

RUTH

With this lesson, we conclude our study of Ruth with an examination of the events described in Ruth Chapter 4.

We noticed in our last lesson that Naomi actually came up with the plan that would get Boaz involved as the kinsman redeemer. Actually, this should come as no surprise since she was Hebrew and would know the traditions of harvest and the laws of the Jews more than Ruth who was a Moabite. Naomi was simply playing matchmaker. We also saw that Boaz must have been looking into the affairs of Ruth and Naomi, since we observed that in the middle of the night, when Ruth came to him, he already knew someone else had first claim on being the kinsman redeemer. And finally, we noted that the behavior and character of both Ruth and Naomi were now well known and respected within the village — something that tells us the importance of our lifestyle as it relates to our Christian witness.

So let's conclude our study, as we view Boaz in his role as kinsman redeemer, and Ruth as his bride. Could there be some similarities here between this picture and the one of Christ redeeming his bride, the Church?

Read Ruth Chapter 4, then answer the following:

1. How many men did Boaz meet "at the gate"? (see Ruth 4:2) (It turns out that many, many, years later, this same number would be the legal number required for a Jewish marriage benediction; and the same number of men would be required to be in agreement in order for a synagogue to exist.)
 - a. ANSWER: Ten men, the same number that during the Babylonian exile would be used to establish a local synagogue.
 2. Re-read Ruth 4:3-4. When Boaz asks the next of kin to redeem the land, what is the response?
 - a. ANSWER: When the kinsman redeemer who is closer than Boaz is asked to redeem the land belonging to Naomi, he immediately responds that he will redeem it.
 3. What is described in Ruth 4:5-9?
 - a. ANSWER: Boaz points out that if the other redeemer redeems the land, he also inherits Naomi and Ruth and must fulfill the law keeping the line of Naomi's husband alive through Ruth. When that redeemer cannot fulfill this commitment, Boaz then steps forward to redeem the land, including Naomi and Ruth. This is sealed with the passing of a sandal, a tradition of the day that signaled an official transaction had occurred in front of the ten witnesses.
 4. When Boaz bought the land, he also assumed responsibility for what (or whom) else? (see Ruth 4:9-10)
 - a. ANSWER: Boaz confirms in Ruth 4:9-10 that he is not simply redeeming the land, but he is also taking on the responsibility of caring for Naomi and marrying Ruth.
 5. As described in Ruth 4:13-15, God, in a very short span of time, richly blesses Ruth, Naomi and Boaz in many ways. Contrast these verses with the beginning of the book, Ruth 1:4-5. How long did Ruth "dwell" with her husband, and did she ever have any children? Also compare this with Ruth 4:13-15.
 - a. ANSWER: We saw in the beginning of the book of Ruth that Ruth had been married during the ten-year sojourn of Naomi and her husband and their sons, but had born no children. Now after marrying Boaz, God has blessed them with a child, a son. What a contrast from the ten years in Moab!
 6. We have known since the beginning of this study that in the end, the story of Ruth is about God working miraculous things in the lives of ordinary people, doing ordinary things. In the end, this story resulted in the joining together of the great grandparents of David, King of Israel. The closing verses of this book indicate this lineage to us. It also then indicates that the line of David, the line of Jesus, had a Moabitess woman in it. However, did you know that it had other unusual women as well — one of whom actually directly "relates" to this story. (Read Joshua 2:1 and Matthew 1:5.) Can you tell who this woman was, the mother of Boaz? ("and now you know 'the rest of the story'".)
 - a. ANSWER: We now see that Boaz was the son of Salmon and Rahab; Rahab was the harlot who had helped the spies in Jericho. So David's line includes Rahab and Ruth, who were both foreign-born women. And now you do indeed know the "rest of the story."
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I hope that you have enjoyed this study as we have looked at the lives of two widowed women, their dependency on God for his watchcare over them, and Boaz — a man of honor, integrity, and moral decency. I hope that we have also learned from this to trust more and more on our Kinsman-Redeemer; to live each day "as unto the Lord"; and in doing so, we will let our light shine so that Christ can use us to draw the lost to Him.

May God richly bless you and fill your hearts with the joy and excitement that comes from being redeemed by the one true Redeemer, our Lord and Savior, Jesus The Christ.

In Christ,

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