

Chapter 1

By occaſion of famine Elimelech of Bethleem going with his wife Noemi, and two ſonnes, into the Land of Moab, there dieth. 4. His ſonnes marrie wiues of that countrie, and die without iffue. 6. Noemi returning homewardes hardly perſwadeth one of her daughters in law, to part from her. 15. The other, called Ruth, wil needes goe with her, profefſing the ſame God and Religion. 19. So theſe two arriue in Bethleem.

In the dayes of one Iudge, when the Iudges ruled, there came a famine in the Land. And there went a man of Bethleem Iuda, to feiourne in the land of Moab with his wife, and two children. ² Himſelf was called Elimelech, and his wife, Noemi: and his two ſonnes, the one Mahalon, and the other Chelion, Ephraites of Bethleem Iuda. And entring into the countrie of Moab, they abode there. ³ And Elimelech the huſband of Noemi died: and ſhe remained with her ſonnes. ⁴ Who tooke wiues of the Moabites, of the which one was called Orpha, and the other Ruth. And they abode there ten yeares, ⁵ and both died, to witte, Mahalon and Chelion: and the woman remayned deſtitute of her two children & her huſband. ⁶ And ſhe aroſe to goe into her countrie with both her daughters in law from the countrie of Moab: for ſhe had heard that our Lord had reſpected his people, & had geuen them victuals. ⁷ She therfore went forth from the place of her peregrination, with both her daughters in law: and being now fette in the way to returne into the Land of Iuda, ⁸ ſhe ſaid to them: Goe into your mothers houſe, our Lord doe mercie with you, as you haue done with the dead and with me. ⁹ Grant he vnto you to find reſt in the houſes of your huſbandes, which you ſhal take. And ſhe kiſſed them. Who liſting vp their voice beganne to weepe, ¹⁰ & to ſay: We wil goe on with thee to thy people. ¹¹ To whom ſhe answered: Returne my daughters, why come you with me? ſhal I haue ſonnes any more in my wombe, that you may hope for huſbandes of me? ¹² Returne my daughters, and goe

your wayes: for I am now spent with old age, and not fitte for wedlocke. Although I might conceiue this night, and beare children, ¹³ if you would expect til they grow, and be of mans age, you shal be old women before you marrie. Doe not so my daughters, I beseech you: for your distresse doth the more greue me, and the hand of our Lord is come forth against me. ¹⁴ Therefore lifting vp their voice, they beganne to weepe agayne, Orpha kissed her mother in law, and returned: Ruth cleaued to her mother in law, ¹⁵ to whom Noemi said: Behold thy kinfewoman is returned to her people, and ^ato her goddess, goe with her. ¹⁶ Who answered: Be not against me, to the end that I should leaue thee and depart: for whithersoever thou shalt goe, I wil goe: and where thou shalt abide, I also wil abide. Thy people my people, and thy God my God. ¹⁷ The land that shal receiue thee dying, in the same wil I die: and there wil I take a place for my burial. These thinges doe God to me, & these thinges adde he, if death onlie shal not separate me and thee. ¹⁸ Noemi therefore feing, that Ruth with a fitt fast mind had determined to goe forward with her, would not be against it, nor perswade her any more to returne to her frendes: ¹⁹ and they went forth together, and came into Bethlehem. Who being entered into the citie, a brute was quickly spread among them: and the women said: This is that Noemi. ²⁰ To whom she said: Call me not Noemi (that is to say, beautiful) but call me Mara (that is to say, bitter) because with bitterness hath the Almighty very much replenished me. ²¹ I went forth ^bful, and our Lord hath brought me backe emptie. Why therefore doe you call me Noemi whom our Lord hath humbled, and the Almighty hath afflicted? ²² Noemi therefore came with Ruth the Moabite her daughter in

^a Noemi perswaded not to idolatrie, but insinuated that if Ruth would not returne to her countrie, she must also leaue the false goddess. And so she answered, that she would serue the same true God of Israel.

^b She had a husband and two sonnes, and sufficient prouision, but now was bereued of them all.

law, from the Land of her peregrination: and returned into Bethlehem, when barley was first reaped.