

RUTH/THREE FUNERALS AND A WEDDING

Week 4 - Ruth 2

February 9, 2016

SCRIPTURE: Lev. 25:23-28 - *'The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.* ²⁴ *And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.* ²⁵ *'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold.* ²⁶ *Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it,* ²⁷ *then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession.* ²⁸ *But if he is not able to have it restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.*

Gal. 3:13-14 - *Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"^[h]), ¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

Ruth 1:22-Ruth 2:2- *So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz.* ² *So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor (GRACE)."*

Following the death of her husband and their two sons, Naomi, a Jewish woman from Bethlehem Judah, an Ephrathite, one who is fruitful, Naomi, the Jew, left Bethlehem Judah and settled in Moab, a foreign country, for "about ten years." Following "about ten years" in Moab, Naomi then hears that God had visited Bethlehem and given the people bread. It is time to return to the land. Ruth, Naomi's Gentile daughter-in-law from Moab, pledges her unconditional love and loyalty to the God of Israel and to Naomi and her people. And, Ruth accompanies Naomi to Bethlehem -- at harvest time -- at the BARLEY harvest. Harvest was a time of abundance and joy. Ruth remains with Naomi throughout the harvest time -- for the barley harvest and for the wheat harvest. There were two harvests in Israel.

The book of Ruth is historical and it is also prophetic.

So, we come to Bethlehem Judah with Naomi and Ruth who are destitute because they are widows. We enter Israel during harvest time -- beginning with the barley harvest.

What is the prophetic aspect of the "harvest"? After the Jewish leadership in Jesus' day rejected Him as their Messiah (Matt. 12), Jesus told His disciples that the harvest

depicted the “end of the age” (Matt. 13:39). We’re given a timeframe in Jesus’ words. To the Jewish people, the “end of the age” was – the “end of the present age” BEFORE the Messiah would come and establish His kingdom on the earth and reign as King. Jesus was explaining the parable of the wheat and tares to His disciples when He, Jesus, defined the “harvest” as the end of the age. Regarding the parable of the wheat and tares, Jesus was teaching about the time on earth after His resurrection and before His physical Second Coming. He was telling His followers that before He returns, within Christendom, there would be genuine believers (the wheat) and there would be those who only appear to be believers but are not (the tares). We are in the harvest time that Jesus called the end of the age [Matt. 13:39] NOW.

While in the wilderness – before entering the Promised Land, God gave the Jewish people a directive regarding the treatment of the Gentiles at harvest time.

Lev. 23:22 - *When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleanings from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.*

God gave the Jewish people this commandment when they were in the wilderness after being delivered from Egypt. However, there is a prophetic aspect of this directive. If the harvest time is now, how are the Jewish people providing for the Gentiles now?

- The Jews have provided for the Gentiles in that God used them, the Jewish people, to give us HIS Word.
- Through the Jewish people, the Messiah came - Jesus came to offer salvation to not only the Jews but to all people!
- Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, wrote in Rom. 11:11 - *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? (Gk – *pepto* – perish/lost – permanent fall) Certainly not! But through their fall (Gk – *paraptoma* – to lapse, to deviate – a temporary condition), to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.*

And so, our response should be _____

Throughout the Bible the chronology of God’s plan of redemption is laid out for us. God’s plan of redemption is also presented to us in the book of Ruth. We see God’s timeframe in a more condensed fashion in the four chapters of Ruth.

CONSIDER the chronology in Ruth. . .

- Israel – a nation chosen by God for His purposes – rebelled.
- The family of Elimelech compromises and follows their own agenda (Prov. 14:12 - *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*). The family depicts Israel in exile – in a foreign country.
- Consequences ensue and we see God administering His chastening based on His holiness and justice. He has already told Israel that if they obey they would be blessed. If they disobeyed. . . . Elimelech and Mahlon and Chilion die. Naomi is left!!
 - Deut. 28:62 - *You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.*

- The family remained in Moab for “about ten years” – under the judgment of God and then. . .
- GOD VISITED and PROVIDED bread for His people. Naomi heard this news. Naomi was wooed by God back to the land. Naomi depicts the remnant. Naomi, not yet restored, returns to Israel in UNBELIEF.
- Naomi is accompanied by Ruth, the Gentile, whom God uses during harvest time as a conduit of blessing for Naomi, the Jew, who is not yet restored by God.

Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz are types. A type in the Bible is a foreshadowing. A type will take a person or an inanimate object and compare it to another person or inanimate object only in certain ways or perhaps, only in one way.

Thus far, we’ve seen:

- Naomi is a type of Israel:
 - Unrestored
 - In exile
 - Returns to the land in unbelief
- Ruth is a type of Gentiles:
 - Presents to us how God’s redemption extends beyond Israel to the Gentiles
 - Presents to us the place of Gentiles, in relation to Jewish people/nation of Israel, in the world today
- Boaz is a type of Jesus:
 - Kinsman Redeemer – redeems people and the land
 - Extends redemption to the poor and impoverished
 - Redeems both Jew and Gentile

Ruth 1:22- *So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.*

Barley harvest – first harvest of the season. The Feast of First Fruits is the celebration of the barley harvest. Jesus rose from the dead on the Feast of First Fruits.

I Cor. 15:20 - *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

Because Jesus rose from the dead, we, who are believers in Jesus, will also be resurrected!

Naomi and Ruth come to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest, and, lo and behold. . .enter Boaz, a type of Jesus!

Ruth 2:1 - *There was a relative of Naomi’s husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz.*

Boaz is mentioned specifically as a relative of Elimelech’s, Boaz is of the tribe of Judah! *Boaz* – means *strength*.

- In Psalm 19:14 we read, “. . . O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.” In Hebrew “strength” means ROCK!
- In I Kings 7:21 we read that one of the pillars in the Temple in Jerusalem was named *Boaz*. There were two bronze pillars at the entrance of Solomon’s temple - *Jachin* – “He shall establish”; *Boaz* – “In it is strength.”
 - The Temple was a House of Prayer for All Nations. God’s plan of redemption impacts the world!
- The pillars, *Boaz* and *Jachin*, speak to the strength and stability of God’s promise of a kingdom forever – even tho’ the Temple would be destroyed!

It appears that Boaz had remained in Bethlehem during the famine and had been working in building his wealth.

Ruth 2:2 - *SO Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, “Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor (GRACE)” And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.”* Ruth is presenting herself submissively to her mother-in-law. Ruth, as a Gentile, came under the Law of Gleaning which provides for the Gentiles – Lev. 23:22; Lev. 19:9-10; Deut. 24:19-21. We need to know that in that day the Gentiles had no inheritance in the land. The land was allotted to the sons of Jacob. Ruth, as a Gentile, had the right to go into the field and glean. Yet, she seeks Naomi’s permission. We see a submissive spirit and a humble attitude. Ruth is looking for favor/GRACE (unmerited favor; getting what we don’t deserve) from the Landlord of the field. Favor/grace – *hanan* – which focuses on the heartfelt response on the part of someone (the Landlord, in this case) who has something to give someone in need. Boaz is associated with extending grace. .

NOTE: The gleanings were stalks of grain left after the first cutting. Those who reaped the harvest were those who cut the stalks of wheat or barley for harvest with a scythe, sickle, or reaper.

Why was Ruth in need of gleaning? Both Naomi and Ruth were destitute. It appears that Naomi had sold her land or was “about to sell” (Ruth 4:3). As such, Naomi was subject to the LAW OF REDEMPTION. We see THE LAW OF REDEMPTION in Lev. 25:23-28 - *The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.* ²⁴ *And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.* ²⁵ *If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold.* The kinsman redeemer could buy the property back for his relative – and restore the land to his relative.

