

RUTH/THREE FUNERALS AND A WEDDING

Week 7 – Ruth 4: Redemption/Restoration!

3/1/16

Ruth 4:1-8 - *Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." So he came aside and sat down. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³ Then he said to the close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. ⁴ And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.'" And he said, "I will redeem it." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance." ⁶ And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it." ⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel. ⁸ Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." So he took off his sandal.*

It's harvest time. The barley and wheat have been threshed There's still work to be done. However, Boaz goes up to the gate. Boaz left the threshing floor to finalize Ruth's redemption. This is Boaz' highest priority.

In the ancient east, city gates were not merely entrances to a city, nor were they only used for the protection of the city. The gates were typically comprised of three chambers which included a local court of law, a place to transact business, and a market.

From Ruth 4:1-2 we see that Boaz is a man with authority. He believed that this matter with the nearest kinsman/relative must be settled legally. Boaz calls an assembly of the elders of the city to present himself in the role of the kinsman redeemer! Boaz *took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here."* The elders were to appear as witnesses. Yet, in Dt. 17:6 we read that two or three witnesses were needed for judicial proceedings. Why did Boaz choose ten? Consider: the number ten is often the number of testimony. The ten commandments have been labeled as the testimony – of God.

Boaz went up to the gate. We need to know that the widowed/childless woman in this culture – who was destitute – bankrupt – and who needed REDEMPTION - was to GO UP TO THE GATE according to the law noted in Deut. 25:5-10. If the nearer relative would not take his brother's widowed/childless wife as his wife – to raise up a firstborn son in his brother's name, the widowed/childless wife would go up to the gate to the

elders. The elders are then to confront him and if he stands firm and refuses to marry his brother's widowed/childless wife – the brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed!! The nearer relative was thus shamed. According to the law, it was Ruth's job to confront the kinsman and receive the shoe (Deut. 25:5-10). BUT – BOAZ TOOK HER PLACE!!!

Boaz goes up to the gate and he calls a city council meeting to determine the matter as Naomi had told Ruth that Boaz would do (Ruth 3:18).

Boaz went up to the gate to put the matter to rest. This was not done in a corner. This was a public transaction. Boaz would redeem Naomi and Ruth before the eyes of all.

Boaz handles the situation:

Publicly:

- There are witnesses whom Boaz calls. All must be done in order to prove a clear testimony of righteousness.
- Nothing was done in secret.
- Jesus paid the debt we owed in public for all to see – on a hill – lifted up (John 3:14-15; John 8:28; John 12:32)

Boaz handles the situation:

Personally:

- Boaz presents the matter to this “friend.”
 - In Hebrew the word for “friend” is *peloni almoni* – translating to “a certain one/a certain one” – which has been rendered “so and so”! NOTE: no name is given to this person!
- Ruth 4:1 (KJV) *Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.*
- KJV - “Ho, such a one” (a certain one/a certain one); “so and so.” And, “Ho” in the Hebrew is *hohe* which means “ah, alas, of woe”!
- Boaz tells the nearer kinsman to “turn aside” – *sur* – implies that the person must listen.
- “I thought to inform you” – literally means “uncovering his ear” – lifting up the fold of the turban to speak to him personally.
 - Is this an indication that the closest relative didn't realize – his responsibility or what was transpiring or about to transpire?
 - It was the widow's responsibility to initiate interaction with the nearer kinsman. However, BOAZ TOOK RUTH'S PLACE! He might've known that the nearer kinsman would reject and Boaz did not want Ruth ridiculed in public.
 - Boaz fulfilled the role of the mediator!

I Tim. 2:5-6 – *There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus Who gave Himself, a ransom for all to be testified in due time.*

- The underlying motivation on Boaz' part was LOVE!
- The kinsman redeemer had to be a relative; he had to be a human.
 - Jesus came into this world as the “seed of the woman” (Gen. 3:15). He was born of a woman (Gal. 4:4). Jesus came in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:7). Jesus is Immanuel, God in the flesh (Isa. 7:14).
- The kinsman redeemer had to be available. Isa. 53:10 tells us in the NASB - *But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He OFFERED Himself as a guilt offering!*
- The kinsman redeemer had to be willing. John 10:17-18 – *I lay down My life that I may take it again.¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.*

God is a romantic! God pursues us! God's grace pursues us.

Jesus paid the debt of a broken law for us – the debt that we owed. We owed a debt that we could NEVER pay; Jesus paid a debt that He didn't owe. Col. 2:14 – *Jesus. . .wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.* Jesus paid the debt we owed in public for all to see – on a hill. He was lifted up (John 3:14-15; John 8:28; John 12:32).

