

The Book of Ruth: A Torah of Lovingkindness in the Wake of Death
Rabbi David Gedzelman

1. Ruth Rabbah 2:14

"May the Lord do Hesed (Loving-kindness) with you as you did with the dead and me" (Ruth 1:8). Rabbi Hanina bar Ada says, "It is written, 'May He do' (ya'aseh as opposed to ya'as) as you showed with the dead' - that you attended to their shrouds, 'and with me' - that they did not hold Naomi to the financial guarantees of their marriage agreements." Rabbi Zeira said, "This scroll does not deal with impurity or purity and not with those things permitted and those things forbidden. So why was this book written? To teach you how good is the reward for those who do acts of loving-kindness.

רות רבה ב' י"ד

(ד) יַעֲשֵׂה יי עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד, רַבִּי חֲנִינָא בַר אָדָא אָמַר, יַעֲשֵׂה כְּתִיב, כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם עִם הַמֵּתִים, שְׁנַטְפַּלְתֶּם בְּתַכְרִיכֵיהוֹן, וְעַמְדִי, שְׁוֹתְרוּ לָהּ כְּתַבּוּתֵיהֶן. אָמַר רַבִּי זְעִירָא, מְגַלָּה זֹאת אֵין בֵּיהּ לֹא טַמְאָה, וְלֹא טְהֵרָה, וְלֹא אִסּוּר, וְלֹא הֶתֵר, וְלִמָּה נִכְתְּבָה לְלַמְדָּהּ כַּמָּה שְׁכָר טוֹב לְגוֹמְלֵי חֶסְדִּים.

2. Ruth 1:8

(8) But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Turn back, each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me!"

רות א' ח'

(ח) וְתֹאמְרֵי נְעָמִי לְשִׁתֵּי כַלְתֵּיהֶן לֵכְנֶה שְׁבֹנָה אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּה יַעֲשֵׂה [יַעֲשֵׂה] יי עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם עִם־הַמֵּתִים וְעַמְדִי:

3. Leviticus 19:9-10

(9) When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. (10) You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the LORD am your God.

ויקרא י"ט ט'-י'

(ט) וְבִקְצֹרְכֶם אֶת־קְצִיר אֲרָצְכֶם לֹא תִכְלֶה פְּאֵת שָׂדֶךְ לְקַצֹּר וְלִקַּט קְצִירָהּ לֹא תִלְקַט: (י) וְכַרְמֶהּ לֹא תַעֲלִיל וּפְרֹט כַרְמֶהּ לֹא תִלְקַט לְעָנִי וְלַגֵּר תַּעֲזֹב אֹתָם אֲנִי יי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

4. Deuteronomy 24:19-22

(19) When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it; it shall go to the stranger, the

דברים כ"ד: י"ט-כ"ב

(יט) כִּי תִקְצֹר קְצִירָהּ בְּשָׂדֶךְ וְשָׁכַחְתָּ עֹמֶר בְּשָׂדֶה לֹא תָשׁוּב לְקַחְתּוֹ לַגֵּר לִיתּוֹם

fatherless, and the widow—in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings. (20) When you beat down the fruit of your olive trees, do not go over them again; that shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. (21) When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not pick it over again; that shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. (22) Always remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore do I enjoin you to observe this commandment.

5. Deuteronomy 25:5-10

(5) When brothers dwell together and one of them dies and leaves no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married to a stranger, outside the family. Her husband's brother shall unite with her: he shall take her as his wife and perform the levir's duty. (6) The first son that she bears shall be accounted to the dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out in Israel. (7) But if the man does not want to marry his brother's widow, his brother's widow shall appear before the elders in the gate and declare, "My husband's brother refuses to establish a name in Israel for his brother; he will not perform the duty of a levir." (8) The elders of his town shall then summon him and talk to him. If he insists, saying, "I do not want to marry her," (9) his brother's widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, pull the sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and make this declaration: Thus shall be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house! (10) And he shall go in Israel by the name of "the family of the unsandaled one."

