתַנָּא פְּשׁוּבְעִיתָא,

קְבֵל יָקֵר סוֹטְפִתָּא יְחִיבָא בְּקַבְעִיתָא.

רְשִׁימָא הִיא נּוּפָא פְּחַמְקָתָא וּבְדִיעִיתָא,

רְכוּוּתָא דִּישְׁרָאֵל קְרָאֵי פְּשַׁמְעִיתָא.

ו

שְׁבַח רַבּוֹן עֲלֵמָא, אֲמִירָא דְכִנּוּתָא,

שְׁפֵר עֲלֵי לְהוֹזִיָּה, פֶּאֶפִּי מְלַפְּוֹתָא.

תִּיאֵי וּמְתַפְּשִׁין פְּדִחוּ: אֲדוּתָא,

תְּמַדְוִין וְלִשְׁלִיָּן לֵה פְּעַסְקֵי אֲתוּתָא.

מְנוּ וּמֵאֵן הוּא רְחִימָה שְׁפָרָה בְּרִיּוּתָא,

אַרוּם פְּבִיגִיָּה סְפִיִת מְדוּר אֲרִיּוּתָא.

continued

TO THE KINGDOMS WHO RULE ON EARTH
בְּתַפְּי רֵבִיבָא. This entire section is a poetic rendition of the description by Rabbi Akiwa of the nations of the world coming to Israel and asking how they might be rewarded like Israel (Mekhilta Shirata 3).

YOU DIE IN THE LION'S DEN אֲרִיּוּתָא מְדוּרָא. Daniel was thrown into the lion's den but was saved. Subsequent Jewish generations suffered actual martyrdom, but Daniel—living in exile and persecuted as a Jew, and willing to suffer the consequences—was a model for those who came after.

We would be honored and rewarded if you would join with us; we will fulfill your desires wherever you dwell.”

Her wise response describes the end of days:
“Would that you knew God in a genuine way!

What is the worth of your greatness today,
compared to what awaits me when God’s deliverance comes?

On me and mine God’s light will shine, but you shall be
covered with shame,

as God’s glory is revealed in all its power and pride,
for then God will repay haters and foes
and vindicate this nation beloved as a bride.”

These pure vessels shall celebrate with joy,
when ingathered exiles enter Jerusalem’s gates,
where glory shall cover them day and night,
a canopy for a wedding where blessings are sung.

Radiant clouds of glory shall shine on each one
according to the deeds that they have done.

ד

On couches of pure gold, in seven rows,
the righteous, seated, face the Master of deeds.

Their appearance is that of satisfied delight,
shining like the splendid heaven and stars burning bright,
reflecting a beauty that lips can’t express,
nor was ever heard or seen in a prophet’s dream.

continued

יָקָרָא וַיֵּאָדָה אֲתָה, אִין תַּעֲרָבֵי לְמָרוֹתָהּ,
וְעוֹנוֹתֶיהָ נַעֲבֹד לִיהָ בְּכָל־תְּרוֹתָהּ.

בְּתַבְּרֹתֶיהָ מְתִיבָא לְהוּן קִרְצָת לְהוֹדְעוֹתָהּ,
יְדַעְתִּינָהוּ תַפְּמִין לִיהָ פֶּאֶשְׁתִּימָוֶד עוֹתָהּ.

רְבוּהוֹבֵנוּן מִזָּה תְּשִׁיבָא קָבֵל הַהִיא שְׂבַחְתָּהּ,
רְבוּתָהּ דִּיעֲבֹד לִי, פִּי מְטִיא, וְיִשׁוּעָתָהּ.

בְּמִיתִי לִי בְּהוֹרָא, וְתַחֲפִי לְכוּן בְּהַתָּא,
וְקָרִיָה פִּד יִתְגַּלִּי בְּתַקְשָׁא וּבַיּוֹתָהּ.

יִשְׁלֵם גְּמֻלָּיא לְשֹׂנְאֵי וּנְנוּתָהּ,
אַדְקָתָהּ לְעַם חַפִּיב וְסַפִּי זְכוּתָהּ.

חֲדוּ שְׂלָמָא בְּמִיתִי וּמְנָא דְכוּתָהּ,
קָרִיָתָהּ דִּירוּשָׁלַם פִּד יִכְפֹּשׁ וְלָתָהּ.

וְקָרִיָה מְטִייל עֲלִיָה בִּיּוֹמֵי וְלִילוֹתָהּ,
וְבַנְּוִיָה לְמַעַבְד פֶּה בְּתַשְׁבּוּחַן פְּלִלְתָהּ.

יְדוּדוּר עֲנַנְיָא לְמִשְׁפַּר פִּירִתָהּ,
לְפוּמָא דְעִבְדִּיתָהּ עֲבִידוּן מְטִילְתָהּ.

ד

בְּתַבְּרֹתֶיהָ דְהָב פִּזָּא וְשִׁבְעֵי מַעֲלָתָהּ,
תְּחַתִּימִין אַדִּיקֵי קְדוּם רַב פְּעֻלְתָהּ.

וְרִיּוּיָהוּן דְּמִי לְשִׁבְעָא חֲדוּתָהּ,
וְקִיעָא בְּדוּחֵיהָ וּכּוּכְבֵי זִיוָתָהּ.

חֲדוּרָא דְלֵא אִפְשֵׁר לְמַפְרֵט סְפוּתָהּ,
וְלֵא אִשְׁתַּמְעֵי וְחַמִּי נְבִיאָן חוּזוֹתָהּ.

continued

JOIN WITH US
תַּעֲרָבֵי לְמָרוֹתָהּ. The nations ask
the Jewish people to leave
their Judaism behind.

HER WISE RESPONSE
גַּבְתִּימָוֶד עוֹתָהּ. That is:
Israel’s.

