

This song Cycle is an offering for a musical evening program about Ruth the Moavite.

Its goal is to bring Ruth character and her story as close to

our modern thought. This program of Ruth, contains 7 completely new songs, that invite the listeners as well as the participants to journey with Ruth, as illustrated through modern, main stream songs, mostly in English, but with some quotes involved, that will bring elements from the story and from the Megillah of Ruth, to our current days and trends, for the congregants to connect to a new. 2 of the offered songs are an interpretation of Poem by Yehudah Amichai, the famous Israeli poet, who's writings are considered pillars of original Israeli literature, more often than not,

The evening will start with a Niggun, creating an ambiance familiar from Shabbat services, inviting the congregation to join along spiritually. Then the themes presented will revolve around Ruth's voice, as a exemplar for empowerment of women and their choice, the loss of Naomi, the theme of Chesed in the scroll, the main idea of Ruth devotion, as portrayed by the famous line "Wherever you go I will go too", the connotation of the book to the holiday of Shavuot – an invitation to a sermon about the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, and a conclusion with Ruth's Blessing.

In this cycle:

conversing between the Jewish identity to the Israeli identity.

- 1. Ruth Niggun
- 2. Kol Ba'Isha
- 3. Null Tone
- 4. Chesed
- 5. Wherever you go I will go too
- 6. Matan Torah
- 7. Ruth' blessing

Dedicated to my teacher – Adriane Leveen Apr. 2022



# Ruth The Moavite

### 1. Opening – Ruth Niggun

The Niggun is transforming us musically without word to a far away land. Desert, struggle, and yet some sparks of hope, and old Jewish modality to start our travel in time, and set the mood. The Niggun invites everyone to join along without words, either humming or with a "dai dai dai…", in the very ancient Jewish spiritual tradition of the Niggun.



Iris Karlin



### 2. Kol Ba'isha

The first song (with words) to open the program is about the woman's voice, A woman's story that is a sacred text and became a "Torah" (Not literally as one of the 5 first books, but rather as a sacred text). We should not take for granted the Zchut that Ruth got, to become a Torah, not hundreds of years ago, and not nowadays either. There is always a place for more women empowerment. Ruth made the choice, she raised her voice and acted, and we should all find our power to do the same – to be heard, to lead, to make a difference and to be a story. Perhaps this is a feminist take on Biblical super hero women.

#### Lyrics:

Kol, Kol, (Ol) Ba-'isha, Kol You have the free will to be what you believe Just take a big breath Rise up And raise your voice You have —

Sound it out!
Own your past
And be your present
And make your future
Be a Torah!

**KOL** 

**KOL** 

You have a voice! You have a choice! Make your life a sacred text! You have KOL

You have the knowledge to lead the way You have compassion to help, Come what may & just a leap of faith To soar To shine Who you are You are —

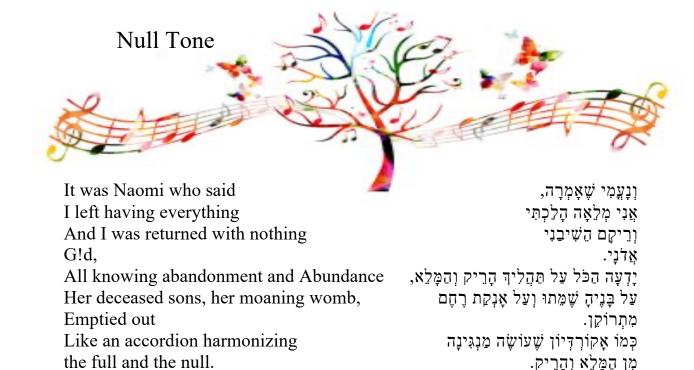


## Kol Ba'lsha קוֹל בַּאִשָּה Ruth' Song cycle



### 3. Null Tone

In the Israeli Literature, many poets criticize the idyllic picture the scroll of Ruth ends with. Amongst "Meshorerey hashchol" The poets of bereavement, the main argument, is that the focus of the book should be on the terrible loss, rather than the happy ending. This poem by Yehudah Amichai focuses on Naomi's loss. Her tragedy, her emptiness, and her moaning. I was drawn to his writing and his depiction of making music out of the everything and the nothing, the happiness and the moaning, the unbearable loss, while life continues. And the Harmony that is counterpointing the conflicting feelings, the full and the null. Accordingly, I offered it the name.



An offered chatimah to the Art song from Ruth 2:20:

בַּרוּדְ יהֹנָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב חַסְדֹּוֹ אֶת־הַחַיָּים וְאֶת־הַמֵּתִים

Blessed is Adonai, whose kindness doesn't leave the living and the dead.

