

they seek a refuge among the Gentiles. In the midst of this desolation, Naomi is still, in spite of everything, linked up with her husband and her children. Her name is not changed and she still bears it in spite of the ruin. But Elimelech ("God is king") dies and Naomi is left a widow. By joining in affinity with the idolatrous nation of Moab, her sons profane themselves and die. To all appearance the race of Elimelech is extinct without hope of posterity; and "My pleasantness," in mourning and henceforth barren, is plunged into bitterness.

"And Naomi arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab; for she had heard in the country of Moab how that *Jehovah had visited His people in giving them bread*. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah" (vs. 6, 7). At the news that Jehovah was showing grace to His people, Naomi arises and starts to return to her country. The state of Israel had not changed, but God Himself had put an end to those days of providential judgment that had fallen on the nation, and this poor widow, bowed down under the weight of affliction, could hope for better days. *Grace* is then, as we have said, the first and dominant note in the book of Ruth. All the blessings which it contains are dependent on the fact that "Jehovah had visited His people in giving them bread." By