ACCORDING TO THE DEEDS
לְפוּמָא דְעִבְדוֹתָהּ. The
Babylonian Talmud asserts
that the glory which each
person will experience in
the world that is coming
will be in accordance with
the deeds the person has
performed in this world
(Bava Batra 75a).

In the Garden of Eden, which no eye has yet seen, they circle in dance with the Shekhinah herself.

Filled with awe, they point to the Divine,
“In captivity, we lived with hope and great faith

in the one who forever leads us as youths in our prime to the portion prepared for us from the beginning of time.”

Leviathan and the bull on the mountain on high
wrestle one another, in battle and war:

Behemoth, the bull going deeply with great horns,
Leviathan with mighty fins slicing the beast.

Their creator approaches them with sword unsheathed,
serving them up to the righteous as a delicious feast.

The virtuous are seated at tables made of rubies and jewels,
with floats of fragrant flowers flowing between them,

and from cups overflowing they drink with satisfaction and elation
the juice of the vines preserved since the time of creation.

1
O you upright, as the praise in this song has just expressed,
your place is assured in this great congregation.

To be seated in these rows on high, you shall be found worthy,
for you obeyed the divine words uttered in glory.

Exalted is our God from first to last,
who desired us, and gave us the Torah to hold fast.

פלא שְׁלֵטָא ביה עיני פְּנֵי עֵדֶן פּוֹמְתָא,
מְטוּיָלֵי בִי חֲנֻפָא לְבַחֲדֵי דְשִׁבְחֵינָתָא.

עֲלִיָּה רָמְעֵי דְדִין הוּא, פְּרָם פְּאַמְתְּוֹנֵינָתָא,
שְׁבִרְתָּא לֵיה פִּשְׁבִּיגֵן, תְּקוּוּף תְּמַנְוֹנָתָא.

דְּדַבֵּר לָן עֲלָמֵינוּ עֲלָמֵינוּ מְדַמְוֹנָתָא,
מְנַת דְּלָן דְּמַלְקָדְמֵינוּ פִּרְשׁ פְּאַמְוֹנָתָא.

סְלוּלָא דְלוּיָתָן וְחֹרֵן סוּר רְמוֹנָתָא,
וְחַד פְּרַחַד פִּי סִבְיָה וְעֵבֵד קְרָבוֹתָא.

פְּקַרְנוּדֵי מְעַמְתָּ בְּהַמּוֹת פְּרֻכּוֹתָא,
וְקִרְטַע נֹון לְקַלְקֵלִיָּה פִּצְיָעֵי בְּגִבּוֹתָא.

מְקַרְבֵּי לֵיה פְּרִיָּה פְּחֻרְפִּיָּה רְבִיבוֹתָא,
אַרְסָטוֹן לְצִדִּיקֵי יְתֵקֵן וְשִׁוְוֹתָא.

מְסַחֲרֵינוּ עֲלֵי תַבִּי דְּכַדְפּוֹד וְגַמְוִתָּתָא,
בְּגִידֵינוּ קְמִיָּהוּן אֲפֻרְסָמוֹן גְּבוֹרָתָא.

וְמַתְּקִפְנֵקֵינוּ וְרוּלֵינוּ פִּכְסֵי רְוִיָּתָא,
חֲמַר מְרַת דְּמַפְרָאֲשֵׁית נְטִירֵי בִי בְּעוֹנָתָא.

1
זָבֵאֵן בִּי שְׁמַעְתָּוֵינוּ שְׁבַח דָּא שְׁרִתָּא,
קְיָבִיעֵינוּ פִּן תְּהוּוֹן פְּהַנְהוּוּ תְּבוֹוֹרָתָא.

וְתוֹבֵנוּ דֵי תִיַּתְּכֵנוּ פְּעֵלָא דְרִתָּא,
אַרִי תְּצִיָּתָנוּ לְמַלְאִי דְּתַפְקִין בְּהַדְרָתָא.

מְלוֹמֵם הוּא אֵלֹהֵינוּ פְּקוּדְמַתָּא וּבְתִרְוִתָּא,
צָבִי וְאַתְרֵנְעֵי בְּן וּמְסַר לָן אֹרְוִתָּא.

LEVIATHAN AND THE BULL
Leviathan is mentioned in various places in the Bible, including the conclusion of the Book of Job (40:19, 25), as a sea monster. The Book of Job also describes Behemoth, assumed to be a bull, who is “the first in creation,” and who is so strong that “only his Maker can draw the sword against him.” Jewish legend envisioned both creatures being slaughtered at the end of days, becoming the fish and meat delicacies to be consumed by the righteous.

TO THE UPRIGHT AS A DELICIOUS FEAST
אֲרִסְטוֹן לְצִדִּיקֵינוּ
Earlier, the poet had described an other-worldly realm populated by angels; here, the promised reward in the world that is coming is populated by the righteous. There, the poem describes the angels serving God; here, the faithful are served a meal by God. Having confronted the challenge of the other nations and prevailed, the faithful now rise higher and closer to God than even the angels.

וְזָבֵאֵן דְּמַתְּקִיפְנֵינוּ
This section of the poem spirals back to its beginning. The poet opened with an address to the congregation and now concludes addressing them with words of comfort. The last line speaks of Torah, since the poem serves as an introduction to the reading of the Torah.

The Scroll of Ruth

CHAPTER 1

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man of Bethlehem in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to reside in the country of Moab. The man's name was Elimelekh, his wife's name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the country of Moab and remained there.

Elimelekh, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth, and they lived there about ten years. Then those two—Mahlon and Chilion—also died; so the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.

She started out with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab; for in the country of Moab she had heard that Adonai had taken note of the people and given them food. Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah.

But Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, "Turn back, each of you to her mother's house. May Adonai grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!" And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping and said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Have I any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you?"

Turn back, my daughters, for I am too old to be married. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I were married tonight and I also bore sons, should you wait for them to grow up? Should you on their account debar yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for the hand of Adonai has struck out against me."

They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law."

But Ruth replied, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may Adonai do to me if anything but death parts me from you." When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her; and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem.

מגילת רות

פרק א

וַיְהִי בַיּוֹמֵי שֹׁפֵט הַשְּׁפָטִים וַיְהִי רָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ יוּדָה וַאֲשֶׁר אִישׁ מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה לָבֹר בְּשָׂדֵי מוֹאָב הוּאָ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִמֶלֶךְ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נְעֹמִי וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי בָנָיו מַחְלֹן וְכִלְיוֹן אֶפְרַתִּים מִבֵּית לָחֶם יְהוּדָה וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׂדֵי-מוֹאָב וַיְהִי-שָׁם: וַיָּמָת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ אִישׁ בְּעַמִּי וַתִּשְׁאָר הָיָא וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו: וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לָחֶם נְשִׂימ מַלְבֹּאֲת שֵׁם הָאִחָת עֲרֹפָה וְשֵׁם הַשְּׂרִירָת רוּת וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם בְּעִשְׂרֵי שָׁנִים: וַיָּמוּתוּ נְסִי-בָנֵיהֶם מִחִלּוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן וַתִּשְׁאָר הָאִשָּׁה מְשֻׁבֵּי יְלָדֶיהָ וַתֹּאמַר אִשָּׁה:

וַתִּקֶּם הָיָא וְכִלְיוֹנָה וַתֵּשֶׁב מְשֻׁבֵּי מוֹאָב בִּי שְׂמַעְיָה בִּשְׂדֵי מוֹאָב בְּרִפְקָד יְהוּדָה אֲחִיעֲזָר לָחֶם לָחֶם: וַתֵּצֵא מִן הַמְּקוֹם וְאִשֶׁר הוֹתֵדָה-שָׂמָּה וּשְׁתֵּי כִלְיוֹנָה עִמָּהּ וַתִּלְכְּבָהּ בְּדָרֶךְ לָשׁוּב אֶל-אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה:

וַתֹּאמֶר נְעֹמִי לְשְׁתֵּי כִלְיוֹנָהּ לָכֵּן שָׂבִנָה אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּה יַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֲסִד פֹּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם עִם-הַפְּתוּמִים וְעַמְדִי: יָמִן יְהוּדָה לָכֶם וּמִצָּאֵן מְנוּחָה אִשָּׁה בֵּית אִישָׁה וַתִּשְׁקֶן לָהֶן וַתִּשְׁאָנָה קוּלָן וַחֲבֻרָנָה: וַתֹּאמְרוּ-בָהּ לָהֶּן כִּי-אִתָּךְ נָלוּב לְעַמְּךָ: וַתֹּאמֶר נְעֹמִי שָׂבִנָה בְּנִתִי מִלְכָּה וַתִּלְכְּבָה עִמָּי הַעַד-לִי בָנִים בְּמִעֵי וְהָיָו לָכֶם לְאֶנְשֵׁימ:

שָׂבִנָה בְּנִתִי לָכֵן בִּי זָקְנָתִי מִהָיִית לָאִשָּׁה בִּי אֲמֹרָתִי יֵשׁ-לִי חֲקוּלָה עִם הָיִיתִי הַלֵּילָה לָאִישׁ וְגַם זָלְדָתִי בָנִים: הֲלָהֶן וַתִּשְׁפָּרְבָה עַד אִשֶׁר יָגִדְלִי הַלָּהֶן תַּעֲנֶנָּה לְכִלְיוֹת דְּהִיִּית לָאִישׁ אֶל בְּנִתִי כִּי-מִרְ-לֵ מֵאֹד מִפָּס כִּי-יִצְאָהּ כִּי יִדְוִדוּהָ:

וַתִּשְׁנֶה קוּלָן וַחֲבֻרָנָה עִדָּה וַתִּשְׁק עֲרֹפָה לְהַמְלוֹתָהּ וְרוּת דְּבָקָה בָּהּ: וַתֹּאמֶר דְּבָהּ שָׂבָה בְּמִתְּךָ אֶל-עַמְּךָ וְאֶל-אִלֹּהֶיךָ שׁוּבִי אִתִּי: בְּמִתְּךָ:

וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת אֶל-תַּפְנְעֵי-נְיָ לְעֻזְבֶּךָ לָשׁוּב מֵאֲחֵרֶיךָ כִּי אֵל-אִשֶׁר תִּלְכִּי אֶלָּהּ וּבְאִשֶׁר תִּלְוִי אֶלָּי עִמָּךְ וְאֶלְחֹן אֶלְהָי: בְּאִשֶׁר תִּמְנוּתִי אֲמוּנָה וְשֵׁם אֲקַבֵּר בָּהּ יַעֲשֵׂהָ יְהוָה לִי וְכֹחַ יִסְדֶּךָ כִּי תִשְׁנוּת יָפִיד בְּיַד וּבִינָה: וַתֵּרָא כִּי-מִתְאַמְצָת הָיָא לְלֶבֶת אִמָּה וַתַּחְדֵּל לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ: וַתִּלְכְּבָה שְׁתֵּי-הֵמָּה עַד-בָּצָנָה בֵּית לָחֶם

THE SCROLL OF RUTH. Each of the festivals is distinguished by the reading of one of the *megillot*. One of the five scrolls. There are many reasons for the association of the Scroll of Ruth with the Festival of Shavuot. Shavuot celebrates the receiving of the Torah at Sinai, and in Jewish tradition Ruth is considered to be the first convert. We, in celebrating the Torah, place ourselves in Ruth's shoes; on this day of Shavuot, it is as if we receive the Torah anew.