## Null tone

### Ruth' Song cycle

Poem by Yehuda Amichai Translation & music by Iris Karlin



וְנְעֲמִי שֶׁאָמְרָה, It was Naomi who said,

ו אַנִי מְלֵאָה הָלַכְהִי I left having everything

אוביקם הַשִּׁיבַנִי And I was returned with nothing

אַד'נָי. G!d.

יָדְעָה הַכּּל עַל הַּהְלִיךְ הָבִיק וְהַפְּלֵא, All knowing abandonment and Abundance,

על בָּנֶיהָ שֶׁמֵחוּ וְעַל אָנְקַת רֶהֶם Her deceased sons, her moaning womb,

מְתְרוֹקֵן. Emptied out.

בְּגִינְה מַנְגִינָה Like an accordion harmonizing

מָן הַמְּלֵא וְהָרֵיק. the full and the null.

### 4. Chesed

From Midrash Ruth Rabbah 2:14:

"מְגִלָּה זוֹ אֵין בָּה לֹא טַמְאָה וְלֹא טָהָרָה וְלֹא אָפוּר וְלֹא הֶתֵּר. וְלָמֶה נִכְתְּבָה? לְלַמֶּדְדְּ בַּמֶּה שֶׂכָר טוֹב לְגוֹמְלֵי חְסָדִים" This scroll - The book of Ruth, does not contain laws of impurity or purity, nor prohibitions or allowances. Then why was it written? To teach you how worthy is the reward for those who do good deeds. According to the midrash, the main purpose of the Megillah is to portray the Chesed - the charity, the kindness, and the extent of it. The word Chesed appears 3 times in the Megillah, 2 times Naomi mentioned The Godly Chesed, once, asking G!d to do a Chesed with her daughters in law, and secondly blessing Boaz, who is a man of Chesed through G!d, by his kindness to Ruth. The third Chesed is Ruth's and it is described by Bo'az in Ruth 3:10, when he blesses her, and says that her latest deed of loyalty is greater than her first's. Her first was not leaving her mother in law, and wishing to continue her late husband's name, and her current, is that she didn't turn to the younger men, whether they are poor or rich, but rather chose Bo'az, who is older and a widower. Bo'az blessing, along with Naomi's blessing inspired this meditative congregational melody. Ruth 3:9 פָּרְשְׂתָּ כְּנָפֶּׂךְ עַל־אֲמֶתְדְּ בְּי גֹאֵל - "and you spread your wing (in protection) over your maid, for you are a redeemer", Inspired the idea of spreading the robe of love in the song. The song ends with a quote from Psalm 85:11 : הֶּסֶד־וָאֱמֶת נִפְּגָשׁוּ צֶדֶק וְשָׁלְוֹם נָשֶׁקוּ: — Deed and truth met, Justice and peace kissed.

Chesed Chesed

With your grace and kindness

Spread your robe of love

Your deed of trueness

Will bring us blessings from above

With will and purpose

And opened arms

Gifting better life to all of us

Embracing charity's charms

Chesed v'Emet nifgashu, Tzedek v'Shalom nashaku.

Liturgical references: Ruth 3:9-10 Psalm 85:11

## Chesed - קָּסֶד

### Ruth' Song cycle



Chesed Chesed
With your grace and kindness,
Spread your robe of love,
Your deed of trueness,
Will bring us blessings from above.

With will and purpose,
And opened arms,
Gifting better life to all of us,
Embracing charity's charms.

קסְדּיָנְאֲמֶת נִפְגֵשׁוּ צֵּדֶק וְשְׁלְוֹם נְשֵׁקוּ Chesed ve'Emet nifgeshu Tzedek v'shalom nashaku (Deed and truth met Justice and peace kissed)

### 5. Wherever you go I will go too

Perhaps one of the most famous biblical declarations of destiny partnership is Ruth' announcement to Naomi - Wherever you go, I will go too... wherever you die, I will die too... Your people shall be my people, and your G!d - My G!d. This is such a strong selfless notion of a sacrifice and extremely generous self-giving. This is also one of the rare occasions we are exposed to Ruth' own words. Despite the Megillah being called after her, and centered on her story, Bo'az is the main speaker of this scroll, speaking in 21 verses. After him, Naomi speaks in 17 verses, and Ruth herself – only in 11 verses.

In Ruth 4:11 the elders bless Boaz: "May G!d make the woman coming to you house like Rachel and Leah" יָתֵּלְ הְּכָּאָה אֶל־בֵּיטֶּׁךּ כְּרָחֵל וּכְלַאָה . The comparison between Ruth and Rachel, brought up their vocalness:

Ruth 1:9: וַתְּשֵׂאנָה קּוֹלֵן וַתְּבְבֵינָה (and they raised their voices and cried)

And Jeremiah 31:15: קַּבֶּה מְמְרוּלִים רָחֵל מְבַבָּה A voice is heard from the higher grounds - Wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her children.