6. Leviticus 25:23-28

(23) But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me. (24) Throughout the land that you hold, you must provide for

ולאֲלַמְנָה יִהְיֶה לְמַעַן יִבְרַכְךָ יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ: (כ) כִּי תַחַבֵּט זֵיתֶךָ לֹא תִפְאַר אַחֲרֶיךָ לַגֵּר לִיתּוֹם וְלֹאֲלַמְנָה יִהְיֶה: (ס)
 (כא) כִּי תִבְצֹר כַּרְמְךָ לֹא תַעֲזֹל אַחֲרֶיךָ לַגֵּר לִיתּוֹם וְלֹאֲלַמְנָה יִהְיֶה: (כב) וְזִכְרְתָּ כִּי־עַבְד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַל־כֵּן אֲנֹכִי מִצְוֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: (ס)

דברים כ"ה:ה'-י

(ה) כִּי־יֵשְׁבוּ אָחִים יַחְדָּו וּמֵת אֶחָד מֵהֶם וּבֶן אִינְלוֹ לֹא־תִהְיֶה אֲשֶׁת־הַיָּמָת הַחוּצָה לְאִישׁ זָר יִבְמֶה יָבֵא עָלֶיהָ וּלְקַחְתָּהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיִּבְמֶה: (ו) וְהָיָה הַבְּכוֹר אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵד יִקְוֹם עַל־שֵׁם אָחִיו הַיָּמָת וְלֹא־יִמָּחַה שְׁמוֹ מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל: (ז) וְאִם־לֹא יִחַפֵּץ הָאִישׁ לְקַחַת אֶת־יִבְמֹתוֹ וְעַלְתָּהּ יִבְמֹתוֹ הַשְּׂעֵרָה אֶל־הַזִּקְנִים וְאָמְרָה מֵאִין יְבָמִי לְהָקִים לְאָחִיו שֵׁם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא אָבָה יְבָמִי: (ח) וְקָרְאוּ־לוֹ זִקְנֵי־עִירוֹ וְדָבְרוּ אֵלָיו וְעָמַד וְאָמַר לֹא חָפַצְתִּי לְקַחְתָּהּ: (ט) וּנְגַשָּׂה יִבְמֹתוֹ אֵלָיו לְעֵינֵי הַזִּקְנִים וְחִלְצָה נַעֲלוֹ מֵעַל רַגְלוֹ וַיִּרְקַה בְּפָנָיו וְעָנְתָהּ וְאָמְרָה כִּכָּה יַעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִבְנֶה אֶת־בֵּית אָחִיו (י) וְנִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּית חָלוּץ הַנָּעֵל: (ס)

ויקרא כ"ה:כ"ג-כ"ח

(כג) וְהָאֶרֶץ לֹא תִמְכַר לְצַמְחַת כִּי־לִי הָאֶרֶץ כִּי־גֵרִים וְתוֹשְׁבִים אַתֶּם עִמָּדִי: (כד)

the redemption of the land. (25) If your kinsman is in straits and has to sell part of his holding, his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his kinsman has sold. (26) If a man has no one to redeem for him, but prospers and acquires enough to redeem with, (27) he shall compute the years since its sale, refund the difference to the man to whom he sold it, and return to his holding. (28) If he lacks sufficient means to recover it, what he sold shall remain with the purchaser until the jubilee; in the jubilee year it shall be released, and he shall return to his holding.

וּבְכָל אֶרֶץ אֲחֻזַּתְכֶם גְּאֻלָּה תִתְּנוּ לְאֶרֶץ:
 (ס) (כה) כִּי־יָמוּד אָחִיךָ וּמָכַר מֵאֲחֻזַּתּוֹ
 וּבָא גְאֻלוֹ הַקָּרֹב אֵלָיו וּגְאָל אֶת מִמְכָּר
 אָחִיו: (כו) וְאִישׁ כִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ גְאֻל
 וְהִשְׁיגָה יָדוֹ וּמִצָּא כַּדֵּי גְאֻלָּתוֹ: (כז) וְחָשַׁב
 אֶת־שָׁנָי מִמִּכְרוֹ וְהִשְׁיב אֶת־הַעֲדָף לְאִישׁ
 אֲשֶׁר מָכַר־לּוֹ וְשָׁב לְאֲחֻזַּתּוֹ: (כח) וְאִם
 לֹא־מִצָּאָה יָדוֹ דֵּי־הַשְׁיב לֹא וְהָיָה מִמִּכְרוֹ
 בְּיַד הַקֹּנֵה אֹתוֹ עַד שְׁנַת הַיּוֹבֵל וַיִּצָּא בַּיּוֹבֵל
 וְשָׁב לְאֲחֻזַּתּוֹ:

7. Ruth 1:9-22

(9) May the LORD grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!” And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping (10) and said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.” (11) 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? (12) 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, (13) 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 the LORD has struck out against me.” (14) They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. (15) So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law.” (16) But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. (17) Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may the LORD do to me if anything

רות א': ט'-כ"ב

(ט) יִתֵּן יי לְכֶם וּמִצָּאֵן מְנוּחָה אִשָּׁה בֵּית
 אִשָּׁה וּתְשָׁק לָהֶן וּתְשָׂאנָה קוֹלָן וּתְבַכְינָה:
 (י) וּתֹאמְרָנָה־לָּהּ כִּי־אָתָּךְ נָשׁוּב לְעַמֶּךָ:
 (יא) וּתֹאמֶר נְעֻמִי שְׁכֹנָה בְּנָתִי לְמָה תִּלְכְּנָה
 עִמִּי הָעוֹד־לִי בָּנִים בְּמֵעֵי וְהָיוּ לְכֶם
 לְאִנְשִׁים: (יב) שְׁכֹנָה בְּנָתִי לָכֵן כִּי זָקַנְתִּי
 מְהֵיזוֹת לְאִישׁ כִּי אִמְרַתִּי יִשְׁׁלִי תִקְוָה גַּם
 הָיִיתִי הַלֵּילָה לְאִישׁ וְגַם יִלְדַתִּי בָּנִים: (יג)
 הֲלָהֶן | תְּשַׁפְּרָנָה עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדְּלוּ הַלָּהֶן
 תִּעֲלֶגְנָה לְבַלְתִּי הָיוֹת לְאִישׁ אֵל בְּנָתִי כִּי־
 מֵר־לִי מְאֹד מִפֶּם כִּי־יִצָּאָה בִּי יַד־יְהוָה:
 (יד) וּתְשָׂאנָה קוֹלָן וּתְבַכְינָה עוֹד וּתְשָׁק
 עֹרְפָּהּ לְחַמוּתָהּ וְרוֹת גְּבָקָה בָּהּ: (טו)
 וּתֹאמֶר הִנֵּה שָׁבָה יְבַמְתָּךְ אֶל־עַמָּה וְאֶל־
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ שׁוּבִי אֶתְרִי יְבַמְתָּךְ: (טז) וּתֹאמֶר
 רוֹת אֶל־תִּפְגַּע־יְכִי לְעִזְבֹּךְ לְשׁוּב מֵאֶתְרִיךְ
 כִּי אֶל־אֲשֶׁר תִּלְכִּי אֵלָיךְ וּבְאֲשֶׁר תִּלְּוִי אֵלָיִךְ
 עִמָּךְ עִמִּי וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵי: (יז) בְּאֲשֶׁר תָּמוּתִי
 אָמוּת וְשָׁם אֶקְבְּרָךְ כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה יי לִי וְכֹה יִסִּיף
 כִּי הַמּוֹת יִפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ: (יח) וּתֵרָא כִּי־
 מִתְאַמְצָת הִיא לְלַכֵּת אִתָּהּ וּתִחַדֵּל לְזַבֵּר
 אֵלֶיהָ: (יט) וּתִלְכְּנָה שְׁתֵּיהֶם עַד־בֹּאנָה בֵּית

but death parts me from you.” (18) When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her; (19) and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole city buzzed with excitement over them. The women said, “Can this be Naomi?” (20) “Do not call me Naomi,” she replied. “Call me Mara, for Shaddai has made my lot very bitter. (21) I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi, when the LORD has dealt harshly with me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!” (22) 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.