The book is permeated with acts of kindness and love beginning with Ruth's relationship with her mother-in-law and continuing with Boaz and Ruth and the kindness they show each other and the love they consume. In this understanding, the Torah is ultimately about teaching us how to love both God and our fellow human beings. Further, the return to the Land of Israel takes place at the time of the harvest—and Shavuot is a harvest festival.

The translation is taken from the Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh*, as are the notes marked "JPS" (with slight adaptations to match the style of this volume).

Naomi The name means "pleasantness."
MARA מָרָא The name means "bitterness."

ויהי כבאנה בית לָחֵם ותָּחֵם כִּלְהַעֲרִי עֲלֵיהֶן והאמרו
הזאת נָעֲמִי: ותאמר אליהן אל־תקראנה לִי נָעֲמִי קְרָאן
לִי מָרָא כִּי־דַמְרִי שָׂדֵי לִי מָאֵד: אֵינִי מִלְּאֵה הַלְכֹתִי וְיִקָּם
הַיְשִׁיבֵנִי יְהוָה לְמָחָּה תִּקְרָאנָה לִי נָעֲמִי ויהוה עָנָה כִּי וַשְׂדֵי
הָרָע לִי:

וּמַעֲשֵׂב נָעֲמִי וְיִהְיֶה הַמִּזְוֵאֲבִיחַ כְּלֶחֶה עֲפָה הַשָּׂבִיחַ מִשְׂדֵי
מִזְוֵאֵב הַחֶמֶץ בָּאוּ בֵּית לָחֵם בַּחֲתֻלַּת קִצְוִיר שְׁעָרֵיהֶם:

פרק ב

וּלְנָעֲמִי מוֹדַע לְאוֹיְשָׁה אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר הָיִל מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֲלִימֶלֶךְ
וַשְׁמִו בָּעַי: וְהֵאמְרוּ הוֹת הַמִּזְוֵאֲבִיחַ אֶל־נָעֲמִי אֶל־דֹּדָהּ הַשְּׂדֵיחַ
וְאֶל־קִטְטָה בַשָּׂפְלִים אַחֵר אֲשֶׁר אִמְצָא־הֶן בְּעֵינָיו וְהֵאמְרוּ לָהּ
לָכֵי בַתִּי: וּמַלְקָה וּמִבּוֹא וּמִלְקִט בַּשְּׂדֵה אַחֵרִי הַקִּצְוִירִים וַיִּקְרָר
מִקֶּדֶה הַחֲקֹת הַשְּׂדֵה לָכַעַז אֲשֶׁר מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֲלִימֶלֶךְ:
וְהַדְּבָר־לָכַעַז בָּא מִבַּיִת לָחֵם וַיֵּאמֶר לְקוֹצְוִירִים יְהוָה עֲמָכֶם
וַיֵּאמְרוּ לוֹ וְכִרְכַּךְ יְהוָה: וַיֵּאמֶר בָּעַז לְכַעֲזוֹ הַנּוֹצֵב עַל־
הַקִּוְצְוִירִים לָמֵי הַתַּעְרָה הַזֹּאת: וַיַּעַן הַנּוֹעֵב הַנּוֹצֵב עַל־
הַקִּוְצְוִירִים מִזְוֵאֵב: וְהֵאמְרוּ אֶל־קִטְטָה־דָּדָהּ בְּעֵמֶלֶיךָ אַחֵרִי
הַקִּוְצְוִירִים וּמִבּוֹא וּמִעֲמֹלֹת מִצֹּד הַבְּקָר וְעַד־עֲתָה זֹדָה שְׂבִיחָה
הַבַּיִת מָעֵט: וַיֵּאמְרוּ בָּעַז אֶל־לוֹת הַלֹּא שְׂמַעְתָּ בַתִּי אֶל־
תְּלִי לְלֶקֶט בַּשְּׂדֵה אַחֵר וְגַם לֹא תַעֲבוּרִי מִזֶּה וְכֹה תִדְבַּקוּן
עַם־דַּעֲרֹתִי: עֵינֶיךָ בַּשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר־קִצְוִירוֹן וְחִלְכַת אַחֲרֵיהֶן
הַלֹּא צְוִירֵי אַחֲרֵיהֶן־עֹרְעִים לְכַלְתֵּי בְּמַעַן וְהַלְכַת אֶל־
הַכְּלָיִם וְשִׂחֵת מֵאֲשֶׁר יִשְׂאָבוּן הַנְּעָרִים:

וּמַתְּעִל עַל־כְּפִיךָ וּתְשַׁתְּחֹדוּ אֶרְצָה וְהֵאמְרוּ אֵלַי מִדֹּעַ מֵאֲחֵרֵי
תָּן בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְחַפְזֵי וְיִגְבְּרִי כְּבָרִידָה:

וַיַּעַן בָּעַז וַיֵּאמֶר לָהּ הִגֵּד הִגֵּד לִי כֹל אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשִׂית אַתְּ־חַמוּלֹתֶךָ
אַחֲרַי מוֹת אִישׁוֹ וּתְעַזְבִּי אֲבִיךָ וְאֶמְךָ וְאֶרְצְךָ מוֹלְדֹתֶךָ וּתְלַלִּי
אֶל־עַם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִדְעַתָּה תַּמּוֹל שְׁלֹשִׁים: יִשְׁלַם יְהוָה שְׂעָלְךָ
וּתְהִי מִשְׁפַּחְתְּךָ שְׂלֵמָה מֵעַתָּה אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־רָפְאוֹת
לְחַסְוֹת תַּחַת־כַּנְּפֵיךָ:

וְהֵאמְרוּ אִמְצָא־הֶן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֲדֹלַי כִּי מִחֲמַתִּי וְכִי דַבַּרְתָּ
עַל־כֵּךְ שְׂפַחְתָּהּ וְאִגְבִּי לֹא אֲהִיָּה פֹאחַת שְׂפַחְתֶּיךָ:

When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole city buzzed with excitement over them. The women said, “Can this be Naomi?” Do not call me Naomi,” she replied. “Call me Mara, for Shaddai has made my lot very bitter. I went away full, and Adonai has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi, when Adonai has dealt harshly with me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!”

