

The Book of Ruth

The Argument

This little Book, by whomsoever written, which is not material to know, is annexed to the Book of Judges, and by some of the Hebrew doctors made a part of it. It is useful, as for many other points, so especially to show the genealogy of David, and consequently of Christ; and the rise of Christ from a Moabitish woman; which was a useful document, and a great encouragement to the Gentiles to believe in Christ.

Chapter 1

A famine in Canaan. Elimelech removes to Moab; with Naomi his wife, and his two sons, who marry Orpah and Ruth there; and die, [Ru 1:1-5](#). Naomi returns to Judah; her daughters-in-law accompany her on her way, [Ru 1:6-13](#). Orpah returns home to her people and gods; Ruth remains, being converted, [Ru 1:14-18](#). They come to Beth-lehem, [Ru 1:19-22](#).

[Ru 1:1](#)

In the days when the judges ruled; which is noted as the cause of the following famine, because in much of that time they were guilty of great defection from God. But under which of the judges this happened, Scripture being silent, it seems presumptuous to determine; nor is it necessary to know. What is said about this matter from the genealogy, mentioned [Ru 1:18](#), &c., it will be most proper to consider it there.

In the land, or, in that land, to wit, of Canaan.

The country of Moab; a fruitful land beyond Jordan, eastward.

[Ru 1:2](#)

Ephrathites; so called, because this Beth-lehem is otherwise called Ephrath or Ephratah, [Ge 35:19](#); [Mic 5:2](#); either from Caleb's wife of that name, [1Ch 2:19](#); [4:4](#), or from the fertility of the soil about it; which title may therefore be used here, to show the greatness of the famine, which affected even fertile parts.

Of Bethlehem-Judah: [See Comment on Jdg 17:7](#).

Continued there, to wit, during the famine.

[Ru 1:3-4](#)

Of the women of Moab; either these were proselytes when they married them, which may well be doubted, from [Ru 1:15](#), or they sinned in marrying them, as appears from [De 7:3](#); [23:3](#); [Ezr 9:1-2](#); [Ne 13:23](#), and therefore were punished with short life and want of issue, [Ru 1:5](#), [19](#), [21](#).

About ten years; as long as the famine lasted.

[Ru 1:5-8](#)

Each to her mother's house; not that they wanted fathers, [Ru 2:11](#), but because daughters used to converse more frequently with their mothers, and to be most endeared to them, and to dwell in the same apartments with them, which then were distinct from those parts of the house where the men dwelt.

With the dead; with my sons, your husbands, whilst they lived.

[Ru 1:9](#)

Rest, i.e. a quiet and happy life, free from those cares, vexations, encumbrances, and troubles which widows are in a special manner exposed unto.

She kissed them, as the manner there was when friends parted.

[Ru 1:10-11](#)

According to the ancient custom, [Ge 38:1-30](#), and the express law of God, [De 25:5](#), which doubtless she had acquainted them with before, among other branches of the Jewish religion, wherein she did instruct them.

[Ru 1:12](#)

Go your way.

Quest. Why doth she dissuade them from this journey, and not rather persuade them to go with her, and to embrace the Jewish religion?

Answ. 1. Possibly she thought such dissuasion might be the best way to persuade them, as it oft happens; especially in that sex. 2. She would not have them rashly and inconsiderately to embrace the Jewish religion, in hopes of some advantage from it, which she justly thought they would be disappointed of; and withal, exposed to many straits and troubles, and on that occasion revolt from the true religion, which would be far worse than never to have embraced it. And therefore she doth justly, and wisely, and piously in representing to them the truth of the business, and the outward inconveniences which would accompany the change of their place and religion; as also our blessed Lord Christ did, [Mt 8:20](#).

[Ru 1:13](#)

Would ye stay for them from having husbands? it is unreasonable for me to expect it, or for you to perform it.

For your sakes; that you are left without the comfort of husbands or children; that I must part with such dear and affectionate daughters; and that my circumstances are such that I cannot invite nor encourage you to go along with me. For her condition was so mean at this time, that Ruth, when she came to her mother's city, was forced to glean for a living, [Ru 2:2](#).

[Ru 1:14](#)

Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, i.e. departed from with a kiss, as the manner was, [Ge 31:28](#); [1Ki 19:20](#).