8. Ruth 2:8-20

(8) 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. (9) 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.” (10) 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?” (11) 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. (12) May the LORD reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge!” (13) 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.” (14)

לָחֶם וַיְהִי כִּבְאֲנָהּ בַּיּוֹם לֶחֶם וַתִּהְיֶה כָּל־הָעִיר
עֲלֵיהֶן וַתֹּאמְרֵן הַנְּזֹאת נַעֲמִי: (כ) וַתֹּאמֶר
אֲלֵיהֶן אֶל־תִּקְרְאֵנִי לִי נַעֲמִי קְרָאנִי לִי מָרָא
כִּי־הִמֵּר שָׂדֵי לִי מָאֵד: (כא) אֲנִי מְלֹאָה
הִלַּכְתִּי וַרְקָם הִשִּׁיבֵנִי יִי לָמָּה תִקְרְאֵנִי לִי
נַעֲמִי וַיִּי עָנָה בִּי וַשְּׂדֵי תִרְעֶ לִי: (כב) וַתֵּשֶׁב
נַעֲמִי וְרוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה כָל־תְּהַלֵּ עִמָּה הַשָּׁבָה
מִשְּׂדֵי מוֹאָב וְהָמָּה בָּאוּ בַּיּוֹם לֶחֶם בְּתַחֲלֵת
קִצִּיר שְׁעָרִים:

רות ב' ח' כ'

(ח) וַיֹּאמֶר בְּעֵז אֶל־רוּת הֲלוֹא שָׁמַעַתְּ בְּתִי
אֶל־תִּלְכִּי לְלֶקֶט בְּשָׂדֵה אַחֵר וְגַם לֹא
תַעֲבוּרִי מִזֶּה וְכֹה תִדְבְּקִין עִם־נַעֲרֹתַי: (ט)
עֵינַיִךְ בְּשָׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר־יִקְצְרוּן וְהִלַּכְתְּ אַחֲרֵיהֶן
הֲלוֹא צִנִּיתִי אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים לְבִלְתִּי נִגְעוּךָ
וְצָמַת וְהִלַּכְתְּ אֶל־הַכְּפָלִים וְשָׁתִית מֵאֲשֶׁר
יִשְׁאַבוּן הַנְּעָרִים: (י) וַתַּפֵּל עַל־פְּנֵיהָ
וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מִדּוּעַ מְצָאתִי
חֵן בְּעֵינַיִךְ לְהַפְרִינִי וְאֲנִכִּי נִכְרִיָּה: (יא)
וַיַּעַן בְּעֵז וַיֹּאמֶר לָּהּ הֲגַד הֲגַד לִי כֹל אֲשֶׁר־
עָשִׂית אֶת־חַמּוֹתַי אַחֲרַי מוֹת אִישׁוֹךְ וַתַּעֲזֹבִי
אֲבִיךָ וְאִמֶּךָ וְאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתְּךָ וַתִּלְכִּי אֶל־עַם
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעְתָּ תְּמוּל שְׁלִשׁוֹם: (יב) יִשְׁלַם
יִי פְּעֻלָּה וְתִהְיֶה מִשְׁכַּרְתְּךָ שְׁלֵמָה מֵעַם יִי
אֲלֵכִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־בָּאת לְחַסּוֹת תַּחַת־
כַּנְּפָיו: (יג) וַתֹּאמֶר אִמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינַיִךְ
אֲדוּשֶׁם כִּי נִחַמְתָּנִי וְכִי דִבַּרְתָּ עַל־לֵב
שִׁפְחָתְךָ וְאֲנִכִּי לֹא אֶהְיֶה כְּאִחַת שִׁפְחָתְךָ:

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. (15) 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, (16) but you must also pull some [stalks] out of the heaps and leave them for her to glean, and not scold her.” (17) She gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned—it was about an ’ephah of barley— (18) 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, (19) 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.” (20) Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not failed in His 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.”

9. Ruth 3:1-13

(1) Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “Daughter, I must seek a home for you, where you may be happy. (2) Now there is our kinsman Boaz, whose girls you were close to. He will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor tonight. (3) 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. (4) 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.” (5) She replied, “I

