

# Ruth 4:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

## Analysis

Community blessing: '**And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses**'. The entire assembly affirms their witness role, creating legally unassailable transaction. Their blessing continues: '**The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel**'. This remarkable blessing compares Ruth to the matriarchs who built Israel—high honor for a Moabite convert. The community recognizes God's hand in bringing Ruth to Israel and prays she'll be fruitful like the foundational mothers. '**And do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem**' prays for Boaz's prosperity and reputation in his hometown. The community's enthusiastic blessing shows acceptance of Ruth and joy at the redemption.

## Historical Context

Rachel and Leah, though rivals in life (Genesis 29-35), together bore the twelve patriarchs who became Israel's tribes. Comparing Ruth to them represented highest possible honor—suggesting she would contribute foundationally to Israel's identity and future. This blessing proved prophetic: Ruth's great-grandson David and ultimate descendant Jesus Christ fulfilled it beyond imagination. Ephratah was

Bethlehem's ancient name, connecting this blessing to messianic prophecy (Micah 5:2) that Bethlehem Ephratah would produce Israel's ruler. Ancient blessings invoked fertility, prosperity, and reputation—the three elements mentioned here—as markers of divine favor.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does the community's blessing illustrate the church's role in celebrating and supporting marriages?
2. What does comparing Ruth to Rachel and Leah teach about fully incorporating converts into covenant community with highest honor?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל הָעָם בְּשַׁעַר אֲשֶׁר יְהִי יָמִן וְאַל יְהִי אָמֵר  
said H3605 And all the people H5971 H834 that were in the gate H8179 and the elders H2205  
H559

אֶל בְּבָא הַבָּא הַבָּא יְמִינֵנוּ אֶת יְהִי הַבָּא  
We are witnesses make The LORD H853 the woman that is come H413  
H5707 H5414 H3068 H802 H935

בְּבֵית לְכָרְחָת לְכָרְחָת לְכָרְחָת לְכָרְחָת  
into thine house like Rachel and like Leah H834 did build which two H853  
H1004 H7354 H3812 H834 H1129 H8147

וְהִרְאָה בְּאָפָךְ תָּהָרָא לְעֵשָׂה יְשַׁרְאָל בְּבֵית  
into thine house of Israel and do thou worthily in Ephratah and be famous H7121  
H1004 H3478 H6213 H2428 H672

בְּבֵית שְׁמָן  
H8034 H0 in Bethlehem H1035

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 2:6** (References Israel): And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

**Micah 5:2** (References Israel): But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

**Psalms 132:6** (Parallel theme): Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.

**Genesis 24:60** (Parallel theme): And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

**Deuteronomy 25:9** (Parallel theme): Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.

**Ruth 1:2** (Parallel theme): And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

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