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# Ruth 4

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## Ruth 4:1–22

## Boaz acts as a Kinsman-Redeemer and Marries Ruth

### Outline of Chapter 4:

- vv. 1–8 **Boaz and the other kinsman before the elders**
- vv. 9–12 **Boaz testifies before the elders concerning Ruth**
- vv. 13–17 **Boaz marries Ruth; they have a child**
- vv. 18–22 **The generations of Perez**

### Charts:

- v. 17a **A Comparison Between Obed and Christ Jesus**
- v. 22 **The Great Parabolic Nature of the Book of Ruth**

**I**ntroduction: Since Ruth has claimed Boaz as her kinsman redeemer, he can now act. Prior to this, he could not act other than in providing his field for her to glean from. However, in Ruth 3, she came to Boaz and made it clear that she wanted him to marry Ruth and to redeem her mother-in-law's land. Similarly, Jesus Christ respects our volition. He has already acted on our behalf, and has paid for our sins. We have naught to do but to claim Him as our Kinsman Redeemer. This act of faith brings us into eternal life. However, we must act just as Ruth acted. For us, it requires faith alone in Christ alone. For her, she laid herself at the feet of Boaz.

In Ruth 4, Boaz will go to the town square and run down the other relative who is closer to Ruth's late husband than he is. When he first suggests the buying of the land, the other man recognizes this as a shrewd financial move, and is willing to do it. However, when he realizes that Ruth comes with the package deal, he bows out and, in front of witnesses in the square, relinquishes his interest in the property.

In order to allow myself a little artistic license, I will name this other potential redeemer, Bob—Bob, the other redeemer. Now, please recognize that Boaz *wants* to marry Ruth. He is surprised that she was even interested in him. However, he knows that the Law of God is not subject to shortcuts. Elimelech and his son, Mahlon, were more closely related to Bob. If Boaz married Ruth as a redeemer of Naomi's property, some impropriety could be alleged, as the nearer relative was not given a chance to do his duty. This may or may not have become a problem; however, since Boaz chooses to do things correctly, it does not become a problem. His seeking out a nearer relative does not indicate a lack of interest by Boaz—it is simply indicative of his character, which prompts him to act in full accordance with the Law.

So, immediately the next morning, Boaz goes early to the town square, knowing that he will run into this nearer relative there and he pulls him aside, along with a handful of witnesses, in order to present him with the proposition of redeeming the property of Naomi and marrying her daughter-in-law, Ruth. Bob the other potential redeemer will relinquish this right, which gives Boaz the clear go-ahead to marry Ruth (whom he was more interested in than the land).

Boaz then marries Ruth and they have a son, Obed, who sires Jesse, who is the father of David. This places Ruth, a Moabitess, in the line of Christ, which is confirmed to us by Matthew in Matt. 1:5 (Matthew delighted in pointing out the inappropriate people in the line of Christ—e.g., Tamar and Rahab in vv. 3 and 5, respectively).

This chapter can be separated into two very different parts: the bulk of the chapter is devoted to the relationship between Rotherham and Boaz, and then the final few verses follow out the royal line from Judah's son Perez to King David.

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## Boaz and the Other Kinsman Before the Elders

Slavishly literal:

And so Boaz went up [to] the gate and so he sat down there. And, behold, the redeemer is passing by who had said, Boaz. And so he said, “Turn aside [please], sit down [please] here, such [and] such a one.” And so he turned aside and he sat down.

Ruth  
4:1

Moderately literal:

Then, Boaz had gone up [to] the gate and he had sat down there. And, observe, the kinsman-redeemer passed by [of] whom Boaz had spoken. And he said, “Turn aside, if you would; sit down here, friend, [my] friend.” So he turned aside and sat down.

At the same time, Boaz went up to the gate and waited there until he saw the kinsman-redeemer he had mentioned to Ruth. Boaz said to him, “Stop, for a moment, if you would, buddy, and have a seat.” So he stopped and sat down.

What we would expect is that, if Boaz were on the top of a hill, where one normally threshes grain, than we would go down into the city. However, the verb is the Qal perfect of *ʿālāh* (אָלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*], which means to go up, to ascend, to rise. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. Recall in Ruth 3:6, when Ruth went from Naomi's house to Boaz, she went down to get there.

Boaz goes to the town gate, which, insofar as we are concerned, this is the town hall or the city courthouse. In the ancient world, cities were compact, with narrow streets and building mashed together, and all of this was surrounded by a wall (often, the buildings themselves were a part of the wall). If anyone went from their house to their land, they would go out this gate—more specifically, to an area just inside the gate. The gate is therefore where most of the public business was transacted, commerce occurred, and visiting took place. Everyone walked by the gate, and some went there just to see what was going on. When witnesses were required, this would be the place to go. Barnes calls it the place of *concourse, of business, and of justice* in the Oriental world (Gen. 34:20 Deut. 16:18 Judges 19:15).<sup>1</sup> Often when we have an area designated for residential use today, we add in a park. After all, hundreds upon hundreds of houses seem to cry out for some place to gather. So it was for the gate—right at the gate, there would be benches and an open area designed for human interaction.

What Boaz said to the man was *turn aside*; Boaz used the Qal imperative with a voluntative *hê*. The voluntative *hê* is tacked onto imperatives to smooth them out and to recognize the volition of the person being spoken to. We might add the words *please* or *if you would*.

Then Boaz uses the pronoun *phêlônîy* (פֶּלֹנִי) [pronounced *ploh-NEE*], which means *such a one, a certain one*. Strong's #6423 BDB #811. This is always followed by the adjective *ʿalmônîy* (אֶלְמוֹנִי) [pronounced *ahl-moh-NEE*]. Strong's #492 BDB #48. This has a pleasant, almost goofy, alliteration going on. Together, they are translated variously as *such a one, such a one* (Young); *my friend* (NIV); *a certain one* [or, *friend*] (NASB). I am thinking that this is a friendly greeting, along the lines of *buddy, my buddy* or *friend, o friend*. This phrase is only found here and in I Sam. 21:3 II Kings 6:8. Apparently, he didn't know his name was Bob? Actually, this is an interesting point. Boaz knows this guy by name. He knew enough about his relation to Elimelech and Naomi to know how close he was as a relative to Ruth, and he knew that this man is closer. However, his name is not recorded in Scripture. I don't think it is because his identity is unknown to Boaz (that would make little or no sense) nor do I think that the writer of this book is intentionally concealing his name. His name is lost to history because he is a man who has no real historical consequence. I personally believe that he is an unbeliever, whose name is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and hence, not recorded here in Scripture.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barnes' Notes, Volume 2, F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 477.

<sup>2</sup> Obviously, this is just a theory and, of course, I realize that there are unbelievers whose names are found in Scripture. However, bear in mind that there are some very important unbelievers in Scripture whose names are not given—one example

**And so he took ten men from elders of the city, and so he said, “Sit down here.” And so they sat down.**

Ruth  
4:2

**Then he took ten men from the elders of the city and he said, “Sit down here.” And they sat down.**

**Then he took ten men from the elders of the city and he said, “Sit down here.” And they sat down.**

The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *lâqach* (לָקַח) [pronounced *law-KAHKH*] which means *to take, to take from, to take in marriage, to seize*. Strong’s #3947 BDB #542. Apparently, this was kind of an impromptu court/public notary thing. Boaz was going to transact some important business, and this needed to be witnessed by several of the men of the community. In other words, if either man decided to go back on his word, then there would be ten witnesses to testify to their original agreement. Having witnesses observe and then be ready to testify about a business transaction was a part of many ancient cultures (e.g., Gen. 23:18 Isa. 8:2 Jer. 32:10, 44). It would be reasonable that at least one of these witnesses would be alive long enough to stand as a witness to any disagreement which later arose. I should add that these are not just any group of ten men—these witnesses were taken from the elders of the city, or the pillars of that village. The elders were often those who governed the city (Deut. 19:12 Judges 8:14).

At the gate of the city, we have what was essentially an informal courthouse (informal by our standards). This does not mean that its decisions were slipshod and non-binding; it just means that the truth and justice were not hampered by law, as it is in our system.<sup>3</sup> There would be stone benches on which they could sit, discuss, deliberate, offer opinions, and finally, when necessary, render a decision which would be binding upon the parties present. They functioned as witnesses, jurors, judges, and as attorneys, lacking the clear-cut delineations of our judicial system. With ten such respected witnesses, it would be hard for one who lost the case to later proclaim that he won.

**And so he said to the redeemer, “A portion of the field which [was] to our brother, Elimelech, has sold Naomi, the one returning from a field of Moab.**

Ruth  
4:3

**Then he said to the kinsman-redeemer, “A portion of the field which [belonged] to our brother, Elimelech, Naomi is selling ([Naomi is] the one returning from a field of Moab).**

**Then he said to the kinsman-redeemer, “A portion of the field which belong to our late brother, Elimelech is being sold by Naomi, who just returned from Moab.**

Boaz calls Elimelech their *brother*. The word is *âch* (אָח) [pronounced *awhk*], which simply means *brother*. It can refer to a literal *brother*, as in Gen. 4:2 27:6; to a *close relative*, as in Gen. 14:14, 16 (Lot was Abram’s nephew, not his brother) Lev. 10:4; as well as to a *fellow-countrymen* (Lev. 19:17 25:14, 46). Strong’s #251 BDB #26. Obviously, Boaz and Bob are related to Elimelech, but they are not necessarily both his literal brothers (although that is not altogether out of the question).