(יד) ויאמר לה בעז לָעֵת הָאֲכֹל גִּתְּשֵׁי הַלֶּם וְאָבִלְתְּ מִן־הַלֶּחֶם וּטְבַלְתְּ פִתְּךָ בַחֲמִץ וּתְשֹׁב מִצַּד הַקּוֹצִים וַיִּצְבֹּט־לָהּ קָלִי וּתֹאכַל וּתְשִׁבֵעַ וּתְתַר: (טו) וּתְקַם לְלֶקֶט וַיִּצֹוּ בְעֵז אֶת־נְעָרָיו לֵאמֹר גַּם בֵּין הָעֲמָרִים תְּלַקֵּט וְלֹא תְכַלְמִי: (טז) וְגַם שְׁלֵתְשְׁלוֹ לָהּ מִן־הַצְּבָתִים וְעֹזְבֹתָם וְלֶקֶטָהּ וְלֹא תִגְעְרוּ־בָהּ: (יז) וּתְלַקֵּט בַּשָּׂדֶה עַד־הָעֶרֶב וּתְחַבֵּט אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לֶקֶטָהּ וַיְהִי כֹאִיפָה שְׁעָרִים: (יח) וּתִשָּׂא וּתָבֹא הָעִיר וּתְרֹא חֲמוֹתָהּ אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לֶקֶטָהּ וּתֹצֵא וּתְתֵן־לָהּ אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־הוֹתֵרָה מִשְׁבָּעָה: (יט) וּתֹאמֶר לָהּ חֲמוֹתָהּ אֵיפֹה לֶקֶטְתְּ הַיּוֹם וְאֵנָה עָשִׂיתְּ יְהִי מִכִּירוֹךְ בָּרוּךְ וּתְגַד לְחֲמוֹתָהּ אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂתָּה עִמּוֹ וּתֹאמֶר נָשָׁם הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ הַיּוֹם בְּעֵז: (כ) וּתֹאמֶר נְעַמִּי לְכֻלְתָּהּ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָנַב חֲסִדּוֹ אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַמֵּתִים וּתֹאמֶר לָהּ נְעַמִּי קָרוֹב לָנוּ הָאִישׁ מִגְּאֻלָּנוּ הוּא:

רות ג' א'-י"ג

(א) וּתֹאמֶר לָהּ נְעַמִּי חֲמוֹתָהּ בְּתִי הֲלֹא אֲבָקֶשְׁלָךְ מִנּוּחַ אֲשֶׁר יִיטַב־לָךְ: (ב) וְעַתָּה הֲלֹא בְעֵז מִדְּעַתָּנוּ אֲשֶׁר הֵייתְּ אֶת־נְעֻרוֹתַי הִנֵּה־הוּא זָרָה אֶת־גֵּרְוֹן הַשְּׁעָרִים הַלְיִלָה: (ג) וּרְחֹצֵףְּ | וְסִכַּף וּשְׁמַף שְׁמַלְתְּךָ [שְׁמַלְתִּיךָ] עֲלֶיךָ וּיְרַדְתִּי [וַיְרַדְתָּ] הַגֵּרְוֹן אֶל־תְּוֹדְעֵי לְאִישׁ עַד פְּלִתּוֹ לְאָכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת: (ד) וַיְהִי בְשֹׁכְבוֹ וַיִּדְעַף אֶת־הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב־שָׁם וּבָאת וְגִלִית מְרַגְלִתִּי וּשְׁכַבְתִּי

will do everything you tell me.” (6) She went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. (7) Boaz ate and drank, and in a cheerful mood went to lie down beside the grainpile. Then she went over stealthily and uncovered his feet and lay down. (8) In the middle of the night, the man gave a start and pulled back—there was a woman lying at his feet! (9) “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.” (10) He exclaimed, “Be blessed of the LORD, daughter! Your latest deed of loyalty is greater than the first, in that you have not turned to younger men, whether poor or rich. (11) And now, daughter, have no fear. I will do in your behalf whatever you ask, for all the elders of my town know what a fine woman you are. (12) But while it is true I am a redeeming kinsman, there is another redeemer closer than I. (13) 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 the LORD lives! Lie down until morning.”

10. Exodus 12:29

(29) In the middle of the night the LORD struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle.