Was the law broken? YES! Mankind can't keep the law. Why? Is the law at fault? NO! The law reflects Who God is.

Psa. 19:7 - *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;*

BUT. . .

Rom. 3:20 - . . .*by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified (declared righteous) in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* The law cannot save; it can only condemn!

Rom. 8:3 - *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

Who is the closest relative – the nearer relative – the one we now meet in Ruth 4. Who is the closer relative?

Considerations: the law knows only justice – its demands are absolute – it can show no mercy. GOD enters with a wonderful message of grace. The law cannot save, justify or sanctify the sinner. It cannot make the sinner a saint – it cannot forgive sin, it cannot change the heart, it cannot teach us to live better, it cannot help us out of our predicament. All the law can do is demand punishment and justice and pronounce our

sentence, reveal our unworthiness, and curse us with eternal death. That is the sole ministry of the law – II Cor. 3:5-11 (the letter kills; the ministry of death; Ex. 32:28). The law, by itself, was never intended to save. This was not the fault of the law! The law established absolute justice and righteousness. The fault – OUR FLESH.

The most universal interpretation is that the nearer kinsman is the law. In considering that the nearer relative could represent the law, we need to understand that it was no fault of the law that it could not redeem us. The fault is ours/mankind – not the law. The law is holy and perfect and righteous and just. To say that the nearer kinsman is the law. . . the nearer kinsman who has no name. . . the nearer kinsman who was looked upon rather shamefully – to equate the nearer kinsman to the law is to accuse God of giving an imperfect law. Romans 8:3 does tell us what the law could NOT do; however, the blame must be placed on the flesh – sinful flesh

Some have suggested that the nearer kinsman represents Satan. Why would Boaz, a picture of Christ, approach Satan and ask him to redeem Ruth?

Could the closest relative represent mankind? “Nearer” relative... To whom are we more related? OURSELVES! Thus, the “nearer” kinsman in Ruth is definitely “nearer”! “So and so” could NOT redeem. He could NOT pay the price. The nearer kinsman had a debt of his own to pay as part of Adam’s race. How then could he pay the debt of another? Psa. 49:6-8 – no man can redeem his brother!

Ruth 4:3-4a - *Then he said to the close relative, “Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. And I thought to inform you, saying, ‘Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people.*

“So I thought to inform you” – “to uncover your ear” indicating that Boaz was removing a veil or covering. This nearer kinsman didn’t know he was first in line (??) Consider: the flesh doesn’t spiritually discern (I Cor. 2:9-14).

Ruth 4:4b - *If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.’ And he said, ‘I will redeem it.’*

Why is Boaz only presenting the land? If Boaz offered to the nearer relative both the land and Ruth as a package deal, we wouldn’t know whether “so and so” was turning down the land or Ruth. With Ruth in the picture, the land would NEVER belong to “so and so”. WHY? The land would go to the seed – to the male child – that would be raised up in the deceased’s name!

Wycliffe – “With both the land and the widow, the land would be held in trust for the child of the widow.”

Ruth 4:5 - *Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance."* Once the nearer kinsman agreed to redeem the land, Boaz presents Ruth – "the Moabitess". Boaz seems to emphasize her position as a Gentile from a country that was Israel's enemy! What an opportunity to also emphasize God's grace! And, Boaz makes it clear that redeeming Ruth would be for a specific purpose – to raise up the name of the deceased.

Ruth 4:6 - *And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."*

Hebrew word for "ruin" or "mar" – *shachath* which means to corrupt, to destroy, to spoil, to cause complete destruction. If the nearer kinsman represents mankind – mankind is selfish; we have our own interests at heart. Redemption always involves a cost, a sacrifice. The "friend," "so and so" was not willing. There was no extension of grace. Perhaps the nearer relative was married and didn't want to include Ruth in the equation regarding the dividing of what he already possessed - his inheritance.

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia - While the law limited the matrimonial duty to the brother and permitted him to decline to marry the widow, such a course was attended by public disgrace ([Deut. 25:5ff](#)).

Deut. 25:7-10 - the kinsman redeemer was confronted by the widow making the request to marry her. If he chose not to assume the obligation, the widow would pull off his sandal and spit in his face (Deut. 25:9)! Even though this redemption action was voluntary – this was a severe rebuke for not being willing!

We see the transfer of the land exclusively to Boaz in verse 7. This verse does not address "so and so's" rejection of Ruth.