One of the difficult things to determine is whether this land had already been sold or whether Naomi had it up for sale. In the Hebrew, we have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect of *mâkar* (מָכַר) [pronounced *maw-KAHR*], which means *to sell, to buy*. Strong’s #4376 BDB #569. We generally think of a perfect tense as a completed action and imperfect as action which will occur in the future or is on-going. However, the perfect tense simple views an event or an action as a whole, without regard to duration or even to its completeness. Context

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would be the Pharaoh of Egypt who ruled during the exodus.

<sup>3</sup> A simple example of this is when DNA evidence became almost 100% conclusive, and could provide clear physical evidence of a person’s presence at the scene of a crime, as well as clear such a one from a crime—it was not a simple matter of a criminal in the system having always proclaimed his innocence being able to demand a DNA test after his trial and conviction in order to prove his innocence. DA’s might haughtily declare, *we know we have the right man*, but were often unwilling to put their money where their mouth is. Another example is there are ways that exculpatory evidence does not find its way into a trial, and damning evidence is prevented from being presented in a trial in our system—the exclusion of either often resulting in the fact that truth is not found, and justice is not served.

determines whether the action of the verb is past, present or future. The perfect tense can look back on a completed event; it can view an ongoing event from the standpoint of its entire action; and it can even be used of a future event (many prophecies are in the perfect tense—a use often referred to as the prophetic perfect). However, what we do know is that Naomi, not Elimelech, is represented as the one having sold the property (or the one selling the property).

There are three basic views given with respect to the *when* of the sale of this property: (1) Elimelech, prior to leaving Israel for Moab, sold the property to get up enough travel scratch. (2) Naomi, since she had returned, had sold the property to someone else in a financial emergency. The reasons that anyone would hold to either of those two views is the use of the perfect tense of *mâkar*. Otherwise, we might expect the verb to be in the Qal active participle and preceded by the verb *to be*. (3) However, my educated guess is that Naomi had not yet sold the property, but was required to, by personal financial constraints, now to do so. Therefore, throughout the exposition of this book, I have presented the property as having belonged to their family and that Elimelech had not sold prior to taking his family to Moab. I have several reasons for taking this position. In v. 5, Boaz tells the other redeemer that he would be buying the property from the hand of Naomi—that does not sound as though she had already sold the property, but it sounds as though she is selling the property directly. We have the same phrase in v. 9 of this chapter as well. Furthermore, the language, if Naomi had already sold the land to another, would be different. Bob would be redeeming the land on behalf of Naomi and her family, rather than purchasing it from her hand. In any case, Naomi is looking to Boaz as her near relative to purchase the property in order to keep the property in the family (which would additionally involve the marriage of Boaz and Ruth).

An odd side issue is raised by some rabbis over the years. They question whether Naomi had the right to sell the property. That is pretty goofy. The property belonged to their family through the husband, and would have been passed down through his sons. He died, as did his sons, and there are no more direct male heirs to inherit the property. Therefore, who else could have owned the property other than Naomi? Furthermore, the problem of ownership and inheritance by females when there are no male heirs was dealt with in Num. 36. Females were allowed, under certain circumstances, to inherit the land of their father. No doubt, the case of Naomi was similar enough to not even require a separate ruling.

Boaz first states what would be the upside for this other guy: the fact that there is some property involved which is being sold in a distress sale. Elimelech apparently owned some land which Ruth and Naomi lacked the capital to cultivate. They were obviously without money—they needed funds just to get by—and the only option open to them was to sell off the inheritance which belonged to Naomi's late husband, Elimelech (and to his late sons). What is even better, in this case, for Bob the other redeemer, is that the person who buys this property will not have to sell it back later or give it back in the Year of Jubilee, as it will still be in the family.

**“And I said I would reveal your ear [to] you to say, buy [it] in front of the inhabitants and in front of the elders of my people, if you will redeem, redeem and if you<sup>4</sup> will not redeem, make known to me and I will know that none besides you to redeem. And I after you.”**

Ruth  
4:4a

**“And I said [that] I would uncover your ear, saying, buy [it], in front of the ones sitting—in front of the elders of my people. If you [desire to] redeem it, then redeem it; if you do not [desire to] redeem it, then make [that] known to me and I know that none besides you will redeem [it]. And I [come] after you.”**

**“And I said that I would speak of this matter to you in front of witnesses, and give you the opportunity to purchase the property, if that is what you want. You have the first right of redemption and I would be next in line.”**

The verb used is the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Qal imperfect of *gâlâh* (גָּלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*], which means *to depart, to remove, to reveal* in the Qal. These are obviously very different in meaning; however, context makes it fairly

<sup>4</sup> This is *he* in the Massoretic text. However, it is *you* in the Aramaic, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac codices, as well as being one of the special class of variant readings referred to by Dr. Ginsburg.

clear which meaning is reasonable. Strong's #1540 BDB #162. This is followed by feminine noun *ʿôzen* (אֵזֶן) [pronounced *OH-zen*], which means *ear*. Strong's #241 BDB #23. According to Barnes—I don't know if I buy this or not—this refers to the act of removing a turban or part of the hair in order to whisper into one's ear (we have the same phrase in I Sam. 9:15 II Sam. 7:27). Tom Waits has used the expression, *Let me pull on your coattails about something here*.

What Boaz would say is the Qal imperative of *qânâh* (קָנָה) [pronounced *kaw-NAWH*] and this means *to purchase, to redeem, to buy, to get, to acquire*. Strong's #7069 BDB #888. He is encouraged to buy the land before the masculine plural, Qal active participle of *yâshaʿ* (יָשָׁא) [pronounced *yaw-SHAH<sup>BV</sup>*] and it means *to remain, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell*. In the Qal participle, masculine plural, it should be rendered *those inhabiting, those dwelling in, the inhabitants of, the ones dwelling in, dwellers of, those sitting, the ones sitting*. Strong's #3427 BDB #442. Prior to this, we have the preposition *neged* (נֶגֶד) [pronounced *NEH-ged*], which means *in front of, in the sight of, opposite to*. Strong's #5048 BDB #617.

The verb for *redeem* is again found four times in this verse; first in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect, followed by the Qal imperative. It is repeated in the Qal imperfect and accompanied by a negative. The last usage is in the Qal infinitive construct.

Boaz reveals a great deal here; primarily, in front of witnesses, that if this other person does not wish to make this purchase, then he, Boaz, would like to purchase the land. Boaz, as we have seen, is quite successful; and this other person, whether successful or not, will realize that this is a great deal, knowing that Boaz would like to purchase the distress property.

**And so he said, “I—I will redeem.”**

Ruth  
4:4b

**So he answered, “I, [even] I, will redeem [it].”**

**So he answered, “I will redeem it.”**

Apparently, this other relative is well-off enough to purchase the property, and the prospect of purchasing the property in a distress sale appealed to him.<sup>5</sup> He uses the 1<sup>st</sup> person personal pronoun, to indicate clearly that he will be the person to purchase this property.

Let's see if we can put some numbers to this. Let's say the land is worth \$20,000 and was sold for \$10,000, as the Law said that it should be returned to the original family in the Year of Jubilee. Now, let's say that it was sold 30 years prior to the next Year of Jubilee. It might, therefore, carry a value of \$6,000 rather than \$10,000 because what is being purchased is really an extended lease. Now, let's say 15 years later, it is redeemed by the original family. Unlike our economy today, they do not pay a higher price for the land, but they pay the original amount prorated according to the time remaining on the lease; so, to redeem this land then 15 years later, it would cost \$3000. So, you see, redeeming a piece of property meant that it could be picked up at a very decent price—assuming, of course, that Naomi has already sold the property). For most people with a little bit of scratch, this is a no-brainer. Now, it is not as clear as to the value of the property if Bob buys it directly from Naomi. However, in any case, it is still a distress sale, and Bob, being a redeemer, will not have to relinquish this property in the future, as he was related to Elimelech.

**And so said Boaz, “In a day of your buying the field from a hand of Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, a woman of the dying. You will buy to establish a name of the dying unto his inheritance.”**

Ruth  
4:5

**Then Boaz added, “In the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi then you will buy Ruth, the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to cause to stand the name of the dead unto his inheritance.”**

<sup>5</sup> I have seen this in at least one commentary presented as an act of good will; however, buying a choice piece of land which will remain in your family forever is not necessarily done out of good will. It is simply good business sense.

**Then Boaz added, “When you purchase the field from Naomi and Ruth, the Moabitess whose husband has died, you will purchase with the intention of establishing Ruth’s late husband’s name in connection with his inheritance.”**

Now, Boaz throws in the catch. There is a cloud on the title, as we would say in real estate. A cloud on the title refers to anything which may be problematic in the conveying of a clear title from party A to party B. The land belonged to Elimelech and to Naomi by marriage when he died. It would be naturally passed to the sons of Elimelech, Mahlon and Chilion, who also died. Since Mahlon married and since his surviving wife, Ruth, is living in Bethlehem, she also has a claim upon the title. In other words, there may be a problem with gaining clear title to this land, even as a near relative of Elimelech. The most logical way to clear up this title problem is to marry Ruth. The land can then be bought, it remains in the family forever, and there is never a question as to the title of the property. Marrying Ruth removes the cloud on the title.