11. Ezekiel 16:6-8

(6) When I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, I said to you: “Live in spite of your blood.” Yea, I said to you: “Live in spite of your blood.” (7) I let you grow like the plants of the field; and you continued to grow up until you attained to womanhood, until your breasts became firm

[וַשְׁכַּבְתָּ] וְהוּא יִגִּיד לְךָ אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂין:
 (ה) וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ כָּל אֲשֶׁר-תֹּאמְרֵי [אֵלַי]
 אֲעֲשֶׂהָ: (ו) וַתֵּרֶד הַגֶּרֶן וַתַּעַשׂ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר-
 צִוְתָהּ חֲמוּתָהּ: (ז) וַיֹּאכַל בָּעֵז וַיִּשְׁתֶּה וַיֵּיטֵב
 לְבָו וַיָּבֵא לְשָׁכֵב בְּקִצְהָ הָעֶרְמָה וַתִּבֹּא בִלְטָה
 וַתִּגַּל מְרָגְלָתָיו וַתִּשְׁכַּב: (ח) וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי
 הַלַּיְלָה וַיִּחַרְד הָאִישׁ וַיִּלְפַת וַהֲנֶה אִשָּׁה
 שֹׁכֶבֶת מְרָגְלָתָיו: (ט) וַיֹּאמֶר מִי-אַתָּה
 וַתֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי רוּת אֲמָתְךָ וַפְרִשְׁתָּ כַנֶּפֶף עַל-
 אֲמָתְךָ כִּי גֵאל אַתָּה: (י) וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ
 לַיְי בְּתִי הַיְיטֵבְתָּ חֲסִידָךְ הָאֲחֵרוֹן מִן-הָרֵאשִׁוֹן
 לְבִלְתִּי-לָקַח אַחֲרָי הַבְּחוּרִים אִם-דָּל וְאִם-
 עָשִׂיר: (יא) וַעֲתָה בְּתִי אֶל-תִּירְאֵי כָּל
 אֲשֶׁר-תֹּאמְרֵי אֲעֲשֶׂה-לָּךְ כִּי יוֹדְעֵי כָּל-שֹׁעַר
 עָמִי כִּי אִשָּׁת חַיִל אַתְּ: (יב) וַעֲתָה כִּי אֲמַנֶּם
 כִּי אִם גֵּאל אֲנֹכִי וְגַם יֵשׁ גֵּאל קָרוֹב מִמְּנִי:
 (יג) לִינִי | הַלַּיְלָה וַהֲנִיָּה בְּבִקְרֵי אִם-יִגְאָלְךָ
 טוֹב יִגְאָל וְאִם-לֹא יִחַפֵּץ לְגְאָלְךָ וַיִּגְאָלְתִּיךָ
 אֲנֹכִי חַיִּי שֹׁכֵבִי עַד-הַבֶּקֶר:

שמות י"ב:כ"ט

(כט) וַיְהִי | בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיִּי הַכָּה כָּל-בְּכוֹרֵי
 בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבְּכֹר פְּרֹעֹה הַיָּעֵב עַל-
 כֶּסֶאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר הַשָּׂבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית הַבּוֹר
 וְכֹל בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה:

יחזקאל ט"ז:ו-ח

(ו) וְאָעֵבֶר עָלֶיךָ וְאָרְאֶה מִתְבוֹסֶסֶת בְּדַמֶיךָ
 וְאָמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶיךָ חַיִּי וְאָמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶיךָ חַיִּי:
 (ז) רִבְבָה כְּצֶמַח הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְתִּיךָ וַתִּרְבִּי
 וַתִּגְדְּלִי וַתִּבְאֵי בַעֲדֵי עֲדֵיִם שְׂדֵיִם נִכְנֹו
 וּשְׁעָרָךְ צִמַּח וְאֵת עֵרֶם וְעָרְיָה: (ח) וְאָעֵבֶר

and your hair sprouted. You were still naked and bare (8) when I passed by you [again] and saw that your time for love had arrived. So I spread My robe over you and covered your nakedness, and I entered into a covenant with you by oath—declares the Lord GOD; thus you became Mine.

עָלֶיךָ וְאַרְאֶךָ וְהִגַּה עֵתָּךְ יַעַת דְּלִים וְאַפְרִישׁ
 כְּנָפִי עָלֶיךָ וְאַכְסֶה עָרוֹתֶיךָ וְאַשְׁבַּע לְךָ
 וְאָבוֹא בְּבְרִית אִתְּךָ נָא אֲדוּשָׁם יי וְתִהְיֶי
 לִי:

12. Ruth 4:1-17

(1) 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. (2) Then [Boaz] took ten elders of the town and said, “Be seated here”; and they sat down. (3) He said to the redeemer, “Naomi, now returned from the country of Moab, must sell the piece of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. (4) 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. (5) 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.” (6) 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.” (7) 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. (8) So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Acquire for yourself,” he drew off his sandal. (9) And Boaz said to the elders and to the rest of the people, “You are witnesses today that I am acquiring from