Thus Naomi returned from the country of Moab; she returned with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabite. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

CHAPTER 2

Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband’s side, a man of substance, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “I would like to go to the fields and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone who may show me kindness.” “Yes, daughter, go,” she replied; and off she went. She came and gleaned in a field, behind the reapers; and, as luck would have it, it was the piece of land belonging to Boaz, who was of Elimelech’s family.

Presently Boaz arrived from Bethlehem. He greeted the reapers, “May Adonai be with you!” And they responded, “May Adonai bless you!” Boaz said to the servant who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose girl is that?” The servant in charge of the reapers replied, “She is a Moabite girl who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.’ She has been on her feet ever since she came this morning. She has rested but little in the hut.” Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen to me, daughter. Don’t go to glean in another field. Don’t go elsewhere, but stay here close to my girls. Keep your eyes on the field they are reaping, and follow them. I have ordered the men not to molest you. And when you are thirsty, go to the jars and drink some of [the water] that the men have drawn.”

She prostrated herself with her face to the ground, and said to him, “Why are you so kind as to single me out, when I am a foreigner?”

Boaz said in reply, “I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had not known before. May Adonai reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from Adonai, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge!” She answered, “You are most kind, my lord, to comfort me and to speak gently to your maidservant—though I am not so much as one of your maidservants.”

At mealtime, Boaz said to her, “Come over here and partake of the meal, and dip your morsel in the vinegar.” So she sat down beside the reapers. He handed her roasted grain, and she ate her fill and had some left over. When she got up again to glean, Boaz gave orders to his workers, “You are not only to let her glean among the sheaves, without interference, but you must also pull some stalks out of the heaps and leave them for her to glean, and not scold her.”

She gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned—it was about an *ephah* of barley—and carried it back with her to the town. When her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned, and when she also took out and gave her what she had left over after eating her fill, her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be he who took such generous notice of you!” So she told her mother-in-law whom she had worked with, saying, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Blessed be he of ADONAI, who has not failed in kindness to the living or to the dead! For,” Naomi explained to her daughter-in-law, “the man is related to us; he is one of our redeeming kinsmen.” Ruth the Moabite said, “He even told me, ‘Stay close by my workers until all my harvest is finished.’” And Naomi answered her daughter-in-law Ruth, “It is best, daughter, that you go out with his girls, and not be annoyed in some other field.” So she stayed close to the maid-servants of Boaz, and gleaned until the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were finished. Then she stayed at home with her mother-in-law.

CHAPTER 3

Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “Daughter, I must seek a home for you, where you may be happy. Now there is our kinsman Boaz, whose girls you were close to. He will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor tonight. So bathe, anoint yourself, dress up, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not disclose yourself to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, note the place where he lies down, and go over and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what you are to do.” She replied, “I will do everything you tell me.” She went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. Boaz ate and drank, in a cheerful mood went to lie down beside the granple. Then she went over stealthily and uncovered his feet and lay down. In the middle of the night, the man gave a start and pulled back—there was a woman lying at his feet!

“Who are you?” he asked. And she replied, “I am your handmaid Ruth. Spread your robe over your handmaid, for you are a redeeming kinsman.”

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ בֹּעַז בֹּעַז לָעֵת הָאֵלֶּךָ גְּשִׁי הִלֵּם וְאִכְלַת מִדֹרְתֶיךָם וְטִבַּלְתְּ פַתְּךָ בַּחֲמִץ וְהִשַׁב מֵאֵד הַקּוֹזְלוֹתַיִם וַיִּצְפֹּץ לָהּ קָלִי וְהִיאִכַל וְהִשִּׁיבֶנּוּ וְהִתְנַחַּח: וְתִמְקֵם לְלֶקֶט וַיֵּצֵא בִיעָז אֶרְתִּיעִי וַיֹּאמֶר עִמָּךְ גַּם בִּין הַעֲמֻרַיִם תִּלְקֹט וְלֹא תִקְלִימֹתַי: וְגַם שְׁלֹשְׁתֶּיךָ לָהּ מִדֹרְתֶיךָ יִשְׁעוּ בְתָמָם וְלֶקֶטְךָ וְלֹא תִנְעָרִירֶיכָּהּ:

