

Orpah and I

The book of Ruth offers unique insights into the perspective of the three women in the story — voices not often heard in the Bible. As part of our 'Bible Month' with Ruth, I've invited friends near and far to offer their own personal reflection on the story, starting this week with a poem from our very own Liz Horrocks.

Ruth

It seemed to me that it might be our fault,
Orpah and I, for wedding foreigners.
Our god, perhaps, then brought disease and death:
our husbands killed, and we two left to mourn.
Their mother, Naomi, set out to return
from whence she'd come, and said a sad farewell....
So Orpah kissed her sadly, turned to go
But in my heart a sense of anger grew
against this land, this god who'd killed our men
and left their mother solitary, sad,
to travel back to Israel alone.
And all because we'd dared to wed her sons.
I touched her arm and then drew in my breath:
"I too will come," I said, "as now this land
has only bitter memories for me.
I will be your daughter, you my dam;
I will belong to your land and your God."

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And so we travelled. And in all the years –
the gulf of years between that choice and now –
regrets have never come to me at all.

I look at my dear man, my sons and girls,
our restful, happy home, and bless the day
I took the Hebrew God to be my own.

Elizabeth Horrocks