רות ד': א'-י"ז

(א) וּבִעַז עָלָה הַשַּׁעֵר וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם וְהִי הַ
 הַגָּאֵל עִבֵּר אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר-בְּעֵז וַיֵּאמֶר סוּרָה
 שָׁבָה-פֹּה פְּלִנִי אֶל-מְנִי וַיִּסֹּר וַיֵּשֶׁב: (ב)
 וַיִּקָּח עֲשָׂרָה אַנְשֵׁים מִזִּקְנֵי הָעִיר וַיֵּאמֶר
 שָׁבוּ-פֹה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ: (ג) וַיֵּאמֶר לַגָּאֵל חֲלֹקֶת
 הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר לְאַחֵינוּ לְאַלְמֵימְלֶךָ מִכְּרָה נַעֲמִי
 הַשָּׁבָה מִשָּׂדֶה מוֹאָב: (ד) וְאַנִּי אֲמַרְתִּי
 אֲגַלְהָ אֲזַנְךָ לְאִמֶּר קָנָה נָגֵד הַיִּשְׁבִּים וְנָגֵד
 זִקְנֵי עַמִּי אִם-תִּגָּאֵל גָּאֵל וְאִם-לֹא יִגָּאֵל
 הַגִּידָה לִּי וְאֲדַע [וְאֲדַעָה] כִּי אֵין זֹלָתְךָ
 לְגָאוֹל וְאַנְכִי אֲחַרֶיךָ וַיֵּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֲגָאֵל:
 (ה) וַיֵּאמֶר בְּעֵז בְּיוֹם-קְנוֹתְךָ הַשָּׂדֶה מִיַּד
 נַעֲמִי וַיֵּמַת רֹות הַמוֹאֲבִיָּה אִשְׁת־הַמַּת
 קַנִּיתִי [קַנִּיתָה] לְהַקִּים שֵׁם-הַמַּת עַל-
 נַחְלָתוֹ: (ו) וַיֵּאמֶר הַגָּאֵל לֹא אוֹכַל לְגָאוֹל-
 [לְגָאֵל-] לִי פֹר־אֲשַׁחֲיִת אֶת-נַחְלָתִי גָאֵל-לְךָ
 אִתָּה אֶת-גָּאֵלְתִּי כִּי לֹא-אוֹכַל לְגָאֵל: (ז)
 וְזֹאת לְפָנַי בִּישְׂרָאֵל עַל-הַגָּאוֹלָה וְעַל-
 הַתְּמוּרָה לְקַנֵּם כָּל-דְּבָר שְׁלֹף אִישׁ נַעֲלוֹ
 וְנָתַן לְרַעְיָהּ וְזֹאת הַתְּעוּדָה בִּישְׂרָאֵל: (ח)
 וַיֵּאמֶר הַגָּאֵל לְבֵעֵז קָנָה-לְךָ וַיִּשְׁלַף נַעֲלוֹ:
 (ט) וַיֵּאמֶר בְּעֵז לְזִקְנָיִם וְכָל-הָעָם עֲדִים
 אִתָּם הַיּוֹם כִּי קַנִּיתִי אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר
 לְאַלְמֵימְלֶךָ וְיָאת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לְכָלִּין וּמַחְלוֹן
 מִיַּד נַעֲמִי: (י) וְגַם אֶת-רֹות הַמֹּאֲבִיָּה אִשְׁת
 מַחְלוֹן קַנִּיתִי לִי לְאִשָּׁה לְהַקִּים שֵׁם-הַמַּת
 עַל-נַחְלָתוֹ וְלֹא-יִכָּרֵת שֵׁם-הַמַּת מֵעַם אֲחֵיו

Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. (10) 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.” (11) All the people at the gate and the elders answered, “We are. May the LORD 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! (12) And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah—through the offspring which the LORD will give you by this young woman.” (13) So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. The LORD let her conceive, and she bore a son. (14) And the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not withheld a redeemer from you today! May his name be perpetuated in Israel! (15) 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.” (16) Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom. She became its foster mother, (17) 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.