[Ru 1:15](#)

Unto her people, and unto her gods; which she saith, partly, to try Ruth's sincerity and constancy; partly, that by upbraiding Orpah with her idolatry she might consequently turn her from it; and partly, that she might intimate to her, that if she went with her, she must embrace the true God and religion.

[Ru 1:16](#)

I renounce those idols which my sister hath returned to, and I wilt worship no other God but thine, who is indeed the only true God.

[Ru 1:17-19](#)

Is this she that formerly lived in so much plenty and honour? Oh how marvellously is her condition changed, that she is returned in this forlorn and desolate condition!

[Ru 1:20](#)

Naomi signifies *pleasant* or *cheerful*, or *amiable*.

Mara signifies *bitter* or *sorrowful*.

[Ru 1:21-22](#)

Full; with my husband and sons, and a plentiful estate for our support.

Hath testified against me, i.e. hath borne witness, as it were, in judgment, and given sentence against me, and declared my sin by my punishment.

Chapter 2

Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz, her deceased husband's near kinsman, h taketh knowledge of her, [Ru 2:1-7](#). He showeth her great kindness, and blesseth her, [Ru 2:8-16](#). That which she got she brings to Naomi; and telleth her what had befallen her. She giveth God thanks, and exhorteth Ruth to continue in the field, [Ru 2:17-23](#).

[Ru 2:1-2](#)

Gleaning was permitted to the poor and the stranger, [De 24:19](#), both which she was; nor was she ashamed to confess her poverty, nor would she eat the bread of idleness; whereby she showeth herself to be a prudent, and diligent, and virtuous woman, as she is called, [Ru 3:11](#).

In whose sight I shall find grace; for though it was their duty to permit this, [Lev 19:9](#); [23:22](#), yet either she was ignorant thereof, or thought that, being a stranger, it might be grudged or

denied to her; or, at least, that it became her modestly and humbly to acknowledge their kindness herein.

[Ru 2:3](#)

Her hap was; for it was indeed a chance in reference to second causes, but ordered and designed by God's providence.

[Ru 2:4](#)

They expressed and professed their piety, even in their civil conversation and worldly transactions; which now so many are ashamed of, and call it hypocrisy or vain ostentation thus to do.

[Ru 2:5-6](#)

i.e. That came with Naomi when she came back; for otherwise, as Ruth did not go from thence, so she could not properly be said to come back.

[Ru 2:7](#)

She said, I pray you, let me glean; she did not boldly intrude herself, but modestly ask leave of us.

Hath continued even from the morning until now; she is not retired though idleness, for she hath been diligent and constant in her labours.

In the house; not in Naomi's house, as many understand it, as may be gathered from [Ru 2:18-19](#), but in the little house or tent, which was set up in the fields at these times, and was necessary in those hot countries, where the labourers or others might retire for a little repose or repast at fit times. Being weary with her continued labours she comes hither to take a little rest.

[Ru 2:8](#)

Not by the young men, to avoid both occasion of sin and matter of scandal. Herein he shows his piety and prudence.

[Ru 2:9](#)

That they shall not touch thee, so as to offer any incivility or injury to thee. *Touching* is oft taken for hurting, [Ge 26:11](#); [Ps 105:15](#).

[Ru 2:10](#)

She fell on her face: this was the humblest posture of reverence; either civil, when performed to men, or religious, when to God. See [Ge 18:2](#); [33:3](#); [42:6](#); [Mt 2:11](#); [8:2](#).

Take knowledge of me, i.e. show any respect and kindness to me; for words of knowledge in Scripture commonly include affection.

[Ru 2:11](#)

Which thou knewest not; of whom thou hadst no experience; for otherwise in general she could not be ignorant of this people.

[Ru 2:12](#)

Wings, i.e. protection and care, as [De 32:11](#); [Ps 17:8](#); [36:7](#); [91:4](#). An allusion either to hens, which protect and cherish their young ones under their wings; or to the wings of the cherubims, between which God dwelt.

[Ru 2:13](#)

Let me find favour in thy sight; I humbly implore the continuance of thy good opinion of me, though I do not deserve it.

Not like unto one of thy handmaidens; a person more mean, and necessitous, and obscure, being a stranger, and one born of heathenish parents, and not of the holy and honourable people of Israel, as they are.