Now, if you don’t think that there is a problem here with the title of the land, let me point out that one of the debates carried on from very early on about this passage is did Ruth or Naomi have the right to sell the property. The rabbis began discussing this issue early on and even J. Vernon McGee devotes a page or two to this topic.<sup>6</sup> If theologians, centuries later, are discussing ownership of this property and who has the right to sell it and who does not—then that should be evidence enough that the circumstances surrounding this matter creates some confusion as to clear custody of title. Now, this is one of the few issues that I don’t feel like spending much time with, personally believing the matter to be resolved by the implications of Num. 36, which would certainly allow the claim of title to Ruth and Naomi.

In the Hebrew, it is unclear and it appears as though Boaz is buying the field from the hand of Naomi and *from* Ruth. That is how the Hebrew reads. However, in the Vulgate and the Syriac, it reads that *you will acquire Ruth the Moabitess*. As you read through the very literal translation and the almost literal translation, you will see that the latter makes more sense than the former. However, I should, at this point, give you one of the rules of textual criticism. First of all, textual criticism is the science of choosing the most accurate reading (with respect to the autographs), and therefore, the best understanding of the text. One of the rules is that when two readings are given, the more obscure and less intelligible reading is the one to be preferred. To many, this will make little sense, at first. However, when copying a manuscript of Scripture, if an intentional change is made to the text (which is actually quite rare with respect to the Bible), then the logical change would be from an obscure or confusing reading to more intelligible one. Therefore, in cases where it appears as though the text was changed intentionally, the less intelligible reading is the preferred reading.

Boaz adds the catch. Recall that we are in the times of the judges, and that everything was not always done in the way that it should have been done. There was a catch to purchasing this land in a distress sale. The land belonged to the husband of Naomi, to his name, which would have been continued through her two male children. Through those three, we had the continuation of the name of Elimelech, and the inheritance which belonged to Elimelech. In fact, there is an implication in this that Elimelech—or his father—received his inheritance under the administration of Joshua, as we have no one else to carry on the family name. In other words, we are close to the very beginning of the period of the judges.

The Qal active participle of *to die* refers to the husband of Ruth, the son of Naomi, who died in Moab. The inheritance rightfully belonged to him and to his name. Boaz then clearly states the purpose of the purchase of this land—he uses the Hiphil infinitive construct of *qûwm* (קום) [pronounced *koom*], which means, in the Hiphil *to establish, to fulfill, to cause to stand, to perform* [a testimony, a vow, a commandment, a promise]. Strong’s #6965 BDB #877.

What Boaz is saying is that this redeemer—Bob—will not just purchase the land in a distress sale, but that the land would be preserved in the name of Ruth’s late husband, who has no heirs. In other words, this redeemer would have to marry Ruth and carry on the name of her late husband. This will cause this nearer redeemer to reconsider.

<sup>6</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Ruth, the Romance of Redemption*; Thru the Bible Books, ©Pasadena, California, pp. 98–99.

Boaz has just told him that he must marry a Moabite woman, who is not related to anyone, and that their first-born child will carry on the name and inheritance of Mahlon, her late husband. Now, even though all of this sounds a little odd, it is all within the Law. Furthermore, if Bob purchased the land, he is then saying, by this purchase, that he is Mahlon's nearest relative, thus obligating himself, under the Levirate law, to marry Mahlon's widow, as she has no children by Mahlon. If someone chooses to act as Mahlon's brother (in the extended sense), then they must take on themselves the obligations as well as the privileges of this position.

I work with teens all of the time, and part of their growing up process is their normal demand for adult freedom. They see the privilege and the freedom, and their hands grab for it. What they often do not see are the obligations and the responsibilities inherent in this freedom. Those who recognize that there are attendant responsibilities often choose not to see them. They may desire to come and go at all hours and be afforded the privilege of driving around, honking at red lights—but they do not want to assume the full financial responsibility of an automobile or a home over which they are the master. Most often, they don't have that ability. However, the two things—autonomy and responsibility—are opposite sides of the same coin. You don't get one without the other. And parents, by the way, who give their child a new car when he or she turns 16, and then buys them another when they wreck the first six months later, deserve the child that they will get—a child who has no concept of the responsibilities that are a part of their freedom (and often that lucky parent will get to partially support their child well into their 30's).

**And so said the redeemer, “I am not able to redeem for myself lest I [cause to] corrupt my inheritance. Redeem for you—you—my redemption for I am not able to redeem.”**

Ruth  
4:6

**So the redeemer said, “I am unable to redeem [it] myself or I will corrupt my inheritance. You redeem [it] for yourself because I am unable to redeem [it].”**

**So the near relative said, “I am not able to purchase this myself or I will cause problems with my own inheritance. Therefore, you should purchase it yourself, as I am unable to purchase it.”**

The first verb that Bob uses is the Qal imperfect of *yâkôl* (יָכֹל) [pronounced *yaw-COAL*], which means *to be able, to have the ability, to have the power to*. Strong's #3201 BDB #407. This is used with the negative. The redeemer is unable to purchase this property. Then this near relative uses the depreciating conjunction *pen* (פֶּן) [pronounced *pen*], which means *lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that* [plus a negative]. It could also be translated simply *else, or for the aversion of, for the avoidance of, so that [you] avoid, in order to prevent*. This can be simply rendered *or* with the negative result of a matter then stated. Strong's #6435 BDB #814.

The problem is the Hiphil imperfect of *shâchath* (שָׁחַת) [pronounced *shaw-KHAHTH*], which means, in the Hiphil, *to cause one to go to ruin, to spoil, to ruin, to corrupt, to destroy*. The NASB renders this *jeopardize*. Strong's #7843 BDB #1007. Bob claims that this would cause a corruption of his own inheritance if he simultaneously tried to preserve the inheritance of Elimelech. Therefore, he encourages Boaz to continue with the redemptive process for himself. Now, would there really be a problem with Bob purchasing this extra land for himself with reference to his own inheritance? Probably not. Back in v. 4, he was ready and willing to redeem the property. However, Boaz included the fact that he would now be raising up a child in the name of the previous husband and that is where Bob was ready to draw the line. Now, he is not going to come out and say, “I am not even remotely interested in Ruth.” Or, “I really don't want to marry Ruth and raise up one child with a different name.” Or, “I am not at all interested in marrying a Moabite woman.” What he does not do is indicate that there is any problem with Ruth, although that is his problem. This would be impolite. What Bob indicates is that the problem is with his inheritance; and he offers no details. Some speculate here, as I have. The NIV Study Bible suggests that if he only has one child, that the land would remain in the hands of that child as a part of the family of Mahlon. Others suggest that he already had a wife and family. Still others think that the financial obligation of purchasing the land, and also supporting Ruth and Naomi would overburden Bob. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, if he has a wife and other children, or if he planned to marry and have children, that the Levirate marriage might cause him some problems with regards to the passing down of his inheritance. This is the only explanation that he offers and he does not expound further. This is what Boaz wanted to hear—he does not ask for or need any details.

You will note the approach of Boaz. He wants to dissuade Bob from acting as the nearest relative to Elimelech. Therefore, when he presented this option to Bob, he first held up that which would entice Bob the most—the additional land, which would remain in his family forever, as a close relative of the late Elimelech. Bob, a business man, not as successful as Boaz, was immediately interested. Then Boaz adds, “However, Bob, there’s a catch. You would also, as the nearest relative, have to marry Ruth.” Suddenly, this no longer was as appealing. It was a small town—he knew who Ruth was—she was a beggar woman from Moab. Bob considered her to be beneath him. Now, as I pointed out, Bob declines with great tact, not realizing that Boaz presented these options with the hope that Bob would decline the offer.

Now, couldn’t Bob take the land but not marry Ruth? Bob would be purchasing the land at a good price and it would remain with his family forever based upon being the closest kin to Elimelech. Because he is the nearest relative to Elimelech, this, at the same time, makes him to nearest relative to Mahlon, making him responsible to marry Ruth and raise up their first child under Mahlon’s name. He cannot publically choose to take responsibility as the nearest relative in one case, but not in the other. It would just be bad form. Furthermore, there would always be the already-mentioned problem that Ruth would always have some claim to the title. If she remarried, then could her new husband purchase this land back? Therefore, from the standpoint of honor and from the standpoint of holding clear title, the redeemer would have to both purchase the land and marry Ruth.

Now, as I have been teaching, there is an undercurrent to this book. Although it deals with a set of real, historical events, it is also a story of Christ’s love for His Church and for His people. So, just who would this unnamed other redeemer be? McGee suggests that he is the Law, which, although it is holy, just and good, **by the works of the Law, no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin** (Rom. 3:20). Bob is unwilling and unable to redeem the land because he does not love Ruth. The Law is unable to redeem us, because the Law itself has no love for us. At best, the Law condemns us; it points out to us where we come short of the glory of God. *The other kinsman, who symbolizes the Law, said, “I cannot redeem.” The Law cannot redeem you. You have to have Somebody who will love your, friend, and Somebody to pay the penalty of your sins... You cannot measure up to God’s standard. You and I are way short of God’s standard. We need today a Kinsman Redeemer who loves us and who was not only willing to risk everything, but who actually gave His life.*<sup>7</sup> It is only through Christ’s love that we are redeemed, just as it is through the love of Boaz that Ruth will be redeemed. McGee, again: *The Law...was unable to redeem...like the anonymous kinsman, [the Law] cannot redeem without imperiling its own inheritance. Law cannot lower its standard to man’s level and still be law. But a greater than Boaz has come and he not only endangered his inheritance, but gave his own life a ransom for many. Now the vilest sinner can be saved by grace. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Romans 3:24).<sup>8</sup>

**Now this formerly in Israel for the redemption and for the exchange to establish all of a word: drawn off a man his sandal and he has given to his associate and this [is] the testimony in Israel.**

Ruth  
4:7

**Now this [is the way] in past times in Israel concerning a redemption or concerning an [act of] bartering to establish [or, confirm] all of a matter: one would remove his sandal and give it to his associate; this is the manner of official records in Israel.**

**Whenever an act of redemption or the act of bartering was concluded, each man would remove one sandal and give it to the other. This is the way official transactions were concluded in Israel.**

At the beginning of this verse, we have the combination of lamed prefixed preposition plus the masculine noun pānîym (פָּנָיִם) [pronounced paw-NEEM], which means *faces* (usually referring to one face, however). Strong’s #6440 BDB #815. With the lamed preposition, these can also refer to time and be translated *before* or *formerly*. (Lamed is BDB #510).

<sup>7</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Ruth*, Thru the Bible Radio, ©1976 in La Verne, California, p. 70.

<sup>8</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Ruth, the Romance of Redemption*; Thru the Bible Books, ©Pasadena, California, pp. 26–27.

We have a preposition which is used twice: ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *ahl*], which means *upon, on, against, above, over, by, beside*. Its more metaphysical use is *on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning*. Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752. This concerns the redemption as well as the feminine singular of tʿmûwrâh (תְּמוּוֹרָה) [pronounced *tʿmoo-RAW*], which means *exchange, barter, what is bartered, compensation, recompense*. Strong's #8545 BDB #558. This is followed by the lamed prefixed preposition and the Piel infinitive construct of qûwm (קָוַם), again, which means, *to establish, to fulfill, to cause to stand, to perform a testimony, a vow, a commandment*. Strong's #6965 BDB #877. This is followed by *all of a word (or, the entire matter)*.

Then we have the Qal perfect of shâlah (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAHF*], which means *to draw out, to draw off*. Strong's #8025 BDB #1025. What the man would take off is a sandal and he would give it to rêaʿ (רֵעַ) [pronounced *RAY-ahg*], which means *associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance*. It is a person with whom you come into contact. In context, this is a man you are transacting business with. Strong's #7453 BDB #945.

Then, this reads: *this [is]* and we have feminine singular of tʿʿûwdâh (תְּעוּדָה) [pronounced *tʿgoo-DAW*], which means *testimony, attestation*. We find this word only used thrice in Scripture; in Ruth 4:7 and Isa. 8:16, 20. We might render this here *the manner of official records*. Strong's #8485 BDB #730.

What this says that in the occasion of redemption or an act of bartering, whereas we would conclude the matter by signing two inches of paperwork in front of a notary; they concluded such a transaction by relinquishing a sandal. This was a tradition or a custom not required by the Mosaic Law. The witnesses testified to the details of the matter, if needed; and the exchange of sandals testified to the conclusion of the transaction (it is not completely clear if both Boaz and Bob gave the other a sandal, or whether just one gave a sandal to the other).<sup>9</sup> My educated guess would be that Bob, in relinquishing the sandal, is indicating that he is willing to relinquish his rights to the property and his obligation to marry Ruth. That seems to be in accordance with the context, including the next verse, as well as with the Mosaic Law—which is approximated here, but not followed completely.

The way that the author words this verse—that the giving of the sandal was a custom in former times—indicates that this custom was probably no longer practiced at the time of writing. This is yet another clue to indicate that the book of Ruth was written some time after the events of the book took place.

Now that you know who these principal players represent, do you understand what just occurred in this verse? Who is supposed to be there? Ruth. Ruth is supposed to be there and take the sandal and spit in Bob's face. Ruth is not there. Boaz is there **in her place**. Boaz stands in for Ruth, just as Christ stands in for us when He took upon Himself the penalty for our sins. Boaz handles the redemption process—Ruth does nothing. She expressed positive volition toward Boaz in private. She didn't walk an isle, she didn't do anything but come to him. Boaz took care of everything else. I hope that you are beginning to realize what an incredible book this is and why it is in the canon of Scripture.

**And so said the redeemer to Boaz, “Buy [it] for yourself.” And so he drew off his sandal.** Ruth 4:8 **Then the redeemer said to Boaz, “Buy [it] for yourself.” And he took off his sandal.**

**Then the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, “You may buy it yourself.” And he took off his sandal and gave it to Boaz.**

The nearer relative determined that the package deal was not what he wanted; he stated this in front of witnesses and gave his sandal to Boaz to indicate that this was the conclusion of the matter. One ancient translation, according to TEV, ends this verse with the words *and gave it to Boaz*.

Now, you may wonder just how did they come up with this kind of a custom—to give someone a sandal when you chose not to buy the land. When you owned land, you walked up and down upon that land in your sandals. The

<sup>9</sup> if they were operating under the Law, Bob would give his sandal to Ruth; however, we are told in this verse that they were operating under the traditions of that day.

taking off the sandal represented that this other-in-law would not be walking up and down on that land. Giving the sandal to another symbolized that this right to walk on your own land was transferred to another—in this case, Boaz. This custom was also found among the Indians and the ancient Germans, and is still found in various places in the east.<sup>10</sup>

By Mosaic Law, it is at this juncture that Ruth would be afforded an opportunity to humiliate the man who rejected her. As per Deut. 25:9, she would be allowed to take his sandal and spit in his face. However, she does not. In fact, she is not even there. Various explanations are given—she is a Moabitess, she is not interested in this other man—but, the simplest explanation is that she simply is not there, nor does it appear as though she has any interest in being there. Furthermore, it is doubtful that Ruth even knew that she had the opportunity to shame this other in-law, much less the desire to.

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### Boaz Testifies Before the Elders Concerning Ruth

**And so said Boaz to the elders and to all the people, “Witnesses you [are] the day that I have bought all that to Elimelech and all that to Chilion and to Mahlon from a hand of Naomi.**

Ruth  
4:9

**Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the people, “You [are] witnesses today that I have purchased all that [belonged] to Elimelech and all that [belonged] to Chilion and to Mahlon from the hand of Naomi.**

**Then Boaz said to the elders as well as to all of the people, “You are all witnesses this day that I have purchased all that belonged to Elimelech, as well as to his two sons, Chilion and Mahlon, from Naomi.**

This transaction early in the morning did attract a small crowd, eager to see what was going on. The elders which Boaz called over to witness this transaction, along with the people who came to observe the transaction—they are all witnesses that Bob has decided against purchasing this land as a distressed property and that he would not be marrying Ruth. Boaz would therefore be the next of kin who could do this.

Now, in case you are confused still as to when this property is being sold, re-read this verse. Boaz will buy the property from the land of Naomi—he is purchasing all that belonged to Elimelech, Chilion and Mahlon. It is difficult to reasonably interpret this in any other way.

**“And also Ruth the Moabitess, a woman of Mahlon, I bought for me to wife to raise up a name of the dying upon his inheritance and not cut off a name of the dying from with his brothers and from a gate of his place. Witnesses you [are] the day.”**

Ruth  
4:10

**“And also Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I bought for myself to wife raise up the name of the dead in accordance with his inheritance so that the name of the dead is not cut off beside his brothers or from the gate of his place. You [are] witnesses [of this] today.”**

**“And also Ruth the Moabitess, the former wife of Mahlon—I purchased for myself to marry in order to raise up the name of her late husband in accordance with his inheritance so that his name is not cut off from his brothers or from the gate of his place. You are all witnesses to this, this day.”**

*Wife* and *woman* in this verse are the same word. What Boaz is going to do is *raise up the name of the dead* and then this is followed by the preposition *ʿal* (אֲל) [pronounced *ahl*], which means *upon, on, against, above, over, by, beside, on the ground of (or upon the basis) of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to*. It is perhaps one of the most versatile prepositions in the Hebrew language. Strong’s #5920, #5921

<sup>10</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 131.

BDB #752. Each Israelite family is associated eternally with an inheritance of land. This is not something which they can lose forever. Even when a piece of property was sold, it had to revert back to the original family within 50 years. It was important for the Israelite to understand that there was a portion of land which belonged eternally to that family. Boaz was keeping a family name—not his, but Mahlon’s—associated with this piece of property forever. This is a recognition that what God does is eternal. These were not some arbitrary laws which simply sounded nice; the Law of God insured that the inheritance which God gave to Israel was eternal.

Prior to *his brothers*, we have a pairing of the prepositions *mîn* (מִן) (*from, off*) and *‘îm*, to give us *mê ‘îm* (מֵעִם) [pronounced *may-ĠEEM*], which means *from with, beside, from being with, away from, far from, from the possession of, from the custody of*. *Mîn* = Strong’s #4480 BDB #577. and *‘îm* = Strong’s #5973 BDB #767. Together, they are BDB# 768.

Boaz has these witnesses testify to the fact that he is purchasing the land with the intention of marrying Ruth and raising up her first born under the name of Mahlon, so that his name retains an eternal inheritance that even death cannot remove. Recall what Peter wrote: **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not decay, reserved in heaven for you who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time** (I Peter 1:3–5). In other words, there was a lot more to this than simply preserving the name of some old dead guy with a plot of dirt. The Law is a shadow of the good things to come (Col. 2:17 Heb. 8:4–5 10:1). Their eternal, imperishable inheritance on earth is a shadow of our eternal, imperishable inheritance in heaven.

