

- Without a title, would you know this painting connects to the Book of Ruth? How?
- What do you see in this painting?
- What aspects of your own knowledge did you bring to your interpretation?
- Who do you think painted this and how did you draw your conclusion?

For more information on art and the Book of Ruth, see  
<http://www.talivirtualmidrash.org.il/?article=the-scroll-of-ruth>

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### **Inside the Frame: Ruth Follows Some Rules and Breaks Others**

#### Conventions of Biblical storytelling

- There is a story frame with a clear beginning, climax, and ending
- The story occurs in a brief time span and is set in a historical frame and a geographical frame.
- Concise—every word and every detail have weight
- Repetition of words (and their cognates) determine emphasis
- Actions and words relay theme
- The story echoes other Biblical books (for the May session)

#### **How does Ruth break the rules of Biblical narrative?**

- Female characters have a male counterpart

<b>Female</b>	<b>Male (alive)</b>
Naomi	Ploni ben Ploni
Ruth	Boaz
Women reapers	Male reapers
Women of Bethlehem	Men at the Gate

- Female chorus provides a counterpoint to the narrator's voice  
1:19-21 and 4:16-17

### Questions to consider at your table

#### Choose 1

- a. Where do you see evidence that Naomi and Ruth live on the margins of society?
- b. How do Naomi and Ruth move from the margins?
- c. Where do you see instances of physical borders, edges, and boundaries. How do the physical places function in the narrative?
- d. What names are used to denote Ruth and how do the different terms indicate her marginality?
- e. What is Ruth's character trait that moves her to the center of the narrative?

See verses 1:8, 2:20, 3:10

- f. For Hebrew speakers, notice how many times the root גאל and the root דבק appear in the narrative. What's the significance?