

A Reading from Ruth:

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there. Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah. Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them and they wept aloud and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me--even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons-- would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD's hand has gone out against me!" At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her.

"Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so

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severely, if anything but death separates you and me.” When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her. (NIV)

The Word of the Lord

*Ruth 1:1-18*

146 *Lauda, anima mea*

- 1 Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul! \*  
I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
- 2 Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, \*  
for there is no help in them.
- 3 When they breathe their last, they return to earth, \*  
and in that day their thoughts perish.
- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! \*  
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; \*  
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, \*  
and food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free;  
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; \*  
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; \*  
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
- 9 The LORD shall reign for ever, \*  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

*Psalms 146*

A Reading from Hebrews:

When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (NIV)

The Word of the Lord

*Hebrews 9:11-14*

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The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according Mark:

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions. (NIV)

The Gospel of the Lord

*Mark 12:28-34*