

# KINDNESS WILL DO

A Play in Five Scenes

Based on The Book of Ruth in “The Old Testament”

By Donna Gordon

Lyrics/poems by Janet Bingham

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

NAOMI.....MOTHER-IN-LAW OF ORPAH AND RUTH

ORPAH.....SHE STAYS BEHIND IN MOAB

RUTH.....SHE FOLLOWS NAOMI TO ISRAEL

BOAZ.....HE'S RELATED TO NAOMI'S DEAD HUSBAND

DAVID.....HE SUPERVISES THE FIELD HANDS

SARAH.....SHE IS ONE OF THE GLEANERS

RELATIVE OF BOAZ, ELI.....HE GIVES UP HIS RIGHT TO MARRY RUTH (CAN BE PLAYED BY ACTOR WHO PLAYS DAVID)

BABY OBED.....HE'S AN ANCESTOR TO JESUS CHRIST

NARRATOR.....HE HELPS TELL THE STORY

## KINDNESS WILL DO, SCENE ONE

NARRATOR: There was a great famine in Israel and people were starving. One Jewish family moved to Moab where they thought they would be safe. But Naomi, the mother in this family, lost her husband and her two sons in Moab. She was left with two daughter-in-laws who had been brought up in Moab.

NAOMI: (in great distress) I need to go back to Israel. It seems as if I will be forever wandering. I hate to go back to my birthplace empty-handed, but the Jewish people care about the poor. Things will go better for me there (She looks at ORPAH and RUTH, sighing.)

ORPAH: (haughtily replying) You're right, Naomi, everyone knows we're poor. You're different, you're Jewish. You go ahead and do what you want, but I don't want to make a difficult move. I know I can find a husband here.

NAOMI: (looking at RUTH) Although it is most difficult for me to separate from you two, I know that you can find husbands among your own people. Ruth, you stay here with Orpah. (Now she is sobbing.)

RUTH: (clinging to NAOMI'S cloak) No, mother. I don't care about a husband here. The real problem is that I can't find another mother-in-law like you. I will follow you.

NAOMI: No, dear. I can't let you go. These are your own people. You must think about your future.

RUTH: What do you mean? I am also your daughter, the wife of an Israelite. What is a future without you? Leave you for this? (She turns around and waves her hand at the temples in silhouette against the sky.)

NAOMI: Go on now girl. Why trail after a poor Jewish woman who has nothing? Here you can find a home and be with your sister. Without my husband, I am less than nothing here... a foreigner...and widowed at that!

RUTH: This may be my home but home won't mean anything without you. You have taught me that home is the peace of God. No, Mother, where you go, I go, and where you stay, I stay.

NAOMI: (hugging RUTH) Such loyalty in one so young! I can see that you possess the heritage your husband taught you. But remember, though you are family to me, you will be a foreigner in Israel, as I have been in Moab.

RUTH: (hugging NAOMI) I am not afraid. Your coming here has brought me to you. What will my going to Israel bring? Only God knows! Oh Mother, I am looking forward to this trip.

NAOMI: I have been away many years and will be a foreigner, at first. I can't tell you what your company will mean to me

(ORPAH, meanwhile, has been smoothing her veil and looking out the window toward the town square. RUTH finally turns her attention to her sister-in-law.)

RUTH: How can we leave you by yourself?

ORPAH: I will do just fine. I was fine before you came and I will take care of myself. You two go along your way. I have many friends. I cannot be torn from my homeland.

NAOMI: Orpah, you are always welcome. You know the beliefs of my people as my son taught them to you. My prayer is that you will remember me and my people always, especially to any who descend from you.