You will note that Boaz has done everything on behalf of Ruth. He has redeemed the land which belongs to her and to Naomi. Ruth was unable to redeem the land herself. She was without assets. In fact, she was a Moabitess. Boaz married her and brought her into the family of Israel. And for all this to occur, one had to die, her husband, Mahlon. And what was closest to Ruth, Bob, could not redeem her. Do you see the great parabolic nature of this story? This is our salvation. Christ had to die for our salvation; He had to pay the penalty for our sins. The Law could not redeem us. We have no assets. We cannot redeem ourselves. We stand completely outside the family of God, rejected by the Law, and without assets. We are completely dependent upon Christ to stand in our place and to redeem us from the penalty of the Law.

At this point, we should examine **Boaz and the Doctrine of the Kinsman-Redeemer**.

**And so said all of the people who [were] in the gate and the elders, “Witnesses! Will make Y<sup>h</sup>owah the woman, the one coming unto your house, like Rachel and like Leah who built up they two a house of Israel. And you make strength in Ephrathah and you proclaim a name in Bethlehem.**

Ruth  
4:11

**Then all the people who [were] at the gate and the elders said, “[We are] witnesses. [May] Y<sup>h</sup>owah make [this] woman—the one coming into your house—like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the house of Israel. Make [yourself] strong and proclaim [your son’s] name in Bethlehem.**

**Then all the witnesses at the gate said, “We stand as witnesses. May Jehovah make this woman—Ruth—like Rachel and Leah, who built up the house of Israel. And may Jehovah make you strong and proclaim your son’s name long in Bethlehem.**

Apparently, several men said several things, and they are combined here into one long quote (vv. 11–12). Like many of the quotes in Scripture, this will require us to see what others have done:

CEV                      The town leaders and the others standing there said: We are witnesses to this. And we pray that the LORD will give your wife many children, just as he did Leah and Rachel, the wives of Jacob. May you be a rich man in the tribe of Ephrathah and an important man in Bethlehem.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Then said all the people who were in the gate and the elders— Witnesses!,— Yahweh grant the woman who is coming into thy house To be as Rachel and as Leah, Which two of them did build the house of Israel. Do thou bravely, then, in Ephrathah, And proclaim thou a name in Bethlehem.
NASB	“We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel; and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem.
Owen's Translation	“Witnesses! May Yahweh make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who built up together the house of Israel; and make strength in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem...”
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	“Witnesses! Jehovah make the woman who is coming in unto thy house as Rachel and as Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel; and do thou virtuously in Ephrathah, and proclaim the Name in Beth-Lehehm;

Although it appears as though all translations place *witnesses* as a part of the quotation, only the NAB gives this in such a way as makes sense: Boaz finishes v. 10 with “...Do you witness this today?” All those at the gate, including the elders, said, “We do so...” (The NJB helps us as well with the sense of this). They all confirm that they are witnesses to this transaction. Then we have several statements which are made and some of which are included here. This is not unlike a toast.

We have the Qal imperfect of *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*], which means *to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set*. Strong's #5414 BDB #678. The subject of the verb is Y<sup>e</sup>howah (or, Jehovah). When they say that Jehovah will make Rachel like Leah and Rachel—these two women, and their handmaids, were the mothers of all of Israel. They had twelve children between them, who made up the twelve tribes of Israel. What they did is given by the Qal perfect of *bânâh* (בָּנְיָהּ) [pronounced *baw-NAWH*], which means *to build, to rebuild, to restore*. Strong's #1129 BDB #124. They *built up* the nation of Israel. This verb is followed by the numeral *sh<sup>e</sup>tayim* (שְׁתַּיִם) [pronounced *sh<sup>e</sup>TAH-yim*], which simply means *two*. With this is the masculine plural suffix, which, despite the fact that it is masculine, refers to Rachel and Leah. It means *they two*; although most render this as *both* or *both of them*. Strong's #8147 BDB #1040. Let me add to this Psalm 127:3: *Behold, children are a gift of Jehovah; the fruit of the womb is a reward.*

In the last phrase, we have the *wâw* conjunction and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of *ʿâsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *ʿaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare*. What we would have expected is for this verb to be in the reflexive (the Hithpael), but this verb is not found in the Hithpael. However, that he should make himself strong is implied (it is in the imperative and not in the Niphal—which is the passive stem). Strong's #6213 BDB #793. What they say that Boaz will do is he will make or construct the masculine singular noun *chayil* (חַיִל) [pronounced *CHAH-yil*] and it means *efficiency, army, strength, valour, power, might*. Strong's #2428 BDB #298. What we apparently have here is a blessing in the form of a command.

The second verb is also the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative; it is *qârâ'* (קָרָא) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*] which simply means *call, proclaim, read, to call to, to assemble*. This word is found approximately 800 times in God's Word. It often means *to name* something (Gen. 21:31 25:30) or to call something into being, so to speak. To all the Jews, this will be a holy convocation. When followed by a *lâmed*, as it is here, it means *to give a name to*. Strong's #7121 BDB #894. This is followed by the masculine singular noun *shêm* (שֵׁם) [pronounced *shame*], which means *name, reputation, character*. Strong's #8034 BDB #1027. Together, the sense is that they order Boaz to make his name proclaimed throughout Bethlehem. Hence we have the idea of being noteworthy, famous, renown, etc. So these men tell Boaz to make himself strong and to proclaim not *his* name, but *a* name throughout Bethlehem. The name which he is to proclaim is, in this context, the name of Mahlon, the late husband of Ruth. Recall v. 5: *Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance.”* Part of the reason for the Levirate marriage is so that the dead brother's name not be lost to history. Little did they realize that his name and his son's name by Ruth would both stand forever in the line of their Messiah.

**“And may be your house like a house of Perez whom bore Tamar to Judah from the children that gives Y<sup>e</sup>howah to you from the young woman the this.”**

Ruth  
4:12

**“And may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah from the children that Y<sup>e</sup>howah gives to you from this young woman.”**

**“And may your house be like the house of Perez, who was born to Tamar and Judah—so may the children given you be Jehovah from this young woman.”**

Recall that we generally have the verb and then the subject of the verb in the Hebrew; so it is Tamar who bore Perez to Judah. This indicates that the family of Perez is one of the larger and more prosperous families to come from Judah. Also, it was interesting that they mention Judah, Tamar and Perez. This goes back to Gen. 38 where we have a recorded instance of what is occurring in this book of Ruth. Originally, Tamar married Judah’s first son, Er, who was a ne’er-do-well whom God struck down soon after he was married. As was the custom, Judah to Er’s younger brother to impregnate Tamar and the son was to be brought up as Er’s son with Er’s name. Onan, the younger brother, didn’t mind having sex with Tamar, but ejaculated onto the ground at the end of the sex act. Because of this, God also took his life. Judah, thinking this was some kind of a curse on whoever came in contact with Tamar, promised her marriage to a younger son, Shelah, who was still too young to be married. He asked her to remain unmarried in her father’s house until then, which she did. Sometime later, she found out that Judah gave his son, Shelah, to another, while she was spying on their family (she had a veil over her face). Judah, thinking she was a prostitute, propositioned her. Now, realize that it was Judah’s word upon which she depended to eventually be married and raise up sons. He did not keep his word. If his son Shelah did not marry Tamar, then Judah should have informed her of this. It would even be reasonable for Judah to raise up a son in her to Er himself. Judah, mistaking Tamar for a prostitute, had sex with her and impregnated her. In exchange, she required that she give him some personal items. When it became known that she was pregnant, the self-righteous Judah called for her to be burned. It was a quick and easy way to get rid of this woman who Judah regarded as a problem and bad luck. When it was revealed that it was his child that she was pregnant with, he could not longer call for her execution. Tamar bore Judah twins, one of whom, Perez, was in the line of Christ.

The word for *young woman* is *na ʿārâh* (נַעֲרָה) [pronounced *nah-ar-AWH*] means *girl, damsel, miss, young woman, woman of marriageable age*; it can refer to a prostitute (Amos 2:7), an engaged girl (Deut. 22:25, 27), a little girl (II Kings 5:2) or a mistress (Judges 19:3–6). It refers to female attendants or maids only when in the plural (Gen. 24:61 Ex. 2:5 Prov. 9:3). This is an unmarried woman. Strong’s #5291 BDB #655.

What we have here is an internal witness of Scripture. This passage refers back to Gen. 38, implying quite strongly the accuracy of that passage. Whereas, we have nothing as strong as we occasionally find in the New Testament (e.g., *And God said...; or, And the Spirit, through David, said...*), nevertheless, this reference indicates that the information found in Gen. 38 is to be taken at face value and that it means exactly what it appear to mean. Now, I should add that there are occasions where a passage from secular literature is found in the Bible. In those few cases, the context of the passage indicates that a quote is being given, and not that Scripture is being quoted authoritatively (e.g., see Acts 17:28).

The reference here by the elders to Perez is quite appropriate. Perez was born from a Levirate marriage. Judah was actually the only semi-willing husband to Tamar. However, when found to be in error for his promises which were not fulfilled, Judah both married and raised up a child by Tamar—actually twins—one of whom was among the ancestors of Boaz.