[Ru 2:14](#)

Bread in those simple and frugal times was the usual food of servants and the meaner sort, at least when they were engaged in such works as this, which required speed, and therefore must be quick in their eating, as well as in their work. Or *bread* may be here put for any food, as it oft is.

Vinegar; either simple vinegar, in which the poorer sort used to dip their bread, and so eat it in hot countries, as they did not only in Canaan, but afterwards in Italy; it being very proper, especially in those parts, for cooling them in those hot seasons, for strengthening their sinews, &c.; or vinegar mixed with other things to make some kind of sauce.

Beside the reapers; not with or among them, but at some little distance from them, and as one inferior to them, as she had acknowledged before in words, and now showeth it by her actions.

Parched corn; a food in frequent use and some esteem with them. See [2Sa 17:28](#).

[Ru 2:15](#)

As if she were rude or impudent in so doing, as otherwise they should have thought.

Quest. Why did he not rather give her as much corn as she could carry, and send her away?

Answ. Because he would not have her to eat the bread of idleness, but honestly to get it with the sweat of her brow, according to her duty and present condition.

[Ru 2:16-17](#)

An *ephah* is thought to contain about a bushel. See [Ex 16:36](#); [Lev 5:11](#).

[Ru 2:18](#)

Or, *that which she had left of her fulness, or after she was satisfied*. She did eat as much as she desired of what she had gleaned, and her mother, as I suppose, with her, and the residue she gave to her mother to lay up for future use.

[Ru 2:19-20](#)

And to the dead, i.e. which he formerly showed to those who are now dead, to wit, my husband and his sons whilst they were living, and now continues to us, their wives, who are now alive.

One of our next kinsmen; Heb. *one of our redeemers, or avengers*, to whom it belongs to avenge our persons, and to redeem our lands, and to marry thee, the widow and relict of his next kinsman, as is expressed, [Ru 3:9](#). She saith *one of them*, not that there were many who were immediately such, but that he was a very near kinsman, and one to whom that office belonged, in case of the refusal of one person, of whom she rightly conjectured that he would refuse, as he did.

[Ru 2:21-22](#)

Whereby thou wilt both expose thyself to many inconveniences, which thou mayst expect from strangers; and incur his displeasure, as if thou didst either despise his proffered kindness, or doubt of the sincerity of his affections and offers.

[Ru 2:23](#)

Heb. *sat or continued at home*, when she had despatched her occasions abroad, and did not wander or gad abroad, after the manner of idle persons and harlots, [Pr 7:11-12](#).

Chapter 3

By Naomi's advice, Ruth lieth at Boaz's feet, [Ru 3:1-7](#). He awaking commendeth what she had done, and acknowledgeth the right of a kinsman; tells her there was a nearer kinsman, to whom he would offer her, who refusing, he would redeem her, [Ru 3:8-13](#). Sends her away with six measures of barley, [Ru 3:14-18](#).

[Ru 3:1](#)

Rest, i.e. a life of rest, and comfort, and safety, under the care of a good husband. The question supposeth an affirmative answer: I will seek it, as my duty binds me.

[Ru 3:2](#)

Which was in a place covered at the top, but open elsewhere, whither Ruth might easily come. And this work of winnowing corn was usually begun or ended with a feast, as may be

gathered both from [Ru 3:7](#), and from other instances, wherein they used to do so upon like occasions; and this work was to begin this evening, and, as some think, was done only in the evenings, when the heat grew less, and the wind began to blow. See [Ge 3:8](#).

[Ru 3:3](#)

Thy raiment, to wit, thy best raiment. All this was done to render herself more amiable in the eyes of Boaz. *Object*. But Boaz could not see her, the whole business being to be transacted by night.

Answ. First, It was begun in the beginning of the night, as soon as Boaz had supped and composed himself to rest, as appears from [Ru 3:4, 7](#), when there was so much light left as might discover her to him. Secondly, There being a solemn feast this evening, as is very probably thought, and the master of the feast having invited his labouring people to it, and Ruth among the rest, it is likely that both she and the rest did put themselves into their best dress upon that occasion, as the manner is even at this day; and so he had opportunity enough to see her.

Make not thyself known unto the man, to wit, not in so familiar a way, as she was appointed to do, so as he might know her, in the sense in which that word is sometimes used.

[Ru 3:4](#)

When he lieth down, to rest or sleep, as upon such occasions they used to do in those hot countries.