וְתִלְקֹט שִׂשְׁדָּה עַד־הַעֲרֹב וְתִחַטֵּב אֶת אֲשֵׁר־לְקֹטְךָ וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר־שָׁעִירִים: וְתִשָּׂא וְתִבְאֵה הָעִיר וְתִמְרָא מִסֹּחֲתָהּ אֶת אֲשֵׁר־לְקֹטְךָ וְתוֹצֵא וְתִתְּנֶנּוּ לָהּ אֶת אֲשֵׁר־הוֹחֲתֶנּוּהָ מִשְׁבַּעְתָּהּ: וְהִיאִמְרָה לָהּ תְּמֹלֶת־אֵיפָה לְקֹטְתָהּ הַיּוֹם וְאַתָּה עֲשִׂיתָ יְהִי כַּמִּיָּד בְּיָדְךָ וְתִתְּנֶנּוּ לָהּ מִבְּמֹתָהּ אֶת אֲשֵׁר־עֲשִׂיתָהּ עִמָּךְ וְהִיאִמְרָ שֶׁם הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתָ עִמָּי עַמּוֹ הַיּוֹם בִּיעָז: וְהִיאִמְרָ נְעַמִּי לְקֹלְתָהּ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לִי־הוּא אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עֲצֹב חִסְדּוֹ אֶרְתִּירֵיִים וְאֶרְתִּירֵמִיִים וְהִיאִמְרָ לָהּ תִּמְרָא לָהּ נְעַמִּי קְרוֹב לִבּוֹ הָאִישׁ מִבְּאֵלָנֶי הוּא: וְהִיאִמְרָ רוּחַ תְּמֹלֶת־אֵיפָה גַּם בִּי־אִמְרָ אֵלַי עַם־הַעֲמֻרַיִם אֲשֵׁר־לִי תִתְּנֶנּוּ עִד־אִם־פִּילּוֹ אֶת כָּל־הַקְּצֵיר אֲשֵׁר־לִי: וְהִיאִמְרָ נְעַמִּי אֲלֵרְוֹת פִּלְתָּהּ טוֹב בְּיָמַי כִּי תִצְאֵל עִם־נַעֲמֹתֶיךָ וְלֹא יִפְגְּעוּ־יָדְךָ בְּשִׂדָּה אַחֵר: וְתִמְדְּבִק בְּנַעֲרוֹת פִּיעָז לְלֶקֶט עַד־כָּלוֹת קִצְצֵיהֶם אֲשֵׁר־יִרְמָזוּ וְתִחַטֵּב וְתִשָּׂא אֶת־הַמֹּלֶתֶת:

פסוק 3

וְהִיאִמְרָ לָהּ נְעַמִּי תְּמֹלֶת־הֵי עִמָּי הִלֵּם אֲבִישְׁנִיךָ מִנְּוֹת אֲשֶׁר יִישְׁבִי לָךְ: וְעִתָּה הִלֵּם בִּיעָז מִדְּעֻתְכֵנו אֲשֶׁר הִיִּית אֶרְתִּיעִי וְתוֹתִי הַיּוֹם־הַזֶּה זָרָה אֶת־הַגֶּר הַשְּׂעִירִים הַלְּלוּהָ: וְהִתְנַחַּח | וְסִבַּח וְשִׁבַּח שְׁמֵיךָ עֲלֶיךָ וְהִרְדִּית הַגֶּר אֶל־תְּוֹדִיעִי לְאִישׁ עַד כָּלְתוֹ לְאִכָּל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת: וַיְהִי בִּישְׁבֵנו וַיְדַעַת אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁפֹּב־שָׁם וּבָאת וּגְלִית מִרְגְּלֶיךָ וַיִּשְׁכַּבְתָּ וְהוּא יִגְדִּי לָךְ אֶת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂי: וְהִיאִמְרָ אֵלֶיךָ כָּל אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאמְרִי אֵלַי אַעֲשֶׂה: וְתִמְרָד הַגֶּר וְתַעֲשֶׂה כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר־צִוִּיתָהּ תְּמֹלֶת־הַיּוֹם: וַיֵּיטֵב וַיִּישָׁת וַיִּיבֵא לְשֹׁפֵב כְּקֶצֶף הָעֲרֻמָּה וְתִבָּא בְּלֵס וְתַמֵּל מִרְגְּלֶיךָ וְתִשְׁכַּב: וַיְהִי בְּחֹצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וְהִתְרַד הָאִישׁ וַיִּפְּתַח וְהִנֵּה אִשָּׁה שֹׁכְבַת מִרְגְּלֶיךָ: וַיֹּאמְרָ מִי־אַתְּ וְהִיאִמְרָ אֲנִי רְוֹת אִמְתְּךָ וּפְרִשְׁתְּ כַּנְּפֶיךָ עַל־אֲמֹתֶיךָ כִּי נִצְלָה אֲתָה:

EPHAI אֵיפָה. An *ephah* is about two-thirds of a bushel.

ONE OF OUR REDEMING KINSMEN הָאִישׁ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה מִבְּאֵלָנֶי הוּא. The fact that Boaz was a kinsman of Ruth's dead husband opened up the possibility of providing an heir for the latter, in accord with Leviticus 25:25 and Deuteronomy 25:5–6. (P5)

A HOME תְּמֹלֶת. Literally, “a place to rest.”

UNCOVER HIS FEET וְגִלְתָּ מִרְגְּלֶיךָ. Perhaps a euphemism for sexual organs.

SPREAD YOUR ROBE OVER YOUR HANDMAID וּפְרִשְׁתָּ מִרְגְּלֶיךָ אֲמֹתְךָ. A formal act of espousal; cf. Ezekiel 16:8. (P5)

He exclaimed, “Be blessed of ADONAI, daughter! Your latest deed of loyalty is greater than the first, in that you have not turned to younger men, whether poor or rich. And now, daughter, have no fear. I will do on your behalf whatever you ask, for all the elders of my town know what a fine woman you are. But while it is true that I am a redeeming kinsman, there is another redeemer closer than I. Stay for the night. Then in the morning, if he will act as a redeemer, good! let him redeem. But if he does not want to act as redeemer for you, I will do so myself, as ADONAI lives! Lie down until morning.” So she lay down at his feet until dawn. She rose before one person could distinguish another, for he thought, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” And he said, “Hold out the shawl you are wearing.” She held it while he measured out six measures of barley, and he put it on her back.

When she got back to the town, she came to her mother-in-law, who asked, “How is it with you, daughter?” She told her all that the man had done for her; and she added, “He gave me these six measures of barley, saying to me, ‘Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’” And Naomi said, “Stay here, daughter, till you learn how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.”

