

Good afternoon everyone! Thank you so much for joining me to share this very special milestone and simcha in my life. I decided to study the Book of Ruth in honour of my Bat Mitzvah. The reason I decided to study the Book of Ruth is because it took place in a time that is my Hebrew birthday: Shavuot. I'm going to give you a quick summary of The story of Ruth, followed by the main message that stood out to me in the book of Ruth, which will remain with me forever. Unfortunately, the Book of Ruth begins with three tragic deaths: Ruth's father in law, brother in law and her husband. Naomi, Ruth's mother in law, decided to move back to the place she previously lived: Beit Lechem. Naomi pleaded with Ruth that she should go and make a life for herself and get remarried. But Ruth who was a princess, refused, leaving all of her riches and honour to be with Naomi. She made a life changing decision deciding to convert. She gave up and sacrificed everything to be close to G-d, because she truly believed in the Jewish religion. This is one of the many reasons she inspires me. When Naomi and Ruth arrived in Beit Lechem, Ruth went to Boaz's field to collect barley for they were desperately poor. Ruth's strength is seen here, as she left her luxurious life, for a poor difficult life because she realized that she wanted more meaning in her life, and becoming a Jew was the only way. The field that Ruth was going to go to collect barely from, belonged to a man named Boaz who was a very rich and wealthy person and was also her uncle. I am now going to do my best to explain a difficult Torah concept that is important in order to understand the story of Ruth. There is a Torah concept where if a woman's husband has passed away, and if her mother in law has any other sons, then the other son has the mitzvah of marrying the woman whose husband passed away. But because Naomi did not have any other children for Ruth to marry, the mitzvah was for her to marry the closest relative, in order to keep on the family name. Thinking that Boaz was the closest relative, Naomi told Ruth to go and hint to Boaz that she wanted to get married to him. So Ruth went to Boaz and hinted that she wanted to get married, and Boaz understood. But he realized that there was a closer relative that Ruth could marry, whose

name was Tov. Boaz went out to find him to ask if he would do the mitzvah of marrying Ruth. Tov ended up saying no, so Boaz married Ruth himself. Ruth gave birth to a baby who was named Oved, who would later become the grandfather of the great King David, who the very messiah will come from. We see that through Ruth's tremendous devotion to Hashem she merited and was fortunate that the Messiah would come from her descendants.

-In Perek gimel, pasuk hey, Naomi tells Ruth to prepare to go see Boaz to hint the idea of marriage, in order to carry on the family name. Naomi tells Ruth to wash and wear nice clothes and to have a bath. She also tells her when to go to Boaz and how to ask him. Then she says: "He will tell you what to do." You might think that when she said he will tell you what to do she was referring to Boaz. But that seems a little strange considering Ruth was coming Boaz to talk to him. Why would he tell her what to do? A commentator, Besuras Eliyahu explains that Naomi was actually referring to Hashem; Because the last thing Naomi said to Ruth was: "I can't possibly know what Boaz will say, but if you follow my directions, Hashem will inspire you to say the right thing." You might be thinking to yourself, what was the point of me telling you this story? The point is that this story shows that Naomi had extreme belief in Hashem that he would make Ruth say the right thing to Boaz. She knew that he would be with her the whole time. She also knew that there was nothing else that they could do. There rest was for Hashem to decide.

-When Ruth returned from her visit to Boaz, the first thing Naomi told her was "ביתי שיבי" which translates to, "sit, my daughter." Ruth had just hinted to Boaz about marriage and he had said that there might be a closer relative that she could marry. She didn't even know who she was going to marry! How could she sit? Well Naomi knew what she was doing. She knew that Ruth had done as much as she possibly could and the rest was for Hashem to decide; they had put in the effort and they had to trust Hashem that he would do whatever was best for her. And all

they could do was wait to hear the outcome of Hashem's decision.

- In Perek Daled, Pasuk Aleph, Boaz goes out to find the closer relative, whose name was Tov, who was eligible to marry Ruth. But there was one problem. Boaz had no idea where to find him. The next thing I'm about to say is unbelievable and requires a very high amount of belief in Hashem. To find Tov, Boaz went to the gate of Jerusalem, sat down and waited for Tov to walk by. He had no clue where Tov might be, but he had such extreme belief, he just knew that he played his part, so did Ruth and so did Naomi and therefore he knew that Hashem would play his part. And of course, "coincidentally", the next person he saw walking by was Tov. As you can see, back then people were on a much higher level than us and had a much stronger connection with God. Today, if you lived in Manhattan, the chances of you waiting on a park bench expecting to see your long lost friend and it actually happening is very, very slim. Igeret Shmuel says that Boaz knew that there was nothing else he could do. He was confident Hashem would help him. Boaz thought to himself, I did everything that I could do, so **of course** God will help me. It was as clear to him as the sky is blue, and the grass is green. He just knew Hashem would help him.

