

UNDERSTANDING THE BIG PICTURE OF THE BIBLE

Week 8 – The Book of Ruth

The Hebrew word for REDEMPTION is ga-al. It literally means to buy back; to buy out of the marketplace. Who were those who were bought and sold in the marketplace in Biblical times? SLAVES. Those in BONDAGE! Before we came to Jesus, were we in bondage to sin? YES!

Ruth has been called the ROMANCE OF REDEMPTION. I'm suggesting that the book of Ruth lays out God's ENTIRE plan of REDEMPTION for both Jew and Gentile.

I'm suggesting that the theme of the book of Ruth is the glory of God. The subtheme: What the law didn't allow, God's grace allows.

Ruth 1:1-5 - Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. ²The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. ³Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. ⁴Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. ⁵Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

The book of Ruth takes place in the time of the Judges. The time of the Judges was after God used Joshua to lead the children into the Promised Land. The time of the Judges was when everyone did what was right in his own eyes. That was the rule of the day! The setting of the book of Ruth is GLOOM! God's love and grace shine brighter against the backdrop of darkness.

We're told at the outset that there was a famine in the land. No reason is given for the famine in the text. The famine is "in the land" – apparently where the Judges ruled – in all of Israel. Scripture tells us that famine is one of God's judgments (Eze. 14:21). Scripture teaches that one of the ways God withheld His blessing upon Israel - because of their disobedience - was through withholding grain (I Kings 8:35-37; Hosea 2:8-9).

It appears that because of the famine, a family leaves their home in Bethlehem, Judah. Bethlehem – House of Bread. Judah – in Hebrew means praise. What a lovely place to live. But they left!! And they "went to dwell/sojourn." In Hebrew, dwell/sojourn means to turn aside from the road - INTENTIONALLY. They had a plan. Their destination had been set. What was their destination? MOAB – outside of the land of Israel – east of the Dead Sea – about 50-60 miles from Bethlehem! God had given the Jewish people the Promised Land – why did this family turn their backs – on God's promises – and leave?

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AND, why did they travel to MOAB? WHY MOAB, of all places? Moab was the ENEMY of Israel! Moab withheld bread and water from the children of Israel after they were delivered from Egypt (Deut. 23:4). The King of Moab hired Balaam, a prophet for hire, not a good prophet, to curse Israel!

Ruth 1:2 provides us with the names of these family members. God has given us great truths in these names. The book of Ruth outlines the very beginning of Genesis for us: creation and the fall of man. The “certain man” in v. 1 is Elimelech. Elimelech means “my God is king.” The Bible begins with God -- “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). The Bible never argues the existence of God. He IS – period!

Elimelech married a woman whose name was Naomi. Naomi means “my delight,” “pleasure,” “pleasant.” In the Garden of Eden there was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – and Scripture tells us that it was PLEASANT (Gen. 2:9). When Satan came to Eve in the Garden of Eden, he offered her a pleasant proposition. Eve saw that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was good for food – it was PLEASANT to the eyes. She ate of the forbidden fruit and gave it to Adam and he ate (Gen. 3:6) – and sin entered the world! “My God is king” married “pleasure. In the marriage of Elimelech to Naomi we have a picture of the fall of man. The sons of Elimelech and Naomi were named Mahlon and Chilion. Mahlon means “sickly” and Chilion means “pining away.” “Sickly” and “pining away” – sounds like the results of sin entering the world.

We see that while the family lived in Moab, Elimelech died. No reason is given for his death. And the two boys took GENTILE women as wives!! What’s wrong with that picture? Is that something a good Jewish boy should do – marry a Gentile woman? NO! And these Gentile women were MOABITES. In Ezra 9:1 and I Kings 11:1-2, God tells the Jewish people NOT to make marriages with the MOABITES – as well as with other “ites”! The Moabite women are Orpah – whose name means “stubborn” or “stiff-necked,” and Ruth – whose name means “friend.” Then sickly and pining away die. Naomi, who is in EXILE in Moab, outside of the land of Israel, is left without husband and children. And Orpah and Ruth are left without husbands. In Deut. 28:62 God told the Jewish people that if they were disobedient (leaving the Promised Land; taking Gentiles wives – could equate to disobedience), they would be few in number.