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## **Boaz Marries Ruth; They Have a Child**

**And so took Boaz Ruth and so she was to him to wife and so he went in unto her and so gave Y<sup>e</sup>howah to her conception and so she bore a**

Ruth  
4:13

**So Boaz took Ruth and she was a wife to him. He went into unto her and Y<sup>e</sup>howah gave her impregnation, and she bore a son.**

**So Boaz took Ruth as his wife and had relations with her. Jehovah gave them a son.**

I should ask something at this juncture—why would Boaz be willing to marry a Moabite woman? The Bible did not encourage intermarriage between the Jews and heathen gentiles. Many interpreted that as racial purity, although they key was religious purity. Still, most Jews would not even consider marrying a gentile woman, just as there are some Caucasian males today who would not marry a woman of color, or a Jewess or an Hispanic woman. The explanation is quite easy the grasp—although the father of Boaz was a Jew (Salmon), his mother was Rahab, the gentile prostitute. Regardless of what occurred in Joshua 2, Boaz no doubt ran into some prejudices from his fellow Jews, and the fact that his mother was Rahab may have had a lot to do with the fact that Boaz was both enterprising and successful, yet without a wife. And, since his mother was a gentile and a believer in Jehovah-Elohim, Boaz would have no problem marrying a gentile woman who was also a believer.

What Jehovah gave to her is found only in Ruth 4:13 and Hosea 9:11, and it means *conception, pregnancy, impregnation*. Strong's #2032 BDB #248. Now, here are a couple of things that might stick in your craw: (1) Boaz is significantly older than Ruth (which we found out in Ruth 3:10); and (2) they marry within about two or three months of meeting, and then have children. However, this is what they know about each other: Ruth knows from experience and Naomi knows from around town that Boaz is a successful believer of great integrity. Boaz knows that Ruth is also a believer with great personal integrity, who is willing to work hard, is not puffed up with self importance, and will endure self-sacrifice when necessary. Why do young people nowadays need to know their opposite number for several years prior to marriage? It takes them at least that long to determine whether the other person has any personal integrity or not. And if they have sexual relations prior to marriage—which Ruth and Boaz did not—then they will never know enough about the other person until after they have gotten married and the hormones have calmed down. At that point in time, they each find out that the other person is lazy, would not sacrifice a thing on behalf of the other person, and that each lacks any personal integrity. One of the reasons an arranged marriage works just as often as a marriage which is founded, supposedly, upon love, is that the parents are intelligent enough to recognize a loser. I've known many teenage and young ladies in their early 20's who marry a loser and every person over 40 knows the guy is a loser and her parents just hope and pray that he will grow out of it. And by loser, I don't mean someone who will not be financially successful. I mean someone who has no personal integrity and who would not sacrifice one thing on behalf of this woman he is about to marry. However, she has no clue until a year or two after they are married.

Allow me to go off on a tangent here: the most important thing for a young woman is to have or to have had a good, loving relationship with her father. Most men would do anything for their daughters—they would sacrifice anything for them, and give their lives for their daughters in an instant. Although a young girl does not fully realize the depth of love that her father has for her, she often recognizes in an instant a young man who is a predator, who has no integrity. A father shows his daughter in 20 or 30 years by example how a man should treat a woman. When a young woman has been so raised, it makes it much easier for her to weed out the losers.<sup>11</sup> Anytime a young woman wants to marry a man who is just like her dad, it means that he has taught her well by his example.<sup>12</sup>

**And so said the women unto Naomi, “Blessed [is] Y<sup>o</sup>howah Who has not [caused to] cease for you a redeemer the day; and will be called his name in Israel.**

Ruth  
4:14

**Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed [is] Y<sup>o</sup>howah, Who has not caused to cease a redeemer for you today. Furthermore, may his name be recited in Israel.**

**Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessings to Jehovah, Who has provided for you a redeemer this day. May your son's name be known throughout all of Israel.**

What the women first say is the Qal passive participle of *bârak*<sup>e</sup> (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced *baw-RAHK*<sup>e</sup>], which means *to bless, to make happy, to prosper*. This is a way of expressing thankfulness to God. Strong's #1288 BDB #138.

<sup>11</sup> And a man's sons learn how a man should treat a woman by watching their father's behavior toward their mother.

<sup>12</sup> And don't get weird about this. Such a woman will be looking for the love, self-sacrifice and devotion from a young man that her father has shown her.

The redeemer that God provided for Naomi was, of course, Boaz; however, the one whom these women call to be renown in Israel is their son. The word used is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect of *qârâ`*, again (קָרָה) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*]. This word means *to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to assemble*. In the Niphal, which is the passive stem, it means *to be called, to be named, to be read aloud, to be recited*. The gist here is that he will be well-known. Strong's #7121 BDB #894.

**“And he is to you to a restoring of soul and to support your old age for your daughter-in-law who has loved you has borne him who she [is] better to you from seven sons.”**

Ruth  
4:15

**“And he is to you a restorer of the soul and a sustainer of your old age because your daughter-in-law who loves you has borne him—she who [is] better to you than seven sons.”**

**“He will both restore your life and sustain you in your old age. Furthermore, your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is carrying his child, is better to you than seven sons.”**

What Boaz is to Naomi is the Hiphil participle of *shûw*<sup>b</sup>v (שׁוּב) [pronounced *shoo<sup>b</sup>v*]; which means *to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution*. In the Hiphil (the causative) stem, it can mean *to be caused to return* (II Sam. 19:11 II Chron. 6:25), *to bring* (Gen. 14:16 28:15), *to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce* (Deut. 30:1) *to return something, to restore, to bring back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution* (Neh. 5:11 Prov. 24:12 Lam. 3:64), *reconsider, think again* (Job 6:29), or *to be caused to return* (Psalm 78:38). Strong's #7725 BDB #996. What he is a restorer of is the feminine singular of *nepesh* (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced *NEH-fesh*], which means *soul, life, living being, desire*. Strong's #5315 BDB #659.

The next verb is the Pilpel infinitive construct of *kûl* (כּוּל) [pronounced *kewl*], which means *to comprehend, to contain* in the Qal. In the Pilpel, it means *to sustain, to support, to nourish, to contain, to endure* [sickness]. Strong's #3557 BDB #465. What he is a sustainer of is the feminine singular noun *sêy<sup>b</sup>vâh* (שֵׂיבָה) [pronounced *say<sup>b</sup>-VAW*], which means *old age, gray hair*. Strong's #7872 BDB #966.

What her daughter-in-law has done is the Qal perfect of *yâlad* (יָלַד) [pronounced *yaw-LAHD*], which means *to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget*. Strong's #3205 BDB #408. With this is the masculine singular suffix, followed by *who she [is]*, literally. Then we have the feminine singular adjective *ṭôw<sup>b</sup>v* (טוֹבָה) [pronounced *toe<sup>b</sup>v*], which means *pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better*. Strong's #2896 BDB #373. This is followed by *for you* and the comparative use of *mîn* and *seven sons*. Bearing children was a blessing from God. Since *seven* was the number of perfection, bearing seven children was considered to be perfect (I Sam. 2:5 Job 1:2 42:13).

The Hebrew is a little messy, but the verse is fairly clear. The man Boaz will restore her soul (or her life) and he will see to her care in her old age. The love of Ruth, who has remained with Naomi, is greater than the dedication of seven sons.<sup>13</sup>

**And so took Naomi the child and so she laid him in her bosom and so she was to him for a nourisher-supporter.**

Ruth  
4:16

**So Naomi took the child and laid him against her bosom and was a nurse to him.**

**So Naomi took and the child and laid him against her bosom and she was his nurse.**

What Naomi was to this child was the feminine singular, Qal active participle of *âman* (אָמַן) [pronounced *aw-MAHN*], which means, in the Hiphil, *to stand firm, to believe, to trust*. When used as a noun, this can mean *nourisher, supporter, foster-father, foster-mother, nurse*. Strong's #539 BDB #52. The Qal active participle along

<sup>13</sup> Keil and Delitzsch interpret this redeemer as being the child; however, in rereading these verses, I will stay with Boaz as being the one spoken of.

with the feminine singular means that this verb acts like a noun here, describing the action of the grandmother. Naomi acts *to confirm, to support, to believe in* this child.

The NIV Study Bible suggests that the laying of the child against her bosom symbolized adoption as a son. However reasonable that may sound, this is simply the natural reaction of any woman to her grandson.

**And so gave [a name] to him the neighborhood women a name, to say, “Born a son to Naomi.” And they call his name Obed.**

Ruth  
4:17a

**So the neighborhood women gave [a name] to him, saying, “To Naomi was born a son!” They called his name Obed.**

**The neighborhood women named him Obed, and said, “To Naomi was born a son!”**

The first noun is the feminine plural of the adjective *shâkên* (שׂוֹכְנִים) [pronounced *shaw-KAYN*], which means *inhabitants, neighbors, dwellers*. As a feminine plural with a definite article, it means *neighbor women, women from the neighborhood, female neighbors*. Strong's #7934 BDB #1015.

The verb used twice in this verse is the feminine plural, Qal imperfect of a verb used often in this chapter: *qârâ'* (קָרָא) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*] which simply means *call, proclaim, read, to call to, to assemble*. When followed by a lamed, as it is here, it means *to give a name to*. The second time it is used, it is not followed by a lamed, and therefore can be rendered *called*. Strong's #7121 BDB #894. The name given to the child is *ôwvêd* (עֹבֵד) [pronounced *oh<sup>b</sup>-VAYD* or *goh<sup>b</sup>-VAYD*], which means *a slave of, a servant of*. BDB says *a worshiper of*, but I don't buy that. Strong's #5744 BDB #714.

Naomi, without any men in her life, clings to this child as a son, and almost presents him as such to the town of Bethlehem.