Who owns the land? GOD! From Scripture we know that He has promised it to the Jewish people (Gen. 12:7; Gen. 15:18; Gen. 17:8; Jer. 25:5; Jer. 7:7; Joel 3:1-2). God provided for the poor – for those who had to sell their land. At the year of Jubilee, the land would return to its human owner. BUT – what if a person couldn’t wait 50 years?

God provided redemption beforehand through the kinsman redeemer – the “close relative,” “nearest kinsman” – one who redeems, who willingly buys back the land that had been sold. The LAW OF REDEMPTION took in the redemption of: The land; also - people/slaves/those in bondage

Ruth 2:3 - *Then she (Ruth) left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she “happened” to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.*

Ruth “happened” to come upon the field of Boaz. (God’s sense of humor)

Ironical that this verbiage is used in Ruth. Throughout the account we see God’s providential guidance.

Ruth 2:4 - *Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, “The LORD be with you!” And they answered him, “The LORD bless you!”*

Here’s Boaz – a type of Jesus – the Creator of the universe! Observe the comradery he has with his workers. In Ruth 3:2 we read that Boaz winnows – he is doing the work and identifying with his workers!

Please note that Boaz is a close relative to Elimelech – he is not the “closest relative.” Boaz becomes the kinsman redeemer in the book of Ruth. He becomes the blood relative who is able to redeem and is willing to redeem. In Ruth 3:12 Boaz tells Ruth that there is a relative closer than I (possibly an older brother). And we meet that closer relative in Ruth 4.

The kinsman redeemer is a picture of God as the Redeemer: Psa. 19:14; 78:35; Isa. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6, 24. “Kinsman” – means in the flesh! One who is human; one who can identify with his fellowman. “Immanuel” – God with us; God in the flesh – Jesus!

REDEEM – ga’al:

- To redeem – to buy out of the marketplace
- To act as a kinsman-redeemer
- To ransom – to pay a price
- To act as a kinsman-redeemer by. . .
 - Marrying a brother’s widow to beget a child for him (Dt. 25:5-6)
 - Buying back a person from slavery (Lev. 25:47-49; Rom. 6:15-18)
 - Buying back land (Lev. 25:25)

People/land – lost in the fall; needing to be redeemed! Redemption - the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.

Scripture teaches that the redeemer must be a kinsman – a blood relative (Lev. 25:48-49; Ruth 2:1, 20; Ruth 3:9-13; Ruth 4; Gal. 4:4; Heb 2:14-15; Heb. 4:15. The redeemer must be willing to redeem (Ruth 4:4-6; John 10:11, 18; Phil. 2:5-8). In all things, Jesus submitted to the Father.

Boaz greets his workers, which seems somewhat uncommon. Masters and bondservants moved in different circles. The Lord is the focus in their greetings. Such verbiage, such communication doesn't seem to fit in with the days of the Judges – everyone doing what was right in their own eyes.

Ruth 2:5-7 – *Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose young woman is this?”* ⁶ *So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, “It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.”* ⁷ *And she said, ‘Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.’ So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house.”*

Boaz consults with his unnamed servant. The servant is in charge of the reapers. The servant introduces Ruth to Boaz. Could the unnamed servant represent the Holy Spirit? John 16:13 – the Holy Spirit doesn't draw attention to Himself – but to the Son.

Ruth 2:8 – *Then Boaz said to Ruth, “You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women.”*

“My daughter” – indicates that there might be a big gap in age between Ruth and Boaz. It has been noted by Bible commentators that when Boaz and Naomi speak, archaic Hebrew is used. Ruth is not noted as speaking archaic Hebrew.

Boaz lays out the process out to Ruth; she is to only glean in his field – one field.

Ruth 2:9 – *Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.*

We see Boaz providing, protecting. Within the Expositors Biblical Commentary we read that the privilege of drinking out of water jars not customarily extended to gleaners. This is pure GRACE!

Ruth 2:10-12– *So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, “Why have I found favor (grace) in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”* *And Boaz answered and said to her, “It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.*

Ruth has come under the “wings” of the LORD God of Israel for refuge. She has come to faith in the one true God!