M.R. DeHaan, (founder of the Radio Bible Class and co-editor of “Our Daily Bread”) in his book, “The Romance of Redemption,” summarizes the book of Ruth” in this way: “The experience of this Jewish family from Bethlehem is a picture of the entire history of the Jewish nation during the long years of her wandering outside the native land of Canaan. . . . It was a time when Israel was without a king. . . .” DeHaan is suggesting that the beginning of the book of Ruth is a picture of Israel in exile among the nations.”

In the book of Ruth, we need to know that Naomi represents ISRAEL and Ruth represents the GENTILES.

In the midst of great heartache and tragedy, God appears. . . .

v. 6 - "Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread."

Naomi had heard that the LORD/Jehovah had visited His people by giving them bread, and she made plans to return to Bethlehem. Has God always "visited" His people? God appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18), to Isaac (Gen. 26) – reiteration of the covenant), to Jacob (Gen. 28) – dream w/ ladder), to Moses (Ex. 3). And, of course, God ALWAYS provides for His people. In v. 6 we read that God had visited His people by giving them bread. This verse is prophetic, isn't it? It's looking ahead to Jesus Who came in the flesh – to Bethlehem - to visit His people. And this Jesus is the One Who said, "I am the bread of life"!

v. 7 - "Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah."

From the midst of EXILE, Naomi returns. "Return" is noted seven times in NKJ in the first chapter of Ruth. "Return" is noted nine times in the NASV in the first chapter. When a word in the text is repeated, God is making a point! Israel who had been in exile is returning to the land that God has given Israel!

Both Ruth and Orpah accompany their mother-in-law on her trek to Bethlehem. But, in *v. 8* we see that Naomi encourages her daughters-in-law to each return to her mother's house. . . .

And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. ⁹ The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband."

Naomi is asking God to grant both Orpah and Ruth REST in the house of their husbands. This rest that Naomi speaks of means marriage.

Orpah and Ruth insist on returning with Naomi.

So she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. ¹⁰ And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people."

BUT Naomi isn't letting the issue die. She wants Orpah and Ruth to return to Moab. And, in verses 11-14 we find a peculiar statement from Naomi. . .

"But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go—for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, ¹³ would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

Naomi is telling the girls that even if she had sons in her womb that very moment, Orpah and Ruth would have to wait MANY years for them to become their husbands. Naomi is referring to Levirate Marriage. "Levir" in Latin means "husband's brother" (Deut. 25:5-10). When a husband died and left no children, the husband's next of kin, his

closest relative, was called upon to take his brother's widow and provide an heir – a child - in the deceased husband's name. A close relative of Elimelech's could marry Naomi and through that union, Naomi could give birth to sons.

Then we read of Naomi lashing out at God. . . *No, my daughters I don't really have hope; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!*" She tells her daughters-in-law that the hand of the Lord had gone out against her. That word "against" in Hebrew carries the meaning of Naomi having rec'd a direct/straightforward punch from God!

v. 14 – "Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her." Orpah kisses her mother-in-law and is out of the picture. She returns home and we NEVER see Orpah mentioned in the Bible again! Orpah was stirred emotionally - for a time. Then it was "asta lavista" Naomi! There was no commitment to Naomi on Orpah's part. Ruth CLINGS to Naomi. She commits to Naomi. But Naomi's disregarding it. . . . *v. 15* - *And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."* Naomi tells Ruth to go back to her gods? Gods? A Jewish woman is acknowledging many gods? Naomi is definitely not a believer at this time!

BUT RUTH offers up a vow to Naomi: *vv. 16-17* - *"Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God."*¹⁷ *Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me."* Ruth is vowing allegiance to the God of Israel AND to His people! She has come to faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And, she pledges loyalty to God's people – the Jews! Is this vow telling us that when we love the God of Israel, we should love the Jewish people? Something to ponder!

v. 18-19 – "When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her."¹⁹ *Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?"*

It appears that NOT every Jewish person had left Bethlehem when the famine hit. Some remained. AND they were so excited to see Naomi.

²⁰ *But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi;^[a] call me Mara,^[b] for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."* Naomi wants to be called Mara which means bitter – and she's blaming it all on God!

²¹ *I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me."* Naomi tells them that the ALMIGHTY has dealt very bitterly with her. It's odd that Naomi would use the Hebrew word "Shaddai" which means ALMIGHTY. SHADDAI tells us that this God is the God Who provides – Who satisfies and strengthens. Naomi uses this endearing name of God, Shaddai, to talk about the One Who has "afflicted" her

- who has pulverized her!?! Naomi expresses that she left Bethlehem full (during a famine?!) and has returned empty!!

