

## The Book Of Ruth

**ח** וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֲמִי, לְשְׁתֵּי כַלְתֵּיהָ, לְכַנֶּה שְׁבִנָּה, אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּה; יַעֲשֶׂה (יַעֲשֶׂה) יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד, כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם עִם-הַמֵּתִים וְעִמָּדִי.

**8** And Naomi said, to her two daughters-in-law, "Go return, each woman to her mother's house. May Adonai deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead [my sons], and with me."

....

**יד** וַתִּשְׁנֶה קוֹלָן, וַתִּבְכְּינָה עוֹד; וַתִּשָּׂק עֲרָפָה לְחֻמוֹתֶיהָ, וְרוֹת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ.

**14** And they raised their voices, and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clung to her.

**טו** וַתֹּאמֶר, הִנֵּה שָׁבָה יְבַמְתֶּךָ, אֶל-עַמָּהּ, וְאֶל-אֱלֹהֶיהָ; שׁוּבִי, אַחֲרַי יְבַמְתֶּךָ.

**15** And she said, "Here, your sister-in-law has returned to her people, and to her God; return, after your sister-in-law."

**טז** וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת אֶל-תַּפְּגַעִי-בִי, לְעִזְבֶּךָ לְשׁוּב מֵאַחֲרֶיךָ: כִּי אֶל-אֲשֶׁר תֵּלְכִי אֵלַי, וּבְאֲשֶׁר תֵּלִינִי אֶלֶי--עִמָּךְ עָמִי, וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵי.

**16** And Ruth said, "Do not plead with me to leave you, to return from following you, for wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you sleep, I will sleep; your people shall be my people and your God my God."

**יז** בְּאֲשֶׁר תָּמוּתִי אָמוּת, וְשָׁם אֶקָּבֵר; כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לִי, וְכֹה יוֹסִיף--כִּי הַמָּוֶת, יַפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ.

**17** Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. So may Adonai do to me and so may [Adonai] continue, if anything but death separate me and you."

**יח** וַתִּרְא, כִּי-מִתְאַמְצֶת הִיא לְלָכֶת אִתָּהּ; וַתַּחְדֹּל, לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ.

**18** And she [Naomi] saw that she [Ruth] was determined to go with her, and she stopped speaking to her.

**יט** וַתֵּלְכָה שְׁתֵּיהֶם, עַד-בּוֹאָנָה בֵּית לָחֶם...

**19** And they went on both of them, until they arrived to Beit Lechem...

## **“She stopped [ceased from] speaking to her”**

### **Discussion Plan: What is the meaning of silence?**

*What is the meaning of silence in these situations? Is permission being given toward the actions involved?*

1. You tell your mother you don't want to visit your Aunt on Sunday and your mother says: "You are coming to your Aunt's, that is it, it's not up for discussion." When you ask her why you have to go, she doesn't answer you and just continues with what she is doing.
2. Your teacher asks you if you know who cheated on the test. You say you don't know. She asks if it was Sandy and you say no. She then asks if it was Sarah, you say nothing.
3. A student in your class whom you don't really get along with sits at your table at lunch. They say hello, you don't say anything.
4. You plead with your parents to let you come back from the party an hour later than your general curfew. Before you get picked up, you remind them you will be back an hour late. They don't say anything.
5. You go for a walk with a friend, after a while you stop talking and you continue walking together in silence.
6. You have a fight with your friend. She stops talking to you.
7. You are chatting with your sister when some friends of hers arrive. Even though you are still in the same room, she no longer talks to you.
8. A friend of the family starts giving you advice. You don't agree with it, but you remain silent.
9. The soccer coach tells you that you are not going to play on Sunday. You interrupt him and tell him all the reasons you should be in the game, finishing by telling him he is the greatest coach that ever lived. He stops talking to you.
10. Can silence be more powerful than words? If so, can you think of some examples?