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What we have here is several parallels between the son of Ruth and Boaz and the Christ child:

Obed, son of Ruth and Boaz	The Christ Child
A descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and Perez.	A descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and Perez.
His true mother and father were from separate, even warring, nations.	His true mother and Father were of separate, even warring, worlds.
His true mother was of another nation, not naturally an heir to the land. She became an heir to the land through her free will.	His true mother was of the earth, not naturally an heir to the kingdom. She became a believer in Christ Jesus of her own free will, thus becoming an heir to the kingdom.
His father was a natural heir to the land.	His Father is the divine sovereign of the Kingdom.
Whereas Ruth was his true mother, his father was represented as Mahlon.	Whereas Mary was His true mother, his father was represented as Joseph.
Although Boaz was the true father, he was raised as the son of Mahlon.	Although God was the True Father, our Lord was raised as the son of Joseph.
His name was to be famous throughout all Israel (Ruth 4:11, 14).	His name would be famous throughout Israel. <b>And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace</b> (Isa. 9:6b).

Obed, son of Ruth and Boaz	The Christ Child
The other woman in his periphery held him close and placed their trust in him.	The other women in His periphery held Him close and trusted in Him.
In their observations and wishes, the women around Obed showed themselves to be more perceptive than the men (Ruth 1:11, 14).	When our Lord was crucified, only one of the disciples was with Him while he was on the cross, but at least five of His female disciples (Matt. 26:56 27:55 Mark 14:50 15:40 Luke 23:55).
He was born and named <i>a servant of</i> . It is possible that Obed is short for Obadiah, which would make him <i>a servant of Yah</i> [God].	He was born a Servant of God.

**He [is] father of Jesse, father of David.** Ruth 4:17b **He [is] the father of Jesse, the father of David.**

**He is the father of Jesse, who is the father of David.**

Ruth, although a Moabite and an outcast, became the mother of Obed, who was the ancestor of Jesse, who was the father of David, who was to be King over Israel. Although David was definitely the son of Jesse, Jesse was probably simply a grandson or great grandson of Obed. The word used here is אָבִי (אָבִי) [pronounced aw<sup>o</sup>v], which means *father*, both as the head of a household or the head of a clan; therefore, it can refer to a grandfather or great grandfather. Strong's #1 BDB #3.

Despite the great degeneracy of Israel during the time period of the judges, there were still those who were faithful men who clung to God. Boaz is to be one of them and so is his descendant, Jesse (I Sam. 16:18).

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### The Generations of Perez

*I Chron. 2:10–12 Matt. 1:3–6 Luke 3:32–33*

With this, we examine the lineage of Perez, the son of Judah and Tamar. There are exactly ten names in this genealogy, just as we find in Gen. 5:3–32 11:10–26. It is unclear to me whether that is significant. Obviously, the initial chapters of the book of Chronicles are not so limited, nor do we find that few names in Matt. 1 or Luke 3. As we will see in Ruth 4:19, the genealogy is incomplete, which appears to be the case in all of the genealogies found in Scripture. Some generations not just not worth mentioning.

**And these [are] descendants of Perez: Perez sired Hezron;** Ruth 4:18 **Now these [are] the descendants of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron;**

**Now, the descent of Perez is as follows: Perez was the father of Hezron;**

To the average person who reads their Bible, the genealogy is the place at which they are to begin skimming. However, they accomplish a great deal, which the average reader overlooks. They first indicate from where one has traveled, as well as point out to where they will go. Secondly, they establish the royal line. There are a number of genealogies in Scripture, but most of them come to a sudden halt. However, one genealogy which is followed from cover to cover in Scripture (okay, actually from Gen. 5 through to Luke 3), is the line of our Lord and Savior. Judaism rejects Jesus as the Messiah (or, *Christ*, in the Greek). However, what we find consistent in the Old and New Testaments is this careful recording of the royal line which leads eventually to the Messiah. Any Jew of the Old Testament who knew Scripture realized that the line of David would lead to David's Greater Son, the Messiah

of Israel. What Judaism does not provide, after the Incarnation, is another genealogy to follow to *their messiah*. There are a number of reasons why, according to Old Testament, there could be no Messiah other than Jesus, and genealogy is one of them. In fact, Judaism is quite divided today on their interpretation of the coming of their messiah. Some expect that it will be miraculous and earth-shattering; others think that his coming will be more of a natural process; some do not expect deliverance by a messiah at all.<sup>14</sup> Old Testament Jews who had an interest in Scripture were fairly unified as to what they expected in their coming Messiah, and passages in the Old Testament that we Christians point to as Messianic passages, were also so viewed by the Jews of the Old Testament. Because they rejected their True Messiah, all they are left with is a false substitute, and there are many views as to what form, if any, that false substitute will take.

Okay, why is Perez the first person mentioned? It would appear, at first, that the logical person to begin with is Judah, the father of Perez, the father of the tribe of Judah. This genealogy seems to be incomplete apart from the mention of Judah—however, this genealogy begins with Perez. The key is the Levirate marriage. Perez was a son through a Levirate marriage and this book is essentially about a Levirate marriage. Perez, as the son of a Levirate marriage, begins the genealogy line; just as Obed, as the son of a Levirate marriage, closes out the narrative of this book (Ruth 4:17).

Perez, as we had mentioned, was the son of Judah and Tamar, through a similar situation. Judah inadvertently raised up seed to his late first-born in Tamar, the wife of his first-born. Perez was actually a twin; his twin brother was Zerah. Both Perez and Zerah were heads of major families (Num. 26:20). Another reason that we possibly begin the line with him, is that his name means *a bursting forth, a breach*.<sup>15</sup>

Following in the line of Perez was Hezron. We also find this in I Chron. 2:5 4:1 Matt. 1:3a Luke 3:33c. In I Chron. 4:1, it appears as though both Perez and Hezron are sons of Judah. In the Hebrew sense, that is accurate. However, what the Hebrew means is that Perez and Hezron are both descendants of Judah and that both of them headed large clans. Perez was really the son of Judah and Hezron was the son (or grandson) of Perez.

Hezron and his family, surprisingly, are found in quite a number of passages: Gen. 46:12 Num. 26:21 Ruth 4:18–19 I Chron. 2:5, 9, 18, 21, 24–25 4:1 Matt. 1:3 Luke 3:33. It is likely that Hezron was actually the son of Perez (Gen. 46:12 in context). I say *surprisingly* because, given all of these mentions in Scripture, we still know little or nothing about Hezron (in the latter portion of I Chron. 2, it is not even clear whether we are speaking of the same Hezron). If this is the same man, than about all we know is that he was rather prolific, and it is no wonder an entire clan was named after him.

**and Hezron sired Ram and Ram sired Amminadab;** Ruth **and Hezron fathered Ram and Ram fathered Amminadab;**  
4:19

**and Hezron was the father of Ram and Ram was the ancestor of Amminadab;**

Hezron appears to be the father of Jerahmeel (his first-born) who was the father of Ram (Jerahmeel's first-born), according to I Chron. 2:25, 27. However, what appears to be the case is that Hezron was the father of Jerahmeel and of Ram, and that Jerahmeel named one of his sons Ram as well; therefore, the Ram in this passage is the uncle of the Ram who is a son of Jerahmeel (compare I Chron. 2:9–10, 25, 27). This is pretty much the sum total that we know about Ram, apart from who his descendants were.

We also find this line in Matt. 1:3b–4a Luke 3:33b. Interestingly enough, we find in Luke 3:33, that between Ram and Amminadab was Admin, who is found nowhere else in Scripture.<sup>16</sup> You will note that the language found in

<sup>14</sup> One of my books on Modern Judaism, *Judaism and the Modern Man*, does not even mention the messiah in any of the topic headings.

<sup>15</sup> I went first to *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976 to examine these different people.

<sup>16</sup> There are problems with this passage in Luke; some translations lack *Admin* and others have *Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni*. The NASB has *Amminadab, Admin and Ram*, but no *Arni*. Because of the disparity of readings, some translations, e.g. the NIV, leave out *Admin* and *Arni* entirely, going with the Old Testament at that point. The KJV, Rotherham

I Chron. 2:9, where Ram is said to be born of Hezron and 2:10, where Ram is said to be the father of Amminadab. We might postulate from this the language of I Chron. 2:9 refers to a father and son relationship as we think of it and that the language of I Chron. 2:10 indicates simply line of descent. The Ram of this passage was likely a Jewish slave in Egypt during Israel's 400 years of servitude to Egypt. Hezron or Ram would have probably been the last generation of free men in Egypt.

**and Amminadab sired Nahshon and Nahshon sired Salmon;** Ruth 4:21 **and Amminadab fathered Nahshon and Nahshon fathered Salmon;**

**and Amminadab was the father of Nahshon and Nahshon was the ancestor of Salmon;**

In the Massoretic text, this is *Salmah* rather than *Salmon*. The Vulgate and the Septuagint (most versions) both have *Salmon*, as do some Hebrew manuscripts. Comparing this to other Old and New Testament genealogies, it is one and the same person. Although there is an *h* in the Hebrew, there is no such letter in the Greek (words which sound as though they begin with an *h* are simply vowels with a rough breathing). Therefore, the Greeks could either just ignore this letter and leave it off altogether or they could throw in a substitute.