Thou shalt go in: though Naomi and Ruth seem to be virtuous and modest women, and their intent was lawful and honest; yet there seems to be a manifold irregularity in the manner of it. First, It seems to be against that modesty which should be eminent in that sex, and in unmarried persons. Secondly, Against honesty, both because it was an injury to another person, who was nearer akin, whose right this was; which Naomi could not be ignorant of; and because it was a preposterous and precipitant method, not agreeable either to the rules of Scripture, or the usage of well-mannered nations, or that decency which even nature requires. Thirdly, Against prudence; for it might have proved the occasion, as of many sins, so of great shame to all of them; and a means to alienate his affection from her, which she sought to engage. And though there be some circumstances which alleviate the fact, as the experience which Naomi had of the wisdom and sobriety both of Boaz and of Ruth, yet she knew not what the event would be; and that there was something of shamefulness in the thing, may be gathered both from Naomi's choice of the night for it, as if it were a work of darkness, and from Boaz's fear lest this should be known, [Ru 3:14](#). And it is an aggravation of it, that this course was unnecessary, and she had a plain and likely way, which was directly to address herself to Boaz, or the next kinsman, and to require the duty which by God's law he was bound to perform, and this before witnesses, as Boaz did. And her clandestine proceeding seems to have arisen from a distrust of God's providence to bring about what she desired in the ordinary way.

Uncover his feet; remove the clothes which were upon his feet; thereby to awaken him.

What thou shalt do; how thou shouldst carry thyself, or what course thou shalt take to obtain that marriage which belongs unto thee. Only there were some rites to be observed, and

circumstances to be done, before they came to the conclusion of the marriage, about which Boaz would instruct her.

[Ru 3:5](#)

The confidence she had in Naomi's wisdom and piety, and true love to her, made her ready to follow her advice, wherein she was the more excusable, because she did not understand the laws and customs of the country, as Naomi did.

[Ru 3:6-7](#)

Had eaten and drunk, to wit, liberally, as the manner was upon those occasions. See [Jdg 9:27](#); [Ps 4:7](#); [Isa 9:3](#).

[Ru 3:8](#)

At midnight; he did not discover her sooner, though she did not uncover his feet, being it seems in a deep sleep, as is usual after feasts, and she doing no more than her mother commanded her, and using no words or gestures which might provoke his lust; wherein she showed her temperance and modesty, and that what she did was only by her mother's instigation and advice, which plainly appeared from her desire expressed, [Ru 3:9](#), which he knew, she being a stranger, was unacquainted with. And this was the reason why Boaz was not in the least offended with her, but only commends her virtue, without any reflection upon her for this fact.

Turned himself; from the place where he lay, he raised and turned himself towards the feet, to learn who or what was there. Or, *he was troubled*, or *afraid*, or *wondered*; for the Hebrew word being but once used, is diversely rendered.

A woman lay at his feet; which he might understand, either by some glimmerings of light which were after midnight, which discovered her; or rather, by her voice, or out of her own mouth, who being asked, told him so much in general, before he made particular inquiry.

[Ru 3:9](#)

Spread thy skirt over thine hand-maid, i.e. take me to be thy wife, and perform the duty of an husband to me. This phrase is used in this sense [De 22:30](#); [27:20](#); [Eze 16:8](#). Either, first, Because the wife is admitted into the same bed with her husband, and both are covered with one and the same covering. Or, secondly, From an ancient ceremony of the husband's throwing the skirt of his garment over her head, in token both of her subjection, [1Co 11:5-6](#), [10](#), and appropriation to him, being hereby as it were hid from the eyes of others; see [Ge 20:16](#); and also of that protection which he oweth to her: see [Ru 2:12](#).

[Ru 3:10](#)

Thou hast showed more kindness; both to thy deceased husband, the continuance of whose name and memory thou preferrest before the satisfaction of thy own lust; and to thy mother-in-law, whose commands thou hast punctually obeyed, even with thy own hazard in so doubtful an enterprise.

Thou followedst not young men, to seek thy marriage either here, or in thy own country, as thou wouldst have done if thou hadst not preferred obedience to God's command, before the pleasing of thyself.

[Ru 3:11](#)

Fear not; think not that I despise and reject thee, because I do not immediately comply with thy desire.