CHAPTER 4

Meanwhile, Boaz had gone to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer whom Boaz had mentioned passed by. He called, “Come over and sit down here. So-and-so!” And he came over and sat down.

Then [Boaz] took ten elders of the town and said, “Be seated here”; and they sat down. He said to the redeemer, “Naomi, now returned from the country of Moab, must sell the pieces of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. I thought I should disclose the matter to you and say: Acquire it in the presence of those seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you are willing to redeem it, redeem! But if you will not redeem, tell me, that I may know. For there is no one to redeem but you, and I come after you.” “I am willing to redeem it,” he replied. Boaz continued, “When you acquire the property from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabite, you must also acquire the wife of the deceased, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate.” The redeemer replied, “Then I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own estate. You take over my right of redemption, for I am unable to exercise it.”

Now this was formerly done in Israel in cases of redemption or exchange: to validate any transaction, one man would take off his sandal and hand it to the other. Such was the practice in Israel. So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Acquire for yourself,” he drew off his sandal.

וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ לַיהוָה אֵת לַיהוּדָה פִּתְי הַיְסֻבֶּתָּת חֲסִדָּתָהּ הַאֲחֻזָּה לְךָ מִיָּד הַרְאִישׁוֹן לְבַלְיִי-לֵבֵת אַחֲרַי הַפְּחֻזִּים אִם-דָּל וְאִם-עֲשִׂירִי: וְעָתָה בִּיהוֹ אֶל-תְּרוּאָי כֹּל אֲשֶׁר-תֹּאמְרִי אֲעִשׂוּ-לָךְ כִּי יוֹדֵעַ כָּל-שַׁעַר עַמִּי כִּי אֲשֶׁת דְּוִלִי אָתָּה: וְעָתָה כִּי אִמְנָם כִּי יֵאָל אֲנִי וְגַם יֵשׁ גָּאֹל קְרוֹב מִמֶּנִּי: לֵיכִי | הַלִּי לָהּ וְהִיָּה בַּפֶּקֶד אִם-יִגְאָלָהּ סוֹב וְגָאֹל וְאִם-לֹא יִחְפֹּץ לְגָאֹלָהּ וּבִאֲלֵמִיד אֲנִי כִי יִהְיֶה שָׂרְבִי עֲדִי-דַּפְקָר: וּתְשַׁבֵּב מִרְקָלֹתָיו עֲדִי-דַּפְקָר וְתִקַּם כְּסֻתָּם יָכִר אִישׁ אַחֲרֵעֵדָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-יְהוָה כִּי-בָאָה הָאִשָּׁה הַגֵּרָה: וַיֹּאמֶר רָבִי תִמְסַפְּחֵה אֲשֶׁר-עָלָהּ וְאֲחֻזָּבָהּ וְהִתְחַזְּקוּ בָּהּ וַיִּמְד שִׁשִּׁשְׁעֵרִים וַיִּשֶׁת עָלֶיהָ

וַיָּבֵא הָעֵירִי: וּתְבֹאֵל אֶל-חֲמוּזָתָהּ וְהִתְאִמֶר מִי-אֵת בִּיתִי וְתִנְעֹד-לָהּ אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂה-לָּהּ הָאִישׁ: וְהִתְאִמֶר שִׁשִּׁשְׁעֵרִים הָאֵלֶּה נָתַן לִי כִּי אִמְרִי אֵלַי אֶל-תְּבֹאֵי רִיקָם אֶל-חֲמוּזָתָהּ: וְהִתְאִמֶר שָׂרְבִי עַד אֲשֶׁר תִּדְעִין אִיךָ יִפֹּל דָּבָר כִּי לֹא יִשְׁקֹט הָאִישׁ כִּי-אִם-כֹּפֶלֶה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה:

פֶּקֶד 1

וּבָעַד עָלָה הַשִּׁעִר וַיִּשֶׁב שָׁם וְהוֹפֶה הַגָּאֹל עָבַר אֲשֶׁר דִּפְקָ-פֶּעַר וַיֹּאמֶר כְּסוּתָה שְׂבֻדָּ-פֶה פִלְכִי אֶלְמִנִי וַיִּסֵּר וַיִּשָּׁב: וַיִּקַּח עֲשָׂרָה אֲנָשִׁים מִזֻּקְנֵי הָעֵיר וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂבוּרָפָה וַיִּשָּׁב:

וַיֹּאמֶר לְגֹאֵל תְּלַקַּח הַשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר לְאֻזְחִינוּ לְאֵילְמִלָּךְ מִבְּרַח מִעַמִּי הַשְּׂבֻדָּה מִשְּׂדֵה מוֹאָב: וְאִנִּי אֲמַרְתִּי אֲנִלָּה אוֹרָה לְאִמְרִי קְנוֹה גִּמְד הַיְשִׁבִים וְגִמְד זִקְנֵי עַמִּי אִם-תִּגְאָל גָּאֹל וְאִם-לֹא יִגְאָל הַגֵּרִידָה לִי וְאִדְעוּהָ כִּי אִין זוֹלָתָהּ לְגֹאֵל וְאֲנִי אֲחַרִּיד וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי אֲנָאֵל: וַיֹּאמֶר פֶּעַר כִּיזִם קְבוּלָתָהּ הַשְּׂדֵה מִיָּד כְּעַמִּי זִפְמָת רוֹת תִּמְזוּבִּיחָה אֲשֶׁר-תִּהְיֶה קְנוּיָתָה כְּהִקְוִים שְׁסִי-דַּהֲמָת עֵל-תְּהַלְתִּי: וַיֹּאמֶר הַגָּאֹל לֹא אוֹכֵל לְגָאֵל-לִי לֹא-אוֹכֵל לְגָאֵל:

וְזֹאת לְפִנְיָ כִּי-שִׁוְרָאֵל עֵל-הַפְּאֻלָּה וְעֵל-הַחֲמוּזָה לְקִיָּם כֹּל-דָּבָר שֶׁלָּךְ אִישׁ כְּעֵל וְנָתַן לְעֵדָהּ וְזֹאת הַתְּעוּדָה כִּי-שִׁוְרָאֵל: וַיֹּאמֶר הַגָּאֵל לְבָעַד קְבוּהָ-לָּךְ וַיִּשְׁלַח בְּעָלָיו:

LEST I IMPAIR MY OWN ESTATE
 פֶּר אֲשֶׁרֵת אֵת הָעִסְתִּי
 That is, by expending capital for prosperity that would go to the son legally regarded as Mahlon's; see Deuteronomy 25:5-6. (P5)

And Boaz said to the elders and to the rest of the people, “You are witnesses today that I am acquiring from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelekh and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. I am also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate, that the name of the deceased may not disappear from among his kinsmen and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today.”

All the people at the gate and the elders answered, “We are. May ADONAI make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the house of Israel! Prosper in Ephrathah and perpetuate your name in Bethlehem! And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah—through the offspring that ADONAI will give you by this young woman.” So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. ADONAI let her conceive, and she bore a son. And the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be ADONAI, who has not withheld a redeemer from you today! May his name be perpetuated in Israel! He will renew your life and sustain your old age; for he is born of your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons.”

Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom. She became its foster mother, and the women neighbors gave him a name, saying “A son is born to Naomi!” They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, father of David.

This is the line of Perez: Perez begot Hezron, Hezron begot Ram, Ram begot Amminadav, Amminadav begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon, Salmon begot Boaz, Boaz begot Oved, Oved begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

וַיֹּאמֶר בֹּעַז לְזִקְנֵי וּבְהֵמֵתָם עַדִּים אֲתָם הַיּוֹם כִּי קָנִיתִי אֶת־כֹּל־אֲשֶׁר לְאֵלֵימֶלֶךְ וְאֶת־כֹּל־אֲשֶׁר לְכִלְיוֹן וּמַחְלִיֹן מִיַּד קְנַמִּי: וְגַם אֶת־רוּת הַמֹּאבִּיטָה אֲשֶׁת מַחְלִיֹן קָנִיתִי לִי לְאִשָּׁה לְהַקְיִים שְׂמֵה־הַמֵּת עַל־בְּתוּלָתוֹ וְלִאֲזַיְכָרְתָּ שְׂמֵה־הַמֵּת מֵעַם אֶרְצוֹ וּמִשְׁעֵר מִקֻּמוֹ עַדִּים אֲתָם הַיּוֹם:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־בְּשַׁעַר וְהַזְקֵנִים עַדִּים יִהְיוּ יְהוּה אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַבָּאָה אֶל־בֵּיתוֹךָ כִּרְחֵל וּבְלֵאָה אֲשֶׁר בְּנִי שָׂמִיתִים אֶת־בָּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעֵשְׂדֵה־חֵיל בְּאֶפְרַתָּה וּקְרָאִישִׁים בְּבָיִת לָהֶם: וַיְהִי כִּי־בָרַךְ בְּיַד אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה תָמָר לִיהוֹדָה מִיְהוָה אֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ יְהוּה לָךְ מִיְהַנְעִיכָה הַזֹּאת: וַיִּקַּח בֶּעַז אֶת־רוּת וַתִּתְּיָלַד לָאִשָּׁה וַיִּבֶא אֶלֶּיהָ יִיתָן יְהוּה לָךְ הַרְבֵּי וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן:

וּמֵאֲמָרְכָה הַנְּשִׂיִם אֶל־נְעָמִי בְרָחוּ יְהוּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִשְׁפִּיתָ לָךְ וְצֵאל הַיּוֹם וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: וְהָיָה לָךְ כְּמִשִּׁיב לְפָנַי וּלְכֹלֶיךָ אֶת־שִׂירְכֶתָּהּ כִּי כָלִמְתָּ אֶשְׁר־אֶהְבֶּתָּהּ וְלִדְתִּי אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה סוּבָה לָךְ מִשְׁבָּעָה בְּנִים:

וַתִּקַּח נְעָמִי אֶת־דָּוִד וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה בְּחַתּוּלָה וַתִּתְּיָלַד לְאֶמְנֶת: וַתִּקְרָאֶנָּה לוֹ הַשִּׁבְלוֹת שֵׁם לְאִמֹר יִלְדֶּנָּה לְנְעָמִי וַתִּקְרָאֶנָּה שְׁמוֹ עוֹבֵד: הוּא אֶבְיִישִׁי אָבִי דָוִד:

וַיֵּלֶךְ תּוֹלְדוֹת פְּרִץ פְּרִץ הוֹלִיד אֶת־הַצֹּרֵן: וַחֲצִרוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת־רָם וְרָם הוֹלִיד אֶת־עִמְרֵינָדָב: וְעִמְרֵינָדָב הוֹלִיד אֶת־נְחִישָׁיון וְנְחִישָׁיון הוֹלִיד אֶת־שִׁלְמָה: וְשִׁלְמָוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת־בֹּעַז וּבֹעַז הוֹלִיד אֶת־עוֹבֵד: וְעוֹבֵד הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִישׁוּי וַיִּישׁוּי הוֹלִיד אֶת־דָּוִד:

בְּאֶפְרַתָּה IN EPHRATHAH Ephrathah is another name applied to Bethlehem. (15)

הוֹלִיד אֶת־ BEGOT SALMON The Hebrew here is in fact “Salmah,” not “Salmon”—though Salmon is the name at the beginning of the following verse. Perhaps “Salmah” is a shortened form of the name.