We know little about Amminadab, although we know a great deal about his immediate family. His name means *my kinsman is generous, noble*.<sup>17</sup> His son or ancestor, Nashon, was a famous prince, numbered with the Israelites prior to their crossing over the Jordan into the Land of Promise (Num. 1:7 7:12, 17); Nashon was the leader, in fact, of the tribe of Judah (Num. 2:3 10:14). Since Israel moved with Judah as the point, this made Nashon the most important man under Moses and Joshua. Amminadab was a member of Gen X; the first generation of adult Jews to walk out of Egypt toward the Land of Promise. His daughter, Elisheba, married Aaron (Ex. 6:23). Between the time of Perez, the son of Judah, and Amminadab, there were about 400 years of Jewish servitude to Egypt. As is often the case, we have the generations of Hezron and Ram who fell in between there, but we do not have a full generational listing of those men between Perez and Amminadab. It would be reasonable to suppose that Ram was a first-generation slave to Egypt and that Amminadab and his son, Nashon, were a last-generation slaves to Egypt. Amminadab is in both the legal and the genetic line of Christ Jesus (Matt. 1:4 Luke 3:33). It appears as though his son, Nashon, was also the brother of Elisheba, who was the wife of Aaron (Ex. 6:23).

This passage is paralleled in Matt. 1:4b Luke 3:32b–33a. As we have seen in the introduction, this is exactly the same as what we find in the other two passages.

**and Salmon sired Boaz and Boaz sired Obed;** Ruth 4:21 **and Salmon fathered Boaz and Boaz fathered Obed;**

**and Salmon was the ancestor of Boaz and Boaz fathered Obed;**

We only know Salmon through his lineage here and in Chronicles, Matthew and Luke. He may or may not have been the actual father of Boaz, although it is not unreasonable to think of him as such. In any case, as we have seen, Boaz really was the father of Obed, as we think of it. Also, interestingly enough, Salmon married Rahab the gentile prostitute whom we met in Joshua 2, something that we don't actually find out until we get to Matt. 1:5. In the lineage given by Matthew, four women are mentioned, although Bathsheba is not mentioned by name. Of those four, three are known to be the actual mothers of the next generation given. Therefore, it is most reasonable to assume that Salmon and Rahab are the parents of Boaz. Therefore, Salmon, Boaz and Obed would have been the first three generations of Israelites under the judges. We covered Obed in more detail in v. 17a.

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and the REB leave out *Admin* and *Ram*, but put in *Arni*. The NRSV, NJB and NAB have *Amminadab*, *Admin* and *Arni*, but leave out *Ram*. There are portions of Scripture which some people generally find uninteresting, and family lines is one of them. Even scribes apparently get sloppy at this point.

<sup>17</sup> Again, taken from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 133.

I must admit that one of the thoughts that came to my mind is *where is Mahlon's name in this?* One possibility that occurred to me was that Mahlon was the actual son of Salmon and Rahab, and that Boaz is placed into the line, as he was the actual father of Obed. However, there is nothing in the verbiage of any of the genealogy passages which would indicate that is the case. So, to those of Bethlehem, for a relatively short period of time, Obed was raised up as a son of Mahlon, and, for the purposes of land ownership, the land that his family owned came down through Elimelech and Mahlon. However, history knows him correctly as the son of Boaz.

**and Obed sired Jesse and Jesse sired David.** Ruth **and Obed fathered Jesse and Jesse fathered**  
4:22 **David.**

**and Obed was the ancestor of Jesse and Jesse fathered David.**

I suspect that there were two or more generations between Obed and Jesse, as we lack continuity in genealogies during Israel's slavery to Egypt as well as during the latter portion of the judges; however, Jesse really was the father of David.

One of the things that this book of Ruth does is form a connection between the time of Joshua and the time of David, giving a positive spin of at least one set of events which took place during that time.

You will note that the genealogy given here is typical of Jewish genealogies. Not every generation is mentioned and those whose names are mentioned are males. In fact, only in Matt. 1 do we find the names of women given in the genealogy, which is quite unusual (however, it is in keeping with the personality of Matthew, who, as a Jewish tax collector, was an outcast of Jewish society, despite his great knowledge of Old Testament Scripture). Therefore, he goes out of his way to mention the *outcasts* in the line of the Messiah. Judah, the parent of the royal line, rejected the woman Tamar from being the wife of his sons (two of his sons died prematurely in connection with her). By his immorality, he sired a son (actually, twins) through Tamar, and one of those sons, Perez, was in the royal line (Gen. 38).

Rahab was a successful prostitute in the city of Jericho who aligned herself with the Israelites when Joshua entered into the Land of Canaan. She was a Gentile woman who believed in Jehovah Elohim, the God of Israel (Joshua 2:11). She apparently married Salmon, and their son (or descendant) was Boaz (Matt. 1:5).

The next woman to be mentioned by Matthew was Ruth. Although her confession of faith is not quite as moving as was Rahab's, she chose to cast her lot with her mother-in-law, Naomi, making Naomi's God, her God. As a woman of Moab, despite her declaration of allegiance and her love for Boaz, she was clearly an outcast by the standards of Israel.

The final woman named by Matthew in the line of Christ was the wife of Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba, with whom King David had committed adultery. She is mentioned in Matt. 1:6b, but not by name.

With this, we leave the book of Ruth, a book about love, although the word *love* is used but once. It is a book which, more than any other, illustrates in shadow form our Savior's great love for us. Scofield: *In this book, may be seen the majestic fulfillment of God's purpose. Even in the dark days of the judges, He was watching over the line through which Christ would come into the world.*<sup>18</sup>

The Book of Ruth begins in turbulent times. The time of the judges was a time of great degeneracy and unrest. The Book of Ruth finds its completion in King David, who will bring Israel into a time of peace, after a period of great conflict. Similarly, at the end of the Church Age, which will apparently end during a time of great degeneracy and unrest, the time of the Jews will resume for the Tribulation. Christ, David's Greater Son, will return, and also, after great conflict, usher in a time of peace. So we find the end times mirrored in this little book, which focuses upon the love of Boaz for Ruth and his great care for her; just as our history focuses upon the love of Christ for us until the Church is removed.

<sup>18</sup> *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 321.

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<b>The Great Parabolic Nature of the Book of Ruth</b>	
<p>When you first read through the book of Ruth in your one year program of reading through the Bible, you no doubt thought that this was sort of a sweet book, with nice people in it doing nice things during a time of great degeneracy (if you realized the historical context of the book). What you likely missed was the great, parabolic import of this story. Ruth is not included in Scripture because it is a nice little book about nice people, nor is it included in Scripture because the line of David is tacked onto the end of the book. It is in the canon of Scripture because it illustrates Christ love for the Church and how He gave Himself for us. Don't misunderstand me here—this does not mean that this is simply a made-up story. The events of the Book of Ruth occurred just as they are herein represented. However, they also speak to our salvation, much like Gen. 22 or Num. 20.</p>	
For these events to be set into motion, the husband of Ruth had to die.	We cannot be redeemed apart from the spiritual death of our Savior (which means that He endured, on our behalf, the equivalent of eternity in hell during the time that he was judged for our sins on the cross).
When Naomi mentions a Levirate marriage in Ruth 1:11, she is foreshadowing the events to come in this book.	The events which occur in this book foreshadow the coming of our Lord.
Naomi suggests that she seek rest for Ruth in Boaz (Ruth 3:1).	Jesus called out to those who are weary and weighed down with work to come to Him for rest (Matt. 11:28 Heb. 4:7–11).
Bob, the redeemer, a closer relative of Elimelech, represents the Law, and, as such, could not redeem.	The Law of Moses cannot redeem us (Rom. 3:20).
Ruth was without assets and could not redeem herself.	We are without the assets to redeem ourselves (Rom. 7:17–18).
Ruth was an outsider, from Moab, and had questionable legal standing in Israel.	We Gentiles are outsiders to the family of God. We are born outside the family and can only be brought in through the justification of Christ Jesus.
The Mosaic Law prevented Ruth, a Moabitess, from entering into the assembly of God (Deut. 23:3).	The Law of Moses does not give us life and it prevents us from pleasing God, thus effectively keeping us out of the assembly of God (II Cor. 3:9 Gal. 3:10, 21–22).
Ruth could only go to Boaz in private and ask him to redeem her.	For our redemption, we can only approach Jesus in faith.
There was no legal requirement which demanded Boaz to step in as a substitute husband to Ruth. Although he was a near relative, he did not live with Ruth and Mahlon (Deut. 25:5), which was one of the requirements for the woman to demand a marriage to the relative. Boaz chose to marry Ruth and fulfil the Levirate custom out of love.	There was no legal requirement for Christ to go to the cross as our substitute. He chose to do so out of His love for us, which is probably one of the greatest mysteries in Scripture.
The fulfillment of the Levirate marriage law by Boaz was not exactly what was expected.	The fulfillment of the Law of Moses in Christ was not what the Israelites expected.
When claiming and redeeming the land, Boaz stands in the place of Ruth, as her advocate (Ruth 4:3–9).	Christ, in bearing our sins, took our place, and now acts as our advocate.

### The Great Parabolic Nature of the Book of Ruth

<p>One of the key concepts in this book is the concept of substitution. Boaz, as the husband by a Levirate marriage, is substituted for Mahlon, the late husband of Ruth. Boaz is substituted for the nearer relative who had the first choice. Boaz stood as a substitute for Ruth when it came to approaching the nearer relative.</p>	<p>Our salvation and our righteousness are completely dependent upon substitution. Our Lord was our substitute on the cross, and, as our substitute, took the penalty for our sins. We do not stand in our own righteousness—when God sees us, He sees the righteousness of our substitute, Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:21–22 4:13 5:17–19 9:30 10:6).</p>
<p>Boaz did everything. Ruth could do nothing.</p>	<p>Christ does everything on our behalf, we can do nothing.</p>

You know that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with the precious blood as of a lamb unblemished and spotless—the blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:17–18)

“I know my redeemer lives!” (Job 19:25).

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