Rachel refuses to be comforted, and she is moaning her dead sons, just like Naomi.

And so I borrowed Jeremiah's consultation to Rachel, as Ruth words to Naomi (Jeremiah 31:16): Restrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears מָנְעֵי קּוֹלֶךְ מֶּבֶּׁי וְעִינֵיִדְ מִדְּמְעֵה Which gave this song a touch of a consolation song.

#### Lyrics:

Wherever you go I will go too
Wherever you lounge I'll be by your side
Your people shall be my people
And your G!d – my G!d

אֶל־אֲשֶׁׁר תַּלְכִּי אֵלֵּךְ (Ruth 1:16) וּבַאֲשֶׁר תָּלִּינִי אָלִין עִימֵךְ עַמֵּךְ יִהְיֵה לְ-עַמִּי וְאֱלֹהָיִךְ אֱלֹהָיִ Restrain your voice from weeping.

And your eyes from tears

I'll share your grief and take away the pain

(Jeremiah 31:16) מָּנְעִי קּוֹלֵךְ מָבֶּׁכִי וְעִינַיִדְ מִדְּמְעָה אֶחְלוֹק בָּסִבְלַךְ וַאֲקֶל עַל כְּאֵבֶךְ

We'll cross the roads together
All through the years
Against all odds, our bond will sustain

נַחְצֶה הַדְּרַכִּים בְּיַחָד בְּמִתְנֵי הַשְּׁכִינָה מוּל הַמְצוּקוּת, קשָרֵינוּ יִחַזְקֵךְ

Wherever you go...

אָל־אֲשֶּׁר תַּלְכִי אֵלֵדְ ...

And you shall see your life renewed.

And May you long live in wellness too

And we will empower each other and heal
our brokenness

(Ruth 4:15) וְהָיָה לָךְּ לְמֵשִׁיב נֶּפֶשׁ וּלְכַלְכֵּל אֶת־שִּׁיכָתֵך נִתְעַצֵּם וְנַרַפָּא בִּמְחִילָה

Our fates entwined together
Our faith will lead us through
We will endure and light up the darkness

נְבְחֵי גוֹרַל שְׁלוּבִים יַחְדָיו וּבְאֶמוּנָה תְּפַלֵּס אֶת דַּרְכֶּךְ נִוֹשָׁע וְנַאִיר אֶת הַאֲפֵלָה

Through and out the wilderness
We will never be alone again
We'll found a new home
And hope will reborn

עוֹד תִּפְרַח זוֹ הַשְּׁמָמָה וְלֹא עוֹד תִּוְתְּרִי בּוֹדֵדָה וִיְהִי בִּיתֵינוּ פֶּתָח לְתִקְנָה שַׁעָר לִיִשוּעָה

Wherever you go I will go too

ֿ ... אֶל־אֲשֶּׁר מַּלְכִּי אֵלֵּךְ ...

# Wherever you go I will go too

Based on Ruth 1:16, 4:15 & Jeremiah 31:16

## Ruth' Song cycle



From the top to fin

### 6. Matan Torah

On Shavuot, when we read the Scroll of Ruth. It's a tradition that was constituted in Babylon 8 C.E. for a few reasons. The main two reasons are:

- Chag Shavuot is the Harvest celebration, and the story of Ruth happened at that time of year, and is describing the harvest all throughout.
- In the time of the Talmud, our sages declared that the 6<sup>th</sup> of Sivan Shavuot will also be known as The celebration of being given the Torah. The process of accepting the Torah could be seen as conversion of Bnei Israel who were slaves before, and took the commitment of the commandments at mount Sinai. Ruth the Moavite, who was a gentile, took upon herself the commitment to become a part of Am Israel, and declared her acceptance of the G!d of Israel as her G!d.

For this cycle, I chose to bring another poem of Yehudah Amichai, who is bringing us a different Israeli flavor of Judaism. While we celebrate Matan Torah, the giving of the Torah at mount Sinai, we are hundreds of years and hundreds of miles away from it. How would we, in the modern world, connect to it, when we sit so far away? Amichai is portraying himself as a kid in a classroom. Moses, up on the mountain, writing on the board, representing our teacher, writing letters on the board, while the kid doodles creatively completely different things, that belongs to a different time and place. There is a distinct disconnection between the two. But maybe not completely unrelated... On Shavuot, traditionally, synagogues get decorated with greenery and flowers, according to the Midrashic explanation, that when the shchinah came to mount Sinai in fire, it didn't burn the surroundings, but rather revived it, and the mountain was covered in greens and flowers. The kid is drawing flowers and faces, what he can daydream about, that happened on the ground level, where his eyes could have seen. He could not grasp what really happened up above, but draws the airplanes, that is perhaps his imaginative way to get a glimpse of what really happened up there, with the sacred writing of the decorative letters... And then the kid (that perhaps became or will become a teacher) is calling us, the readers, perhaps the next generation of students – don't do! And don't listen! Don't take for granted what others tell you is the proper way to do and listen, they weren't there. Don't get what they say as Torah MiSinai, don't follow blindly. Dare to dream, dare to be creative, dare to find your way, to fly on the wings of your imaginative airplane, to make your Torah of what happened there, and what it means to you. Bring it to be a