I will do to thee all that thou requirest, i.e. marry thee, upon the condition here following.

[Ru 3:12-13](#)

If he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, i.e. take thee to wife, to raise up seed to his brother, as he ought to do.

[Ru 3:14](#)

Before one could know another, i.e. while it was yet so dark that one person could not discern another. Or, before one did know the other, i.e. before they were carnally known to one another.

Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor; he takes care to preserve not only his conscience towards God, but his reputation, and hers also, among men.

[Ru 3:15](#)

The veil, or, the apron, such as women ordinarily wear.

Six measures; known and usual measure: it is not determined how large those measures were, but this the nature of the thing shows, that they were no larger than one woman could carry in her veil, or apron.

[Ru 3:16-18](#)

Who art thou, my daughter? either, first, She did not distinctly know who she was, because it was dark, and so calls her daughter only in general, as elder women call the younger. But she could as easily have discerned who she was, as what her age was. Or, secondly, This is not a question of doubting, but of wonder, as if she had said, Art thou in very deed my daughter? I can hardly believe it. How comest thou hither in this manner, and thus early?

Chapter 4

Boaz goeth up to the gate, calleth his kinsman; inquires whether he would redeem and marry Ruth, [Ru 4:1-5](#). He refuseth, [Ru 4:6-8](#). Boaz, the people witnessing and congratulating, buyeth the inheritance, and marrieth Ruth, [Ru 4:9-12](#). She beareth Obed the grandfather of David, [Ru 4:13-17](#). The genealogy from Pharez unto David, [Ru 4:18-22](#).

[Ru 4:1](#)

The gate; the place where controversies were decided, and the people assembled, and where they used to go out and come in to the town; where he was most likely to find his kinsman. *Ho, such a one!* doubtless Boaz both knew his name, and called him by it; but it is omitted by the holy writer, partly because it was unnecessary to know it; and principally in way of contempt, as is usual, and as a just punishment upon him, that he who would not preserve his brother's name might lose his own, and be buried in the grave of perpetual oblivion.

Sit down here, I have some business of importance with you.

[Ru 4:2](#)

He took two men, to be umpires or witnesses between them; for though two or three witnesses were sufficient, yet in weightier matters they used more. And *ten* was the usual number among the Jews, in causes of matrimony and divorce, and translation of inheritances; who were both judges of the causes, and witnesses of the fact. See [1Ki 21:8](#).

[Ru 4:3](#)

Both Naomi and Ruth had an interest in this land during their lives, but he mentions only Naomi, partly because all was done by her direction, to which Ruth wholly submitted herself; and partly lest the mention of Ruth should raise a suspicion of the necessity of his marrying Ruth, before he had given his answer to the first proposition.

Selleth a parcel of land; which she might do because of her poverty, [Lev 25:25](#).

[Ru 4:4](#)

Before the elders of my people; before this assembly, that it may be legally and firmly made over to thee.

[Ru 4:5](#)

The wife of the dead; according to the law, [De 25:5](#); [Mt 22:24](#), &c.

To raise up the name of the dead; to revive his name, which was lost and buried with his body, by raising up a seed to him, to be called by his name.

[Ru 4:6](#)

Lest I mar mine own inheritance; either, first, Because having no children of his own, he might have one, and but one, son by Ruth, who, though he should carry away his inheritance, yet should not bear his name, but the name of Ruth's husband; and so by preserving another man's name, he should lose his own. Or, secondly, Because as his inheritance would be but very little increased by this marriage, so it might be much diminished by being divided amongst his many children, which he possibly had already, and might probably have more by Ruth.

Redeem thou my right, which I freely renounce and resign to thee.

[Ru 4:7](#)

For to confirm all things, i.e. in all alienation of lands. So that it is no wonder if this ceremony differ a little from that [De 25:9](#), because that concerned only one case, but this is more general. Besides, he pleads not the command of God, but only ancient custom, for this practice.

A man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: he who relinquished his right to another, plucked off his own shoe, and gave it to him. This was symbolical, and a significant and convenient ceremony; as if he said, Take this shoe wherewith I used to go and tread upon my land, and in that shoe do thou enter upon it, and take possession of it.

This was a testimony in Israel; this was admitted for sufficient evidence in all such cases.