Ruth 4:7-8 - *Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel.* ⁸ *Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." So he took off his sandal.* Removing the shoe signified the sealing of a legal transaction, renouncing of any legal rights, and transferring ownership. Since they walked off the land in sandals, the sandal became the immovable title to that land.

Regarding the kinsman-redeemer not being named in the book of Ruth, The Expositor's Bible Commentary states that this was deliberate. According to Deut. 25:5-10 in that culture - it was shameful not to fulfill the role of Goel regarding Levirate marriage. The kinsman, therefore, was not worthy of mention. Someone expressed it this way, "He who would not preserve his brother's name does not preserve his own name."

The nearer kinsman rejected the "calling" and lost the "honor" when he chose not to redeem Ruth. Through Ruth, God established the line of the Messiah (Matt. 1:5). The

honor of being in the line of the Messiah went to Boaz – who was second in line, so to speak. What the nearer kinsman thought would ruin his reputation, would have inscribed him in the Scriptures as a hero of the faith! So, he remains unnamed!

Re: Boaz as the second in line – not the nearer relative – not the closest relative. . . the “unexpected one”. . . . What did the people think of Jesus at His first coming? Coming from Nazareth. Nazarenes were looked down upon esp. by those in Judah/Jerusalem. Country people. “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” asked Nathanael when Philip told him about Jesus – the Messiah. AND, the Jewish people, at this point in their history, were looking for a Messiah Who would overthrow the Romans. Jesus’ message was one of salvation!

Ruth 4:9-10 - *And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech’s, and all that was Chilion’s and Mahlon’s, from the hand of Naomi.”*¹⁰ *Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day.”* All the family members were mentioned again except Orpah. She chose not to accompany Naomi – disappeared off the pages of history. . . .

Ruth 4:11-12 *And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, “We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.”*¹² *May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman.”*

“May the Lord make (her). . . like Rachel and Leah” From Rachel and Leah came the 12 tribes of Israel. Plus both Rachel and Leah left their families (left their father Laban) to join Jacob. Rachel was not able to conceive at first. God granted conception (Ruth 4:13 – the Lord gave Ruth conception)

“May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.” Micah 5:2 – The Messiah would be born through David’s line. Ruth and Boaz – great grandparents of King David.

“May your house be like the house of Perez. . . .” God used a levirate marriage (of sorts) w/ Tamar to maintain the house of Judah through Perez – Genesis 38. Twins, Zerah and Perez, were born to Tamar. Zerah was first and a midwife put a scarlet thread on his hand. Zerah drew back his hand and his brother came out unexpectedly. His name was Perez (means “breach,” “pushing through”). Unexpectedly!

Perez was in Jesus’ genealogy. Perez was illegitimate. Deut. 23:2 - *One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD.* Perez was from the tribe of Judah – the kingly line. There were no kings through Perez until. . .David! David was the tenth generation!

Ruth 4:13-21 - So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel!" ¹⁵ And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him." ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him. ¹⁷ Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David. ¹⁸ Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron; ¹⁹ Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; ²⁰ Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; ²¹ Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; ²² Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David

Boaz redeems Naomi, the Jew, and Ruth, the Gentile. He redeems the land and he redeems Ruth while also restoring the name of the dead. Our God RESTORES!

The book of Ruth which begins amidst the setting of gloom, unfolds God's eternal plan of redemption. Jew and Gentile are redeemed and the land is redeemed! We find the culmination of redemption in the name of the child born to Ruth and Boaz – "Obed". Obed means WORSHIP! What a glorious culmination.

Salvation in Jesus the Messiah for both Jew and Gentile will result in our praises to God now and in our future home when we come before the King and worship Him when all gloom is dispelled and we see Him in His radiance!

In redeeming Naomi – we see a picture of Israel's ultimate restoration! (Zech. 12:10ff; Isaiah 62. . . .) How? We see that Obed was a restorer of life to Naomi! Specifically Naomi! Why? In redeeming Naomi, we see a picture of Israel's ultimate restoration which impacts the world. The world will experience life from the dead when Israel is restored!

Rom. 11:15 - For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

QUESTIONS

What are your thoughts re: the nearer relative?

How might God's plan of redemption be more clear to you?

How did Obed's name/it's meaning impact you?

So what? Share how this book has impacted you in your personal walk with the Lord.

How will you use the book of Ruth to share Jesus with those who do not know Him?

How will you use the book of Ruth in teaching believers?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Why do you think the book of Ruth is read in synagogues at the Feast of Weeks/Shavuot? List various themes through the book of Ruth