

THE BOOK OF RUTH

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Lesson 1

LEAVING & RETURNING TO THE LAND OF REST

Ruth 1:1-22

Memory Verse: Ruth 1:16 (N. W. 2:10)

The events recorded here took place in the time of the Judges. This time is described in Judges 21:25. In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Ruth was not written until at least the reign of David (Ruth 4:22). Samuel may have been used of the Lord to write down this book.

It is the only instance in the Bible in which a whole book is devoted to the history of a woman. There are two books of the Bible named after women: Ruth, a Gentile, who married a Hebrew husband; Esther, a Jewess, who married a Gentile husband. Ruth is one of four women who are mentioned in the genealogy of our Lord. As a Moabite she was shut out by the Law (Deuteronomy 23:3), but she was admitted by grace.

Ruth is a type of the Church, the Gentile bride, and Boaz as the kinsman redeemer is a type of Christ. She was the great-great grandmother of David, and the genealogy of Ruth 4, is the chief reason for the book being written.

“The book of Ruth is the eighth book of the Bible. The number “eight” is the number which signifies something new, a new beginning. Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week, which is the eighth day. Noah was the eighth person (2 Peter 2:5), and eight people were saved in the Ark. Jewish boys were circumcised on the eighth day.” W. G. Heslop

One of the themes of the book is REST, and it only comes through redemption and union.

I. THE LAND OF REST & THE LAND OF DISTRESS – Verses 1-5

A. The Land Of Rest Forsaken – Verses 1-2

- a. The time of their departure – Verse 1a
- b. The occasion of their departure – Verse 1b. Famine was often a disciplinary testing of God’s people in the land. Genesis 12:10 “And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.” Genesis 26:1; 42:5; 2 Samuel 24:13; Psalm 105:16 “Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.”
- c. The place of their departure – Verse 1c. Bethlehem-judah means the house of bread and praise. This is what they departed from.
- d. The place for which they departed – Verse 1d. This is a sad case where separation was abandoned. Moab a land and people under God’s judgment.
 - i. They were descendants of Lot and his daughter – Genesis 19:35-37
 - ii. Moabites hired Balaam to curse Israel – Numbers 22:1-8
 - iii. Chemosh was the god of Moab, and was called the “abomination of Moab”: 1 Kings 11:7 “Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.” 1 Kings 11:11 “Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.”
- e. The people of the departure – Verses 1-2
 - i. “Elimelech” means “my God is King.”
 - ii. “Naomi” means “pleasant.”
 - iii. “Mahlon” means “sick”, and “Chilion” means “pining.” These two names reveal the spiritual famine in the life of Elimelech and Naomi before they left Judah. God could have preserved them in Judah. Many others stayed in Judah and survived, but this family was tested and they failed.

B. The Land Of Distress Found – Verses 3-5

- a. Elimelech dies out of the heaven blessed land – Verse 3a. The way of the transgressor is hard. Leaving the will of God never brings peace and prosperity. 1 John 5:16 “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.”
- b. Naomi and her two sons left in an unblessed land – Verse 3b
- c. Naomi allows her sons to marry unblessed wives – Verse 4a; Deuteronomy 23:3 “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever.”
 - i. “Orpah” means “double-minded” or some say “stiff-necked.”

- ii. "Ruth" means "satisfied."
- d. She stayed 10-years too long in the land of distress – Verse 4b
- e. Death strikes again in the land of distress – Verse 5. This shows the cost of departing from God. Now there are three sad heartbroken widows.

II. LEAVING THE LAND OF DISTRESS FOR THE LAND OF REST – Verses 6-13

A. A Decision To Return To The Land of Rest – Verses 6-13

- a. She heard of God's blessings upon Judah – Verse 6b. When the Lord blesses us, others will hear.
- b. "Then she arose" after all of her distress and chastisement – Verse 6a
- c. "She went forth OUT of the place." – Verse 7. Separation always precedes sanctification. Genesis 12:1 "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." 2 Corinthians 6:17 "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."
- d. Naomi urges her two daughters in law to remain in Moab – Verse 8
- e. She mistakenly thinks they will find REST in Moab – Verse 9
- f. They express a desire to go with her – Verse 10
- g. She confesses her barren fruitless condition and that she had nothing to give them – Verse 11-13; Deuteronomy 25:5-9
- h. The result of disobedience – Verse 13. "... The hand of the Lord is gone out against me." Proverbs 3:11 "My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction." Hebrews 12:5-8 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

B. They Face A Time Of Decision – Verses 14-18

- a. Orpah decides to return to her people and her gods – Verses 14-15. We cannot believe but what this is exactly what Orpah wanted. There are many like her today who are seemingly very close to being Christians, but they turn back. The result – she disappears from history.

- b. Ruth decides for rest and the true God – Verses 16-18. She states her allegiance to the true God of Israel, and not to Chemosh the god of Moab. If she had not made the right decision she would never have been an ancestor of our Lord Jesus Christ. Right decisions are important.
 - i. In verses 16-17 we have one of the most beautiful statements to be found in all of literature. Her heart was fixed. She did not know it, but she was headed for a city whose builder and maker is God. Hebrews 11:10 “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.
 - ii. Surely the grace of God was at work in her heart.

C. Her Features Marked By Distress – Verses 19-22

- a. The city moved by her return – Verse 19a
- b. “Is this Naomi?” or the price of backsliding – Verse 19b
- c. From “pleasant” to “bitter” in just a few years – Verse 20. Ten years had left their mark.
- d. “The Lord hath brought me home again.” – Verse 21a. God always does this for His erring children. She was “empty” as a result of backsliding.
- e. Almighty God had afflicted her – Verse 21b; Hebrews 12:5-6 “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”
- f. They came at a time of harvest and blessing – Verse 22; Romans 8:28 “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Philippians 2:13 “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”
- g. She left three graves in Moab as a result of sin, but at long last she is back in the land of blessing.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. At what time did the events in Ruth take place?
2. Name each member of the Jewish family and the meaning of their names.
3. How many books of the Bible are named after women?
4. How many women are mentioned in the genealogy of our Lord and who were they?

5. What did the Law say about a Moabite?
6. Why did Naomi and her family leave their homeland?
7. What is the meaning of Bethlehem-judah?
8. How do the names of her children reflect the spiritual condition of Naomi and her family?
9. What was wrong with the marriages of her two sons?
10. Give the five-fold expression of resolve made by Ruth?
11. What did the people of Bethlehem-judah say when Naomi and Ruth arrived?
12. What time of the year was it when they arrived?
13. Repeat the memory Verse.

Notes

Lesson 2

SEEKING REST AND THE KINSMAN — REDEEMER

Ruth 2:1-23

Memory Verse: Ruth 2:10 (N. W. 3:1)

Ruth could have sat at home with Naomi, and they both could have had a pity party. She did not allow herself to become bitter, but she went forth to do what she could.. Bitterness is always the wrong way for God’s people to go.

Boaz is introduced in this chapter as the kinsman-redeemer, and thus he is a beautiful type of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no blot on his character as some of the other types of Christ, such as Moses, and David. The Hebrew word “Gaal” (go-el) is translated “kinsman” some 13 times in the book of Ruth. The same word is translated redeemer or redemption several times in Ruth. In the following lessons we shall consider the meaning and application of these truths. Boaz means strength or fleetness. We shall see this man as lord of the harvest, master of servants, redeemer, bridegroom, and life-giver. Thus we see him as a fitting type of Christ.

I. RUTH GLEANING THE GRAIN – Verses 1-16

A. Ruth Finding Grace In The Field Of Boaz – Verses 1-3

- a. This was at the beginning of the barley harvest – 1:22. This would have been in the early spring, perhaps in April.
- b. Boaz the kinsman – Verse 1
 - i. As a type of Christ he was kinsman who could redeem. Galatians 4:4 “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” Philippians 2:7-8 “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
 - ii. As a type of Christ he was a mighty man. What a contrast from the sickly Mahlon. John 1:1-3 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Romans 9:5 “Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.” Colossians 2:9 “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Hebrews 1:3 “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

- iii. As a type of Christ he was a man of wealth, for redemption is costly. Psalm 49:8, (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) Philippians 2:5-11; 2 Corinthians 8:9 “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”
 - c. Ruth the gleaner – Verse 2a; Leviticus 19:9-10; Leviticus 23:22 “And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.” Deuteronomy 24:19-21
 - d. Ruth’s faith was centered on him “in whose sight I shall find grace.” – Verse 2b
 - e. Providence, “her hap,” leads her to the field of Boaz – Verse 3. Joseph sold as a slave, resulted in the salvation of many nations as well as Israel. The capture of a Hebrew made, led to the cleansing of Naaman the leper.
- B. Boaz Bestowing Grace Upon Ruth – Verses 4-16
 - a. Boaz as a type of Christ came from Bethlehem – Verse 4. Divine providence led her to the right field. Micah 5:2 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Luke 2:4-7 “And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”
 - b. Boaz as a type of Christ is Lord of the harvest – Verses 4-5
 - c. The lord of the harvest concerned about one damsel – Verse 5
 - d. The servant is here a type of the Holy Spirit, as was Abraham’s servant – Verses 6-7. He leads her to the lord of the harvest, he gives her rest in the house.
 - e. As lord of the harvest and a type of Christ he invites Ruth to abide in his field and behind his reapers – Verse 8. He treated her as a daughter, and did not try to seduce her for sinful purposes. He gave her guidance as Christ will give to us, if we will only listen to Him. John 15:5 “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

- f. As a type of Christ he offers her protection and water – Verse 9. John 4:14 “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Revelation 21:6 “And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”
 - i. Because she was a Moabitess some of the young men may not have respected her.
 - ii. But Boaz took care of that, so that she would have the protection and fellowship with believers. How we should depend upon the protection of the Lord. Psalm 91:11; Psalm 46:1 “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”
- g. Ruth takes her place in humility at the feet of Boaz, as all sinners should, at the feet of the Lord – Verse 10; John 3:27 “John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”
- h. Boaz as a type of Christ knows all about her – Verse 11. She had forsaken all to follow the God of Israel, and so should we – Psalm 32:8; Proverbs 3:5-6.
- i. She has left father and mother – Verse 11; Genesis 12:1-3; Mark 10:28-30
- j. As a type of Christ he promises her recompense, reward, and the protection of the Lord – Verse 12; Psalm 17:8; 36:7
- k. He had comforted her and spoken friendly (to her heart) – Verse 13. As a Gentile she was unlike the others.
- l. As a type of Christ he offers her the bread (of life) – Verse 14. The bread a type of our Lord’s body and the vinegar perhaps a type of His blood. She was satisfied. Philippians 4:19. The world would have said that she was a fool to march out of Moab.
 - i. Abram marched out of Ur of the Chaldees and became the father of the Hebrew nation, and the father of all the faithful.
 - ii. Rebekah marched out to become the bride of Isaac.
 - iii. Moses marched out of a palace, to become the lawgiver of Israel.
 - iv. Ruth marched out of Moab into the lap of luxury, and to become and ancestor of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- m. Reproach her not – Verse 15. Although she was of the hated Moabite race she was not to be reproached. She was a stranger and an alien, yet grace took her in.
- n. She was allowed among the sheaves, this was more than the Old Testament law demanded – Verse 15
- o. Let fall ... the handfuls of purpose – Verse 16. This is grace!!

II. RUTH GLEANING THE GOSPEL OF GRACE – Verses 17-23

A. Naomi Inquiring – Verses 18-19

- a. Her great success – Verse 17. This was a ten day supply.
- b. Naomi saw the great blessing – Verse 18
- c. Where hast thou gleaned TODAY? – Verse 19. Not tomorrow, today.
- d. Where hast THOU gleaned? – Verse 19. Each person must answer.
- e. Where host thou GLEANED? – Verse 19; John 4:35-39. Each one of us will give an account of our labor in the Lord’s field.
- f. Ruth confessing the name of Boaz – Verse 19; Romans 10:8-10

B. Naomi Declaring – Verses 20-23

- a. Naomi declares the blessing – Verse 20a. “Blessed” is a new word on her lips after all her bitterness. Psalm 103:1-2
- b. She declares the remembrance – Verse 20b “His kindness to the living and to the dead.”
- c. She declares the redeemer – Verse 20c. He is a near kinsman to redeem their inheritance and to marry Ruth. Boaz would do for her in a physical way, what Christ would do for us in a spiritual way. Naomi has been bitter because of an empty house, her empty heart, and her empty hands. Now that bitterness is leaving and all because of Boaz. Our Boaz (Christ) can take away all our bitterness.
- d. Boaz advises her to keep in his field – Verse 21. What a lesson for us, oh, that we might stay busy in His harvest until “they have ended all my harvest.” – Verse 21. John 4:35; Galatians 6:9. Ruth did not yet know it, but there is going to be a wedding after the harvest. As members of His church, we are in His field, and praise God there is going to be a wedding after the harvest.
- e. Naomi advises her to keep in Boaz’s field, and that is good advice for us – Verse 22
- f. Ruth’s continued gleaning – Verse 23. The wheat harvest follows the barley harvest.

Boaz has his eye upon Ruth and shows every kindness to this poor but beautiful widow. She is content to glean in his field and to remain under his protection. Already the wisdom and blessing of Ruth 1:16-17, is evident. We can already see grace flowing and love blooming, and we can hardly wait to tell what the end shall be!!

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Where do we get the idea of the kinsman-redeemer?

2. How is Boaz as the near kinsman a type of Christ?
3. What right did Ruth have to go into the field and glean?
4. How did she end up in the field of Boaz?
5. As lord of the harvest, how is Boaz a type of Christ?
6. What does he offer Ruth?
7. What did Boaz already know about Ruth?
8. Explain why Ruth was among the sheaves, and the handfuls of purpose.
9. What did Naomi say when she found out that Ruth had been gleaning in the field of Boaz?
10. What did Naomi advise Ruth to do?
11. Quote the memory verse.

Notes

Lesson 3

RUTH RESTING AT THE FEET OF THE KINSMAN-REDEEMER

Ruth 3:1-18

Memory Verse: Ruth 3:1 (N. W. 4:14)

Finding GRACE and seeking REST constitute two of the key expressions of the book of Ruth. These may only be found at the feet of Boaz (a type of Christ). The events of this chapter would lead to marriage, and we see the importance of parental guidance in choosing a mate. Even though she was a grown woman and a widow, she needed advice. This is lacking today in many instances, and it reveals why there are so many failed marriages in our time.

I. RUTH SEEKING REST – Verses 1-7

A. Ruth Instructed In Finding Rest – Verses 1-4

- a. Naomi a type of the Godly remnant in Israel – Verse 1. She is concerned about a Gentile finding rest. Matthew 11:28 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
- b. A proper marriage was a place of rest and protection for the woman – Verse 1; 1 Timothy 5:14 “I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.” It was Ruth’s duty to take the initiative – Deuteronomy 25:5-10
- c. Boaz as a type of Christ is a separator – Verse 2; Matthew 3:12 “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” The light chaff and all that is frivolous and empty is to be winnowed away in our lives.
- d. Ruth as a type of the Church and individual Christian must be washed – Verse 3a; Ephesians 5:25-27 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” 2 Corinthians 7:1 “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
- e. Ruth as a type of the Church must be sealed and anointed by the Holy Spirit – Verse 3b; Ephesians 1:13 “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 5:18 “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”

- f. Ruth as a type of the Church and of the believer; must be dressed in proper apparel (modest) – Verse 3c. “Nudity is of the devil. Exposing of the body is wicked, sinful and devilish. Immodest dress or undress is to be condemned as Satanic and corrupting. We must dress right if we would please our Boaz (Christ). Dress is a sure index to the condition of the mind and the state of the heart.” W. G. Heslop
- g. Ruth as a type of the Church should be at the feet of Boaz (the Christ) – Verse 4a; Luke 10:39-42 “And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”
- h. Boaz the redeemer will tell her what to do – Verse 4b; John 2:5 “His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.”

B. Ruth At The Feet Of Boaz – Verses 5-7

- a. She promises to follow instructions – Verse 5
- b. She performed her promise – Verse 6
- c. It is not implied that Boaz was drinking strong drink – Verse 7a
- d. Ruth at his feet – Verse 7b

NOTE: It cannot be stressed too strongly that nothing immoral or unscriptural took place that night. Boaz was an honorable man and Ruth was a virtuous woman (verse 11). “There is not the faintest touch of impurity about it.” J. Sidlow Baxter. “... There was no impropriety in them ... Boaz probably slept upon a mat or skin; Ruth lay crosswise at his feet; a position in which Eastern servants frequently sleep in the same chamber or tent with their master; and if they want a covering, custom allows them that benefit from part of the covering on their master’s bed. Resting as the Orientals do at night, in the same clothes they wear during the day, there was no indelicacy in a stranger, or even a woman putting the extremity of this cover over her.” Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. All of this must be understood in the light of the customs of that day and the teaching of the Old Testament Law. Of course such a thing to would not be done in this adulterous age.

II. RUTH FINDING REST – Verses 8-18

- A. Boaz Providing Shelter – Verses 8-13
 - a. The discovery made – Verse 8

- b. A confession made – Verse 9a. She is not now Ruth the Moabitess, nor Ruth the Gentile stranger, nor Ruth the weeping widow, but “Ruth thine handmaid.” Remember that Ruth means “satisfied,” and so should we be satisfied at His feet. Ezekiel 16:8 “Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.”
- c. A request made – Verse 9b. The skirt or covering is a picture of the robe of righteousness, which the Lord gives to the saved.
- d. Ruth had eyes for Boaz alone – Verse 10. She did not follow the young men, but the kinsman-redeemer alone. This may imply that Boaz was not a young man, but he certainly was not an old and feeble man.
- e. Boaz testifies to her being a virtuous woman – Verse 11; Proverbs 31:10 “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.”
- f. There was a nearer kinsman – Verse 12
- g. If he will not, I will redeem thee – Verse 13. We might well be reminded that no one would or could redeem us except Christ.

B. Boaz Providing Sustenance – Verses 14-18

- a. She lay at his feet until morning – Verse 14a (The place of rest).
- b. It was not yet time for her to be revealed – Verse 14b. Notice how careful he was to protect her reputation as well as his own.
- c. Boaz as a type of Christ bestows gifts – Verse 15
- d. Naomi asks and Ruth tells all – Verses 16-17
- e. Ruth could only sit and wait – Verse 18a
- f. The kinsman-redeemer will not rest until he is finished – Verse 18; Philippians 1:6

NOTE: Typically, the book of Ruth sets forth:

Chapter 1 — Decision for Christ.

Chapter 2 — Meeting with Christ.

Chapter 3 — Resting in Christ.

Chapter 4 — Union with Christ.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Give two of the key expressions of the book of Ruth.
2. How is marriage related to rest in this chapter?
3. Name the three things Ruth was instructed to do before going to Boaz, and give their typical meaning.
4. Where did Ruth lie down and what is the typical meaning?
5. Why was there nothing improper in what Ruth did, and explain why this would not be proper today?
6. What did Boaz say about her moral character?
7. What one thing stood in the way of Boaz redeeming Ruth?
8. Quote the memory verse.

Notes

Lesson 4

RUTH REDEEMED AND REWARDED

Ruth 4:1-22

Memory Verse: Ruth 4:14

The issues of this book come to a dramatic head in the gate of the City, where matters of great importance were settled before sober and thoughtful elders. The kinsman-redeemer must meet three tests, if the redemption is to take place.

1. He must have the **RIGHT** to redeem. He must be a near kinsman with no nearer kinsman willing to redeem.
2. He must have the **POWER** to redeem. If he is poor, of course he could not redeem.
3. He must be **WILLING** to redeem.

Think upon these 3 tests in regard to Boaz, and in regard to our kinsman-redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. THE KINSMAN WHO WAS UNWILLING TO REDEEM – Verses 1-8

A. He Is Willing To Redeem The Land – Verses 1-4

- a. Boaz finds the man – Verses 1. The gate of the city was a good place to find him, and the place of important business.
 - i. Those seeking refuge were to come to the gate. Joshua 20:4 “And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.”
 - ii. It was a place where rebuke of wrongdoing took place – Amos 5:10, 12, 15
- b. Ten elders found for witnesses and judgment – Verse 2
- c. Boaz presents the problem – Verse 3
 - i. The land sold or going to be sold because of poverty.

- ii. It will not revert to the descendants of Elimelech until the year of jubilee. Leviticus 25:25-28 “If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it; Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.”
- iii. It is not stated here, but there would be no descendants of Elimelech unless Ruth is redeemed through marriage.
- d. The other kinsman willing to redeem the land – Verse 4. This was a business investment, pure and simple, for there is no love or affection involved at all. Leviticus 25:23-24 “The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.”

B. He Is Unwilling To Redeem Ruth – Verse 5-8

- a. Boaz reveals that the one who redeems the land must redeem Ruth, in order to raise up an heir to Elimelech’s inheritance – Verse 5; Deuteronomy 25:5 “If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband’s brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband’s brother unto her.” “Brethren” could mean a brother as we think today, but it could also mean a near kinsman, if there was no brother.
- b. The kinsman refuses the opportunity – Verse 6a. By not taking advantage of his opportunity, he slips out of history and is forgotten.
- c. He fears if he did that he would mar his own inheritance – Verse 6b. What he means by this is in much dispute. He may have already been married and had children. Another marriage and more children could dilute his inheritance. He may have already had other marriage plans, or he might not have wanted to marry a Moabite, since the previous man who did, had died. It may be that he was financially unable to redeem the land and Ruth.
- d. He offers his redemption rights to Boaz – Verse 6c
- e. He takes off his shoe and gives it to Boaz – Verses 7-8. This signified his public agreement that he gave the right to tread upon the inheritance to Boaz. See Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Joshua 1:3; and Psalm 60:8. This unnamed kinsman now drops out of history. Little did he know what a great blessing he missed. He may be looked upon as a type of the law which could not redeem, and of man who also could not redeem.

II. THE KINSMAN WHO WAS WILLING TO REDEEM – Verses 9-22

A. Boaz Makes The Redemption – Verses 9-10

- a. He redeemed the land – Verse 9. “Ye are witnesses this day” clearly shows that the 10 elders and the others, were legal witnesses of this transaction.
- b. He redeemed Ruth – Verse 10. Boaz paid the price of redemption, and so did Christ. Ephesians 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.” Boaz a wealthy man did not need the land, but he did it because his real interest was in Ruth. He is mighty to save and strong to deliver. He is not ashamed of “Ruth the Moabitess” and publicly announces he will marry her.

B. Boaz And Ruth Are Wed – Verses 11-13

- a. The people desire Ruth to be fruitful – Verse 11a
- b. The people desire Boaz to be worthy and famous – Verse 11b
- c. The people desire Boaz and Ruth to be like Pharez and Tamar – Verse 12. All the tribes of Judah sprang from five families of whom Pharez and Tamar were one.
- d. Boaz and Ruth married – Verse 13a
- e. Obed is born – Verse 13b. Boaz (Jew) took Ruth (Gentile) into Davidic ancestry and the Messianic line; and Ruth representatively takes all the Gentiles with her.

What Star of Messianic truth,
More beautiful than Gentile Ruth?
In her the Gentiles find a place,
To share the hope of Judah’s race;
Now see from royal David’s line,
One hope for Jew and Gentile shine!

C. Naomi’s Great Blessing – Verses 14-17

- a. Naomi (a type of the believing Jewish remnant) also blessed by the Lord, because of Boaz the redeemer – Verse 14a
- b. Obed is also a type of Christ – Verse 14b. When connected with verse 14, we see that it is Obed in this verse who is the kinsman and not Boaz.
- c. What the son will do for Naomi – Verse 15a. “A restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age.”
- d. Ruth (a type of the Church) is better than seven sons – Verse 15b
- e. Naomi the happy grandmother – Verse 16. She did what good grandmothers do.

- f. The naming of Obed, the grandfather of David – Verse 17. “Obed” means “worshiper and server.”

D. Part Of The Genealogy Of Our Kinsman-Redeemer.

See Matthew 1:3-6, And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Boaz of Rachab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias. Luke 3:31-33, Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David, Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Boaz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda, Matthew contains the genealogy of Joseph and Luke that of Mary. How significant this genealogy: Boaz, Obed, David, Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:1 “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

The book of Ruth begins with a famine and funerals, but it ends with a beautiful romance, a happy marriage, and a smiling baby boy. We see here once again that God’s grace leads from darkness to light!

Ruth a type of the Church: 1) a stranger, 2) destitute, 3) a Gentile, 4) bids farewell to her past, 5) enters Canaan, 6) possesses the land, 7) dwells in Bethlehem, 8) serves in the field, 9) helps in the harvest, 10) feasts with the lord of the harvest, 11) obeys his word, 12) abandons her all to him, 13) keeps clean and anointed, 14) supplicates, 15) rests in faith at his feet, 16) and becomes his happy bride.

Boaz a type of Christ: 1) Lord of the harvest, 2) Powerful and rich, 3) Compassionate and kind, 4) Interested in both Jews and Gentiles, 5) Provides for all, 6) Welcomes Ruth into his service, 7) Speaks comfort to her heart, 8) Purchased Ruth for himself, 9) Covered her with his robe, 10) Protected her and blessed her, 11) Redeemed her fully and completely, 12) And unites her to himself in marriage. W. G. Heslop

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why did Boaz go to the gate of the city?
2. What was the purpose of the 10 elders?
3. State the three tests of the kinsman-redeemer.
4. Why was the land sold? When would it revert to its heirs?

5. Why was the other kinsman unwilling to redeem?
6. What is the meaning of the taking off of the shoe?
7. Do you think that Boaz's main interest was in the land, or in Ruth?
8. Name the son born to Boaz and Ruth.
9. What is the significance of the genealogy of this chapter?
10. Quote the memory verse.

Notes