Think of Ezekiel 37 – the vision of dry bones. God tells us that Israel will return to the land as dry bones – empty. It is only after Israel is gathered into the land – during end times – that God will give them flesh and put His Spirit in them.

v. 22 – *“So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab.*

Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem as two destitute widows. In that culture, without someone coming alongside them, - a REDEEMER – a kinsman-redeemer – a close relative - they would NOT survive. Naomi would have to sell her land and she would be left with nothing. BUT – if there was a KINSMAN-REDEEMER who would come to their aid – there would be REDEMPTION!

Ruth is described as “the Moabitess” – the enemy of Israel! She’s ALWAYS described as “the Moabitess”; and she will always be a Gentile even tho’ she has come to faith in the God of Israel. God’s GRACE reaches down to the lowest of the low.

In Ruth chapter 1 we see Israel in exile – separated from their land – separated from God. The majority die. The one who is left returns to the land in unbelief. A Gentile is accompanying her.

Scripture so clearly supports this prophetic picture that we see in Ruth: Isa. 14:1-2 – *“God will still choose Israel (He’s not finished with Israel) and will settle them in their land and the strangers (the Gentiles) will be joined to them.”*

The second part of v. 22. . .*Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.*” Don’t gloss over this phrase “barley harvest.” It’s in Scripture in this book for a reason. The barley harvest was the first harvest in Israel’s growing season. Harvest always speaks to a time of abundance – a season of grace (Jer. 8:20) in Scripture. The barley harvest was called the Feast of First Fruits (Lev. 23:9-14) in Israel and it occurred during Passover week. JESUS was crucified on Passover and rose from the dead on the Feast of First Fruits – at the time of the barley harvest! Here is a foreshadowing of Jesus. And, Whom do we meet in Ruth 2? BOAZ who represents JESUS in the book of Ruth.

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 a relative – a kinsman – of Elimelech’s. In Ruth 4:3 we read that Boaz is a brother of Elimelech. Boaz’ name means STRENGTH. Who is our strong tower? JESUS. Who is our Rock – which speaks of strength? JESUS! I’m suggesting that Boaz represents JESUS in the book of Ruth.

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.”* Ruth was destitute – she was bankrupt. Ruth went out looking for grace.

The Law of Gleaning offered to Gentiles was one of the Laws of Redemption. Gleaning is when a person walks after the reapers in a field. The reapers cut the stalks of grain. Gleaners pick up stalks that are not bundled into sheaves. Here is another picture of God's GRACE! The Jewish people were told by God not to entirely clear the corners of their fields in harvest time. They were told by God to provide for the poor and stranger – the Gentile - who could come into the field and pick up what was not tied up in sheaves after the men cut the grain with sickles (Lev. 23:22). Ruth was asking permission from Naomi to glean. We see a submissive Ruth.

Ruth 2:2b-3 - And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."³ Then she 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.

Ironic that the word "happened" is used in the book of Ruth. Throughout Ruth we see God's providential guidance/His hand in every detail. Even many Rabbis teach that "happenings/coincidences" aren't – kosher!!

ENTER BOAZ – who comes from Bethlehem and greets his employees with. . .

v. 4 " . . . 'The LORD be with you!'" And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!" Boaz has a good relationship with his workers. This seems to be very unusual for days in the time of the Judges when there was virtual chaos in the land.

AND BOAZ sees Ruth. . . and asks his servant. . . *vv 5-6 - ⁵ . . . '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. Boaz speaks to Ruth and says in vv. 8-9 - "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. 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."*

In Boaz calling Ruth, "My daughter," it appears that there might be a large age gap between them.

Boaz offers Ruth water from the vessels. Bible scholars have written that the privilege of drinking out of water jars was not customarily extended to gleaners. The gleaners were the lowest of the low. But we see GRACE being extended to Ruth.

The subtheme of the book of Ruth is What the law didn't allow, God's grace allows!

Ruth 2:10-12 - ¹⁰ So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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 had come under the wings of the God of Israel? She had come to faith in Him. In Ex. 19:4, Deut. 32:11-12, Eze. 16:8 – we see that this word “wings” speaks of God’s covenant relationship with Israel. He has carried them on eagles’ wings, He has spread His wing over them and entered into a marriage relationship with them. In Matthew 23:37 Jesus said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.” Psa. 57:1 – “In the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge.” When we come to know God personally through Jesus, God protects and shelters us!

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.”* Ruth was a Gentile. 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.* Perhaps we’re seeing communion here between Boaz and Ruth. And, she was SATISFIED! JESUS satisfies us!

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 is going BEYOND the letter of the law by telling the young men to let the grain fall purposely for Ruth. Again we see GRACE being extended!

Ruth 2:17-18 - *So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. An ephah was about 30-40 lbs. This speaks to ABUNDANCE! Does God provide ABUNDANTLY? 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 travels home with her barley and gives to Naomi part of her “lunch”. Ruth shares with Naomi from that which has satisfied her! Who satisfies us? JESUS! Are we sharing Him with Jewish people?

Naomi then asks a very curious question. . .

Ruth 2:19 - *Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you.”*

It always amazes me that Naomi couldn’t figure out that Ruth had wound up in Boaz’ field! Boaz is a relative. He’s a brother of Elimelech! Ruth tells her that she gleaned in Boaz’ field. Naomi responds with surprise and thankfulness.

Ruth 2:20 - *Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!” . . . “This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives.”*

Didn't she know this? How many brothers did Elimelech have that were landowners with fields? Was Naomi so out of touch? Do Jewish people realize that Jesus is Jewish? Some don't! So – we need to tell them! Ruth, the Gentile, introduced Boaz, a Jewish man, to Naomi, who is Jewish! We need to introduce Jesus to Jewish people!

Ruth 2:23 tells us that Ruth gleaned in Boaz' field through the barley and wheat harvests. And, during that time, she lived with her Jewish mother-in-law, Naomi. At the end of Ruth 2, we have the end of the harvest time. Harvest time is a time of abundance – the season of grace. The Church age is the season of grace! At the end of Ruth chapter 2, the wheat harvest is completed. In Ruth 3 we find Ruth in a most secure spot.

Ruth 3

Ruth 3:1-2 – *“Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? ² Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.* Naomi is telling Ruth that since Boaz is our relative, you have the right, Ruth, to approach him. He is a kinsman-redeemer and can redeem you! He can marry you. Naomi is telling Ruth to propose marriage to Boaz! Naomi tells Ruth to go to the threshing floor.

Threshing in Hebrew means “to trample”. After the barley and wheat were harvested the stalks were trampled by oxen to separate the grain from the chaff – the straw. Many times a threshing roller with metal studs was used to break up the grain. The threshing roller was called a Tribulum. What does that sound like? Tribulation! Threshing in Scripture pictures God's judgment.

In Ruth 3 we find Ruth in a very secure spot during the threshing scene which represents the Tribulation in God's plan.

Naomi tells Ruth how to approach Boaz to get him to exercise his responsibility as her kinsman-redeemer. Ruth 3:3 - *Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor;*

“Wash yourself” speaks about purification for marriage (Eze. 16:9-10) when God spread His wing over Israel – when He entered into a covenant with Israel. In Ezekiel 16 we read that God washed Israel and anointed her with oil and clothed her and took her to Himself – He was married to Israel – “You became Mine.” (Jer. 3:14 – “I am married to you.”) Was Naomi aware of what she was doing? According to the law - a Jewish person couldn't marry a Moabite. Check out Ezra 9:1 along with I Kings 11:1-2. The answer: What the law didn't allow, God's grace allowed. The law shut Ruth out. Grace took her in!!

Naomi then tells Ruth to notice the place where Boaz lies down by the threshing floor – and go there – and uncover his feet and wait for him to tell you what you should do. “Uncover his feet” – in the culture of that day, this was understood as an act of total submission. A servant would lay at his master's feet – waiting for the next command.

Ruth obeys Naomi. Where was this submissive Ruth during the threshing scene – during the tribulation? At the feet of Boaz who is a type of Jesus.

Ruth 3:8-9 - *Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. ⁹ And he said, “Who are you?” So she answered, “I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing,^[a] for you are a close relative.”¹⁰ Then he said, “Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. ¹² Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. ¹³ Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning.”*

Boaz is seeking Ruth’s protection. While he’s not the closest relative, he will approach the brother who is the closest relative and tell him of his duty. And if the closest relative will not perform, Boaz will perform the duty. Boaz LOVES Ruth!

Ruth remains at his feet until morning and leaves before it is light. Boaz gives Ruth a measurement of barley – seemingly as a message for Naomi. Upon receiving the measurement of barley, Naomi assures Ruth that Boaz will not rest until he takes care of the matter re: the closest relative.

Who is this kinsman closer to Elimelech?

RUTH 4

In Ruth chapter 4 we find Boaz going up the gate and sitting down. Boaz left his work at the threshing floor to finalize Ruth’s redemption. This is Boaz’ highest priority.

The gates to cities in Israel were not merely entrances. The gates typically had three chambers. The gate was a PUBLIC place where governmental issues were handled. It was a communal area for meetings and public justice. Boaz goes up to the gate to take care of the matter in public. Jesus paid the debt we owed in public for all to see!

Ruth 4:1 - *and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, “Come aside, friend,^[a] sit down here.” So he came aside and sat down. Friend – lit. means “so and so.” The closest relative does not have a name in the book of Ruth.*

Boaz takes ten men to sit with him – to serve as witnesses. Boaz then explains to the “so and so” that Naomi sold the piece of land that had belonged to their brother Elimelech. Boaz then tells “so and so”. . . ⁴ *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^[b] 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.’” Boaz brought up the land issue first – and Naomi’s need. So and So 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^[c] the name of the dead through his inheritance.”

Now Boaz brings up the issue of marrying the widow – a GENTILE woman. A Moabitess even! According to the law in the OT, it was the widow who was to approach the kinsman-redeemer (Deut. 25:5-10). Ruth should have approached “so and so.” However, BOAZ TOOK RUTH’S PLACE. Boaz underlying motivation – LOVE! “God so loved the world. . . .”

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.” “Ruin” – corrupt, destroy, spoil – in the Hebrew. It means to cause the complete destruction of something. Redemption always involves a cost, a sacrifice. The friend was not willing. No grace is being extended by him. There is no explanation given in the text as to why marrying Ruth would destroy his inheritance. He could’ve been married. He could have had children and did not wish to include Ruth on divvying up his inheritance. All we need to know is that he refused to marry Ruth. “So and so” tells Boaz to “buy it for yourself” – to redeem the land from Naomi and to redeem Ruth by marrying her.

Ruth 4:9-17 - ⁹ 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.^[d] You are witnesses this day.” ¹¹ 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; (RACHEL and LEAH gave birth to the heads of the 12 tribes 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.” ¹³ 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.

We’ve seen Naomi, who represents Israel, in EXILE – but then returned to the land – supported by a Gentile, Ruth. Naomi, through the grace extended her by a Gentile, moves from unbelief and bitterness to belief in the God of Israel to RESTORATION – to the place God had chosen for her as a Jewish woman! AND RUTH – is not forsaken.

Boaz, who represents Jesus, REDEEMS Ruth, the Moabitess (the enemy of Israel), the Gentile.

The book of Ruth so clearly lays out God's ENTIRE plan of salvation – of REDEMPTION – for both Jew and Gentile. And, what are the results? We find the results in the name of the child born to Ruth – “Obed” – “Obed” means WORSHIP! What a beautiful culmination. What a glorious truth.

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 (Rom. 15:7-12)

COMPARISON OF TWO KINSMAN REDEEMERS	
BOAZ	JESUS
Had to be a family member	God became man in the flesh so He could be our Kinsman and redeem us
Had the duty of buying family members out of slavery	He redeemed us from slavery to sin and death.
Had the duty of buying back land that had been forfeited	In the future He will redeem the earth that Adam forfeited control of to Satan.
Not motivated by self-interest but by a sincere love for Ruth the Moabitess	Jesus' was motivated by the love of God
Boaz as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer took her as his bride	Jesus has redeemed us to be His bride
Boaz as kinsman-redeemer provided a glorious destiny for Ruth	Jesus, as our Kinsman Redeemer, provides a glorious destiny for us

QUESTIONS:

What's your take-away from the book of Ruth?

What Biblical subthemes did you note?

Did you note any chronology re: end times?

How does the book of Ruth summarize God's plan of redemption?

What was new to you?

Do you have any challenges with this book?

How do you now understand Ruth 3?

How is Ruth connected to the Christmas account?

HOMEWORK:

Write down the Biblical themes you encountered in this book.

Develop a chart using the book of Ruth that encompasses the big picture of the Bible.

Read week 9's handout when you receive it.

