



The JPS Bible Commentary: Ruth

Dr. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, Dr. Tikva Frymer-Kensky

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The latest in the JPS Bible Commentary series, 2011 National Jewish Book Award Winner, Barbara Dobkin Award in Women's Studies

The moving story of Ruth, with its themes of loyalty, loving kindness (*hesed*), and redemption, is one of the great narratives of the Bible.

Socially, the Israelites were aware of their responsibility to protect the weak and unprotected among them. Redemption secures the life of the people as a community, not just as individuals. In this story, Boaz fills the familial obligation to marry the widow of a deceased relative who never was able to father children, both to continue the family line and protect an otherwise vulnerable woman.

The authors provide a critical, line-by-line commentary of the biblical text, presented in its original Hebrew, complete with vocalization and cantillation marks, as well as the 1985 JPS English translation. The extensive introduction places the book within its historical, literary, and critical context, discusses contemporary interpretations of the story of Ruth, and examines its major motifs and themes, among them: family, marriage and levirate marriage in biblical and ancient Israel, redemption and inheritance, *hesed*, and the book's connection with the Jewish holiday of Shavuot.

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