part of you, not just something you were taught in class. On Shavuot, we are hoping to bring these two worlds closer, the cold boards – the tablet, illustrated words, commandments, and the emotional experience of connecting to the beauty, to the feelings, to the celebration.

In the Gmara, our sages were conflicted regarding the celebration of the holiday, should it be all about the Torah and devoted to study? Or all about the people, and devoted to a feast celebration, with foods and drinks and merriment. Rabbi Yehoshua solved the Machloket, by renouncing that Chag Matan Torah is the perfect time for sharing the celebration – half to G!d and half to the people, to remind us all that our relation with G!d is not only "Ol Mitzvot" the burden of the commandments, but rather a partnership – a relation that needs to be celebrated. Not just by listening and doing, but rather by understanding our differences and accepting them.

We are all different kids, and each one of us has different needs, and different ways to interpret and connect. Instead of following instructions, we should each take our time to bring ourselves into the relationship, make it personal, and celebrate it in our own artistic way.

### The giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai Translated by Iris Karlin

(Adjusted to the music)

At the time Moses sat to chat along with our G!d at mount Sinai

He wrote on the tablets

I sat at the end of the class, in the corner

My mind wondering, and I drew

Faces and flowers

Airplanes and names, decorating the letters.

And now, I'm showing all of it to you:

Don't you "Do" and don't you "listen"!

### / Yehuda Amichai

#### <u>מתן תורה/ יהודה עמיחי</u>

בְּשָׁעָה שָׁמֹשֶׁה יָשַׁב אֵצֶל אֱלֹהִים בְּהַר סִינֵי וְכָתַב עַל הַלֹּוּחַ, יָשַׁבְתִּי בִּקְצֵה הַכִּתָּה, בַּפִּנָּה וְצִיַּרְתִּי, חוֹלְמִנִי, פְּרָחִים וּפָנִים , אַוִירוֹנִים וְשֵׁמוֹת מִקְשַׁטִים.

עַרָשָׁיו אָנִי מַרְאָה לָכֶם הַכּּל: אַל תַּעֲשׂוּ וְאַל תִּשְׁמְעוּ!

## Matan Torah - מַהָן תּוֹרָה



Start from the beginning till you reach G!d... (And keep going till you meet your maker :)

### 7. Ruth' Blessing

To conclude the cycle, I was inspired by Bo'az' blessing to Ruth from Ruth 3:10:

בְּרוּכָּה אָתְּ לִיהוָה בִּתִּי הֵיטַבְהְ חַסְדֵּךְ הָאַחָרָוֹן מִן־הָראשֵׁוֹן

"Blessed are you to G!d, my daughter. Your last act of kindness was even greater than the first". I wanted to fill his blessing for her with more content. Not just say "bless you" but rather detail, just like the psalms detail so well the songs for David – Ruth' grandson. I let Bo'az have his Zchut Rishonim first, and open with his words from Ruth 3:11: And now, my daughter, don't fear. All that you wish – I will do. But what would a humble modest person as Ruth ask for?

I dared asking for her, wishing her to have more voice, more light, salvation, change, passion compassion, prosperiity, hope and peace. And above all, I wished her to be the change, to be a prayer, and that her path will be filled with blessings, at every turn.

### Lyrics:

Ata Biti, Al tire'i, kol asher tomri e'ese lach עַּהַה בָּתִּי אֵעֲשֶׁה־לָּךְ אֵעֶשֶׁה־לָּךְ אַעֲשֶׂה־לָּךְ אַעֲשֶׂה־לָּךְ

And now, my daughter, don't fear. All that you wish – I will do.

And there's so much to say, so much to see, and ever forever to learn

May your path be filled with blessings, at every turn.

Be the voice in the silence

Be the light in the dark

Be a hand in times of need

Be the change

Be a blessing to the others

Bring your kindness loving spark

Let your heart take the lead

be the change

Have the passion and compassion

May it bring prosperity

And your grace will increase

Be a prayer

Be a mother to a nation

And a teacher of verity

Be the hope for peace

Be a prayer

Brucha Tihiyi b'lechtech

May your path be filled with blessings at every turn

# Ruth' Blessing - בִּרְכַּת רוּת

Opening quote from Ruth 3:11

### Ruth' Song cycle