***What do you think Naomi's silence meant?***

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Naomi seems not to know what to make of Ruth's dedication. She walks on in silence as the two women make their way to Bethlehem. Upon their arrival, Naomi declares, "I left here full, but God has returned me empty." (Ruth 1:20-21) Despite Ruth's pledge of love and loyalty, Naomi does not even acknowledge Ruth's presence.

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"The Book Of Ruth: A Celebration Of Female Friendship" BY [WENDY AMSELLEM](#) May 28, 2014, 12:00 am. Downloaded August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017: <http://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/the-book-of-ruth-a-celebration-of-female-friendship/>

**"so she stopped speaking to her:** From here they derived that we do not overburden him and we are not overly meticulous with him (i.e., with a prospective convert)."



### **The Sounds of Silence By Pamela Wax.**

*The following quote and sources are from a D'var Torah on Vayeira, Genesis 18:1–22:24 by Rabi Pamela Wax.*

*At the time of this writing in 2002, Rabbi Wax was the assistant director of the UAHC Department of Adult Jewish Growth in New York, NY.*

*Photo: <https://azjewishpost.com/files/rabbi-pam-fox.jpg>*

"Not all silences are equal. There is angry silence, and there is stymied silence. There's silence that is imposed externally by oppression or trauma, and there is the holy silence of contemplation and inner quiet. The latter is a silence that is chosen, practiced, and rewarded with wisdom, creativity, and a sense of God's presence."

All my days I have grown up among the wise, and I have found nothing of better service than silence. (*Pirkei Avot* 1:17)

A fence to wisdom is silence. (*Pirkei Avot* 3:17)

When Mendel was in Kotzk, the rabbi of that town asked him, "Where did you learn the art of silence?" He was on the verge of answering the question, but then he changed his mind and practiced his art.

(Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim: Later Masters*, New York: Schocken Books, 1948, p. 301)

The world would be much happier if people were as fully able to keep silence as they are able to speak. (Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, 1677)

## Ruth, Naomi and Orpah in art

Look at these images - how do each of these artists interpret the relationship between the three women?



### William Blake 1795

<http://www.google.com/imgres?hl=en&biw=1280&bih=656&gbv=2&tbn=isch&tbnid=UJ33i27GioRCVM:&imgrefurl=http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:1795-William-Blake-N>



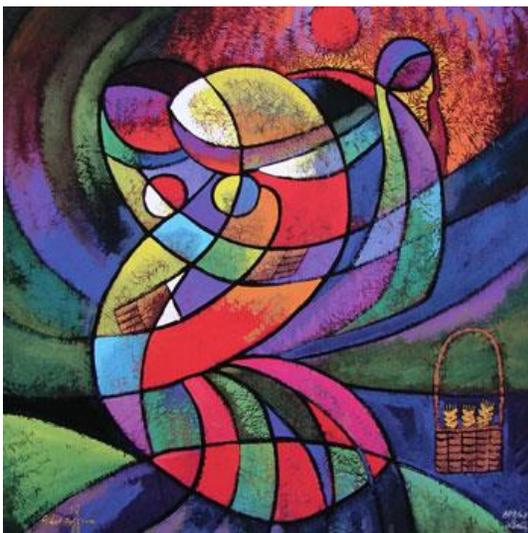
**Marc Chagall 1960**

<http://www.talemuseum.com/bigImgUts.asp?bildelD=307&KunstnerID=28&CurPage=3&lang=eng&utstiling=chagall>



**Kyra Markham, 1959**

<http://www.mutualart.com/Artwork/Ruth--Naomi-and-Orpah/797AB416ADD9B666>



**He Qi, 2001**

Chinese artist

<http://www.heqigallery.com/gallery/gallery1/pages/RuthAndNaomi.html>

## Nelle Fastman Pringree

North Carolina, Jewish potter

<http://www.oyclaypottery.com/ARTIST-STATEMENT-RESUME.html>



## Leonard Baskin, 1979

USA

<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/27084490>

### Activity:

In Groups of three, create your own 'freeze frame' that captures the relationship between these women at the moment of parting. Come back together and show your freeze-frame to the other groups. Ask someone to take a photo of all the presentations. Put the photos on display in the school with your explanations of what you were conveying.