[Ru 4:8-10](#)

From the gate of his place, i.e. from among the inhabitants dwelling within the gate of this city, which was Bethlehem-judah.

[Ru 4:11](#)

Like Rachel and like Leah, amiable and fruitful. Those two are singled out, partly because they were of a foreign and heathenish original, and yet ingrafted into God's people, as Ruth also was; and partly because of that singular fertility which God vouchsafed unto them above their predecessors, Sarah and Rebekah.

Rachel is placed before Leah, because she was his most lawful, and only intended, and chosen, and best beloved wife.

Build the house, i.e. increase the posterity. See [Ge 16:2](#); [Ex 1:21](#). Ephratah and Bethlehem, two names of one and the same place; of which [See Comment on Ru 1:2](#).

[Ru 4:12](#)

Like the house of Pharez; as honourable and numerous as his family was; whom, though he also was born of a stranger, God so far blessed, that his family was one of the five families to which all the tribe of Judah belonged, and the progenitor of the inhabitants of this city.

[Ru 4:13](#)

Boaz took Ruth; which he might do, though she was a Moabite, because the prohibition against marrying such is to be restrained to those who continue in the heathenish estate, as is evident from the reason of it; whereas Ruth was a sincere proselyte and convert to the God and faith of Israel.

He went in unto her, i.e. had conjugal converse with her. See [Ge 6:4](#).

Conception, i.e. strength to conceive and retain seed.

[Ru 4:14](#)

Without a kinsman; which is understood, either, first, Of the son new born. Or rather, secondly, Of Boaz; for the name of *goel*, which is translated *kinsman* or *redeemer*, is never, that I know of, given to the child born, but always to the person begetting him of his brother's or near kinsman's wife. And whereas it is objected, that there was no cause for this congratulation at this time in reference to Boaz, because that was done divers months before this time; it may be replied, that the memory of that generous action was revived upon this occasion, and therefore is fitly mentioned as the foundation of this child's birth; and this happy effect justly leads them to the cause and original of it, which was this, that Boaz had shown himself to be a kinsman or not only in name and title, as the other kinsman was, [Ru 4:6](#), but in truth and reality. The words may be rendered, *which hath not made or suffered thy kinsman to fail to thee*, i.e. to neglect or refuse the performance of his duty to thee and thine, as the other kinsman did.

That his name may be famous in Israel, Heb. *and his name shall be famous in Israel*, for this noble and worthy action, wherein he gave so great an example of piety, charity, humility, and self-denial.

[Ru 4:15](#)

A restorer of thy life, i.e. of the comfort of thy life, which was in a great measure dead and gone.

Hath born him, to wit, a son; the pronoun for the noun understood, which is frequent in the Hebrew tongue. Or, *hath born to him*, i.e. to thy kinsman, to wit, a son, which is easily understood; and so the pronoun affix is put for the separate; of which there are instances; as [Jos 15:19](#); [1Ki 19:21](#); [Job 31:37](#); [Eze 29:3](#).

[Ru 4:16-17](#)

Gave it a name, i.e. they gave her advice about the name; for otherwise they had no power or right to do so.

Obed; a servant, to wit, to thee, to nourish, and comfort, and assist thee; which duty children owe to their progenitors.

[Ru 4:18-22](#)

How can this be a true genealogy, seeing by this means four persons take up three hundred and eighty years, which were between Salmon and David, and consequently every one of them must beget a son when he was very old?

Ans. 1. It is not certain that each of these was the immediate parent of him whom he is said to beget; for sometimes grandfathers are said in Scripture to beget their grandchildren, to wit, by the intervention of their immediate sons; whereof instances have been given. And sometimes in genealogies whole generations are omitted, as may appear by [Ezr 7:2](#), compared with [1Ch 6:3](#) and by [Mt 1:8](#), which might be done here for divers reasons now

unknown. 2. There are many examples even in profane writers, both ancient and modern, of persons that have not only lived one hundred and twenty and one hundred and thirty years and upwards, but have been vigorous and have begotten children at above one hundred years old; and of women that have conceived and born children at the age of fifty, sixty, yea, seventy years. And therefore if it were so in these more ancient times, when men were longer lived, and under the law, when long life was expressly promised to the obedient, and in persons of strong constitutions and sober conversations, such as some of these are known to have been, and the others may justly be presumed to be such, it is not strange, nor in the least incredible.