The lesson I have learned from studying the Book of Ruth is that I know that I am going to go through the journey of life, there are going to be good times and bad times, and tough decisions to be made. My bat mitzvah is a turning point in my life and with these good times and bad times I want to take this message home and use it to help me as things come into my life. I'm going to put the effort in, doing the best I can, work hard, and once I do that I can rely, trust and believe that Hashem will take care of the rest.

Now I would like to say some thank you's to the people who helped prepare for my bat mitzvah and who have always been there for me throughout my life. First off I need to give an incredibly big thank you to Henna Chaya Kamin who has been

teaching me Judaism lessons for two years and was also the one to help me write this speech. I've absolutely loved learning with her and I hope we will continue very soon. I honestly could not have done this without her! Secondly, I would like to give a tremendous thank you to the community of Young Israel, who has made coming to shul on Shabbat an amazingly fun, interesting, funny and happy experience. There has never been a dull moment, and I will remember all of you forever. Among the community of Young Israel, there are a few ladies who greatly helped my mother to prepare for my Bat mitzvah. I would like to thank Connie, Julie, Suzy, Leah and Adina and Grace for helping prepare every little gorgeous thing that is here. I also need to give a huge thank you to Sally Piccinato who unfortunately could not be here today, who helped my mom bake most of the baked goods and treats. Not only that, but she also made the gorgeous table cloths. And a big thank you to Jocelyn for taking all the beautiful photos. Also a huge thank you to Lorise Cohen for inspecting and making sure the lettuce was kosher for the salad, and thank you to Lauren for making the delicious salad dressing. And thank you to Andi for helping set up. Everything looks gorgeous. And now I would like thank all the people who could not be here today. Granny Evy and Zeida Milton, Bobba Edna, my wonderful grandparents. Also Zeida Selwyn who passed away four years who I know is looking down on me from heaven right now. Aunt Sharon, Uncle Stephen and Cousin Josh. Aunt Sharon, Uncle Howard, and Cousin Shaina, Ayala, Liat and David, who I will see very soon when my mom and I go to Israel in July. Also cousin Izzy, Shoshi and Aviya who I will also see in Israel. I also need to thank my family that is here: Uncle David, Aunt Robyn and cousin Asher and Levi. Having Shabbat dinner with you is so much fun and I look forward to it every Friday. And now of course I need to say a huge thank you to all my friends from my synagogue, my dance classes, Camp Miriam and all my friends from VTT. You guys make coming to school that much more exciting, fun and sometimes a little dramatic, but I wouldn't have it any other way. Finally I need to thank the three most important people in my life. My mom, dad and little adorable

brother. Dad, or as I call you, Abba, I love you to the moon and back and back and back. You are always there for me when I need a hug and you never let me get out of bed in the morning without singing a song or two to get me up. Aba, you gave the best gift anyone could give to another person. You believe in me and love me for who I am and I love you unconditionally for that. Oren. Oh dear, sweet, adorable, lovable, sometimes a little annoying, fun, little Oren. When we play family and act out the Shrek movie together I have so much fun. You make living in the Katz family home that much more exciting, fun, and cute. Because I have a brother I'll always have a friend and remember, this little brother is protected by one big sister. And when you find that one lucky girl you decide to be with, she going to have to go through me first! Love you Orenkie! And finally, Ima. Ima, there are literally no words in this entire galaxy that can I explain how much I love and appreciate you. You are first the person I go to when I have a problem and that's because you always give me the best answers within two minutes. You do so much for me and I appreciate you so much you don't even understand. I truly believe in love at first sight because I've loved my Ima ever since I opened my eyes. I love you!

And last, yet most important I need to thank the one who has always been there with me every single second of my life and brought me to this point where I am standing right now. The one who does everything for me from putting breath into my lungs to letting me be able to enjoy a piece of chocolate. Hashem has given me a life of simcha, laughter, and meaning. Thank you Hashem for all that you do for me.

Thank you so much for coming! I hope you enjoy and have a great afternoon!