13. Bava Metzia 47a:14-15

The Gemara comments: This dispute between Rav and Levi is **parallel to** a dispute between *tanna'im*. The verse states: “**Now this was the custom in former time in Israel concerning redemption and concerning substitution, to confirm all matters; a man drew off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor**” (Ruth 4:7). The verse is interpreted: “**Redemption**”; **that is a sale. And likewise it says:** “Neither shall be sold

וּמִשְׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ עֵדִים אַתֶּם הַיּוֹם: (יא)
וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־בְּשַׁעַר וְהַזְּקֵנִים
עֹדִים יְתֵן יי אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַבָּאָה אֶל־בֵּיתָךְ
כְּרַחֵל | וְכִלְאֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה שְׂתִימָהּ אֶת־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַעֲשֵׂה־תְחִיל בְּאֶפְרָתָה וּקְרָא־שֵׁם
בְּבֵית לָחֵם: (יב) וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם בְּבֵית פְּרָצִי
אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה תָמָר לַיהוּדָה מִן־הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר
יְתֵן יי לָךְ מִן־הַנְּעָרָה הַזֹּאת: (יג) וַיִּקַּח בְּעֵז
אֶת־רוּת וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ וַיִּתֵּן יי
לָהּ הַרְיוֹן וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן: (יד) וַתֹּאמְרָנָה הַנְּשִׁים
אֶל־נְעָמִי בְּרוּךְ יי אֲשֶׁר לָא הִשְׁבִּית לָךְ גֹּאֵל
הַיּוֹם וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: (טו) וַהֲיָה לָךְ
לְמִשְׁיָב נֶפֶשׁ וּלְכִלְכֵּל אֶת־שִׁבְתְּךָ כִּי כָלְתָךְ
אֲשֶׁר־אֶהְבֶּתְךָ יִלְדְתוּ אֲשֶׁר־הִיא טוֹבָה לָךְ
מִשְׁבָּעָה בָּנִים: (טז) וַתִּקַּח נְעָמִי אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד
וַתְּשִׁתֵּהוּ בְּחִיקָה וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִמָּנָה: (יז)
וַתִּקְרָאנָהּ לוֹ הַשְׁכָּנוֹת שֵׁם לְאֹמֶר יִלְד־בֶּן
לְנְעָמִי וַתִּקְרָאנָהּ שְׁמוֹ עוֹבֵד הוּא אָבִי־יִשָּׁי
אָבִי דָוִד: (פ)

בבא מציעא מ"ז א:י"ד-ט"ו

כתנאי (רות ד, ז) וזאת לפנינו בישראל
על הגאולה ועל התמורה לקיים כל דבר
שלף איש נעלו ונתן לרעהו גאולה זו
מכירה וכן הוא אומר

nor shall be redeemed” (Leviticus 27:28). **“Substitution”**; that is the transaction of exchange. And likewise it says: **“He may neither exchange it nor substitute it”** (Leviticus 27:10). With regard to the phrase **“To confirm all matters; a man drew off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor,”** the *baraita* asks: **Who gave the shoe to whom? Boaz gave his shoe to the redeemer,** the closest relative of Elimelech, who had the right of first refusal to the land that Naomi, Elimelech’s widow, was planning to sell. The redeemer was transferring that right to the land to Boaz, who was acquiring it by means of his shoe. **Rabbi Yehuda says: The redeemer gave his shoe to Boaz.** The dispute between Rav and Levi is parallel to the dispute between the first *tanna* and Rabbi Yehuda.

14. Deuteronomy 23:4

(4) No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of the LORD; none of their descendants, even in the tenth generation, shall ever be admitted into the congregation of the LORD,

(ויקרא כז, כ) לא יגאל תמורה זו חליפין
וכן הוא אומר (ויקרא כז, י) לא יחליפנו
ולא ימיר אותו לקיים כל דבר שלף איש
נעלו ונתן לרעהו מי נתן למי בועז נתן
לגואל רבי יהודה אומר גואל נתן לבעז

דברים כ"ג:ד'

(ד) לֹא־יָבֹא עַמּוֹנִי וּמוֹאָבִי בְּקִהְלֵי יְיָ גַם
דֹּר עֲשִׂירֵי לֹא־יָבֹא לָהֶם בְּקִהְלֵי יְיָ עַד־
עוֹלָם: