

In God's Care -The Book of Ruth

#4 God's hand in our blessings

Ruth Chapter 4

Intro

Who doesn't love a story with a happy ending?

Boaz and Obed and the Redeemer

In the actions of Boaz as *Goel* we see foreshadowed the saving work of Jesus Christ, his later descendant. Chapter 4 of Ruth tells us that Boaz had the right to be the kinsman-redeemer, yet clearly was under no obligation to intervene on Ruth's behalf because in chapter 4 we learn that there was another closer kinsman in the town. Yet Boaz chose **freely to take up the role.**

So it was with Jesus Christ for us. He had the right but not the obligation to pay the price that frees us from our slavery to sin. Yet he chose to take up this role for our sake. His obligation was only born of love.

Boaz recognized the plight of the young widow and her mother-in-law. Without the ministry of the *goel*, they would have been relegated to life-long poverty, depravation and destitution. But the story doesn't end there. Like the best movies today, the story has an amazing reference to a **sequel.**

In chapter 4 vs. 14 we read the happy ending:

[Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer \[la'G:\] today, and may his name become famous in Israel.](#)

What is so interesting about vs. 14 is that the reference is not to Boaz, but to the child Ruth and Boaz have conceived. It's an allusion to the Messiah that is not lost on later Biblical writers. A child, *in utero*, is called the *Ga'al*, *the redeemer!* The birth of a child was a promise from God that you yourself would be cared about and cared for, until your death. Therefore, the child was a *goel*, *a redeemer*, to you.

- Just as Boaz recognized Ruth and Naomi's plight, their pitiful situation, and their wretched condition, so God the Father has recognized our pitiful situation and wretched condition.
- Just as Boaz became the *goel*, *the redeemer*, to Ruth by purchasing her out of poverty, marrying her and having a child with her – so Christ has purchased us out of condemnation, betrothed us as his bride, and given to us the fruit of the Spirit.
- And just as Ruth's child was the *restorer of life and the sustainer of her old age*, so the Christ-child is the Father's gift of eternal life to us.

One of the most important passages where the word *la'G* occurs is in Isaiah 59:20
The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD. (words to which St. Paul refers to this passage as destined to be fulfilled at the time of the complete salvation of Israel in Rom. 11:26)

...and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "The Deliverer (redeemer) will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."

Conclusion

Look at Ruth 4:17 for our conclusion:

"The neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi!" So they named him Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David."

Now we turn to Matthew's Gospel chapter 1 which says:

"Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse....Jesse was the father of David the king....So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations."

The *go-el*, the kinsman-redeemer, is a type, or pre-cursor of Christ. The Book of Ruth is not a sentimental love story; it is the story of salvation. The image of the Bridegroom and the Bride, the birth of the child, and the promise of eternal life all make much more sense as we let the Old Testament inform the metaphors of the New Testament.

Jesus is, in a sense, our *go-el*, our *kinsman-redeemer*. He rescues, or redeems us from our wretched condition in sin, takes us out of our poverty and in as his "spouse", sparing us from the continued degradations of sin, and holds out to us the promise of eternal life!