“Wings”:

Ex. 19:4 – *You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.*

We are getting a look into God's covenant relationship with Israel.

Dt. 32:11-12 – *As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings,* ¹² *So the LORD alone led him, (Jacob/Israel).*

Eze. 16:8 – God spread His wing over them (Israel) and covered their nakedness – and entered into a covenant with them and they became God's ("*you became Mine*").

"wing" – kaw-nawf (kanaph) – an edge or extremity. Can be used to speak of the lower part of a garment. Root meaning – to project laterally. The rabbis have said this is a metaphor borrowed from the birds who shield their mates with their wings during mating. This is a symbol of marriage. The custom of placing a garment over a maiden as a token of marriage is mentioned in the Talmud and is a precursor of the present day chupah (canopy). Many Jewish communities perform the marriage ceremony under a tallit.

In Israel, the lower part of the garment, the hem of the garment, depicted authority. Read: I Sam. 24:4-6. In Israel a contract could be authenticated by pressing the embroidery on the hem of a garment into a piece of clay. In the culture, you could divorce a wife by cutting off the hem of her robe.

Matt. 23:37 – Jesus cried over Jerusalem in that week prior to His crucifixion and said that He would have gathered them as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.

Psa. 17:8 - *hide me under the shadow of Thy wings*

Psa. 57:1 - *in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge*

Psa. 61:4 - *I will trust in the shelter of your wings*

Psa. 63:7 - *in the shadow of your wings I will rejoice*

Psa. 91:1-4 - *He shall cover you with His feathers and under His wings you shall take refuge*

Mal. 4:2 – *the Sun of Righteousness ("Sun" - Heb. 1:3 speaks of the brightness of Jesus' glory) shall arise with healing in His wings*

Luke 8:43-44 - *Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any,* ⁴⁴ *came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.*

Ruth 2:13-14 - *Then she said, "Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants." ¹⁴ Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar (sour wine)." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.*

Here we see a time of communion. And Ruth was satisfied and held back some of the food she had been served.

Ruth 2:15-16 - ¹⁵ *And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. ¹⁶ Also let grain*

from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."

Boaz went beyond the letter of the law by telling the young men to let the grain fall purposely for Ruth.

Ruth 2:17 - *So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.*

"About an ephah of barley" (about 30-40 lbs.). This speaks to ABUNDANCE.

Ruth 2:18 - *Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied.*

Ruth shares with Naomi from that which has satisfied her!

Ruth 2:19 - *And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz."*

NOTICE that Naomi asked Ruth with whom she gleaned.

Ruth 2:20 - *Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives."*

Do you see what occurred in this exchange between Ruth and Naomi? Ruth "introduces," so to speak, Boaz to Naomi. Ruth, the Gentile, introduces he who is a type of Jesus to the Jewish woman. Naomi realizes that Boaz is one of their "close relatives". Jewish people today realize that Jesus is Jewish. In Naomi stating that Boaz is one of their close relatives – she identified him as a potential kinsman redeemer. "Potential" – Boaz wasn't the closest relative. He is "one of our close relatives."

Ruth 2:21-22 - ²¹ *Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'"* ²² *And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field."*

Naomi is addressing Ruth's protection.

Ruth 2:23 - *So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.*

Ruth dwelt with Naomi, the Jew, while she, Ruth, the Gentile, gleaned through the barley harvest and then the wheat harvest

Following the harvest time in Lev. 23:22 is the Feast of Trumpets beginning in Lev. 23:23. The Feast of Trumpets will be a time of repentance for Israel. The Tribulation is called the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7).

Questions

How do you see God's plan of redemption in the book of Ruth?
If you had to explain it in a few sentences, how would you do so?
What should your response be based on Rom. 11:11?
What's the "so what?" from this chapter?

Suggested Homework

Review the notes from week 4.
Pray about what God is revealing to you!
Read the handout for week 5 when you receive it.