

Ruth – Part 14

Ruth 4:7-11

If you've been following along with us, you've been studying with us in the book of Ruth. We're now in Chapter 4 of the book of Ruth. We left off last time by looking at *Ho! such a one*. Boaz was a near kinsman as we've read, but we found out there was a near kinsman who was nearer than Boaz, one who could redeem Naomi, and as *Ho! such a one* found out, he would not only redeem Naomi and receive the land and all that went with it, but he also had to marry Ruth and this was something that he didn't want to do. He said, "Okay, I can't do it. I can't redeem." First of all, he said he would and then he said, "Well, I can't do it." He found out he would have to marry Ruth and this just stopped everything for him.

We left off last time, and I told you that in order for someone to be a redeemer, it's not only necessary for the person to be willing to redeem but also to be able to redeem. I said, thank the Lord, Jesus was not only willing; He was able to redeem us. He was able to redeem us and make us fit for the kingdom of Heaven. He redeems us to Himself.

There are so many verses that we can read that talk about this. In I Peter 1:18-20, we read that the last time, and Galatians 3:13-14. It says, *¹³Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: ¹⁴That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

We've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We've been set free because Jesus Christ loved us so much He's redeemed us.

Titus 2:13-14 says this: *¹³Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; ¹⁴Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Yes, Jesus Christ was not only willing to redeem, but He is also able to redeem.

Now we look in verse 7 and we see something about a shoe here. It says, *Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel.* And we see there this is following a custom. Of all the Jewish customs involving shoes, I believe the most unusual and fascinating is that of the laws of, the Jewish word, *halitzah*. I may be saying that word wrong. I don't know.

I'm not Jewish, but there's a Jewish law and it goes back to Deuteronomy 25:5-9 where we read about that. It's when a married man dies childless, leaving an unmarried brother, and the brother is obligated to marry his widowed sister-in-law. The rationale for that was called a Levirate marriage, and it was to continue the name of a bloodline and the assets and the soul of the deceased brother. Through the subsequent marriage and children, this lineage would be carried on. I would ask you later on to read Deuteronomy 25:5-10 and you'll read about this law.

In the case of Boaz and Ruth and *Ho! such a one*, we see that there were no brothers around. You'll remember, both the brothers had died, Naomi's sons, so there's no brother. So this fell

to a near kinsman and *Ho! such a one* was a nearer kinsman than Boaz but he could not redeem.

So we see now, as we continue on and read this, something else about this shoe is that it's a symbol of the transaction. This tradition is part of the color and romance of Jewish tradition and life. It's also a part of the spiritual tradition and we see that the Kabbalists describe the body as "shoe of the soul." This is Jewish, of course, and just as shoes protect feet from the dirt, so too does the soul require the body as a shoe to protect it during its journey in the physical world.

I was thinking about this the other day. We say, "Oh, God, how long am I going to have to put up with this old sinful body? I'm waiting for You, Lord, to come and take me home in the Rapture of the church or if I die first and the body gives up the breath of life first, whatever it is, Lord. I don't want to go too soon, but this old body is giving me a lot of trouble. It's sick and I just have a lot of temptations come into my life."

Well, we sort of beat up this old body, but you know, we need to be thankful that God's given us this body. It's a covering for the soul and it's a means for us to get around and it's especially the means for us to get around and tell people about Jesus Christ. Isn't that wonderful that we can say that we have Jesus as our Redeemer and we can tell others about Him.

Well, as we've seen in verse 7, the shoe custom was concerning redeeming, changing, in other words, confirming all things. Taking off the shoe was a custom and it was a legal, binding transaction in Israel. And as we read in verse 8, it says, *Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.* This is an oath unspoken. A man's word should be his bond. Do you remember when someone would

say, "My word is my bond"? That's few and far between anymore and that's not right, but *Ho! such a one's* bond, his oath, was taking off his shoe. He said, "I'm saying that the transaction is finished and that Boaz can now have the responsibility and privilege of redeeming Ruth."

We continue on with verses 9 and 10. And we see the purchase taking place here. ⁹*And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people... Remember, he's at the gate. There were ten witnesses and the people had gathered around, I'm sure, to see this transaction of business take place. And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.* ¹⁰*Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.*

In other words, through the redeemer the dead shall live. Boaz said the elders and all the people were witnesses to the transaction that had taken place between him and *Ho! such a one*. Boaz had bought everything that was Elimelech's, Chilion's, and Mahlon's from Naomi. Ruth 4:9 talks about that and we've read that. But Boaz not only purchased land from Naomi; he had also purchased Ruth. You say, "Well, that doesn't sound right to me." Well, that was a Jewish custom back then. Boaz purchased Ruth to keep the name of Mahlon alive. This was her dead husband, of course.

In John 11:25, it says, *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection.* He's not speaking to Ruth now. He's speaking to the woman, and He says, *I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall*

he live. The Bible teaches us that we are dead in trespasses and sins until we come to the Lord Jesus Christ. And when we do that, He purchases us from that. He purchases us from the slave market of sin, and we become His.

And then one day, I spoke of death a few minutes ago, but you know, for the Christian, the sting of death, the old stinger's been pulled, because in I Corinthians 15:55, it says, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* The grave does not have dominion over me because I'm going to be with the Lord once this breath of life leaves me. I will be with the Lord whether he comes back in the clouds for me or however I go, I'm going to be with the Lord and the grave is not going to hold me. It's not going to hold you either if you know Jesus as your Savior.

We read about Mahlon and Mahlon would be remembered because of the redeeming act of Boaz, according to Ruth 4:10. We're remembered by the redeeming act of Christ just as Mahlon is remembered by the redeeming act of Boaz.

In Colossians 2:13 it says, *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.* In the sight of God, we're alive. In the sight of the old flesh, the old flesh is going to die but we will never die. The soul will never die because we're going to go be with the Lord and He sees us right now as if we're already in Heaven.

Well, we keep reading here and we see a blessing here in verse 11. It says: *And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah...* They're pronouncing a blessing here. It says Let your house be like Rachel and like Leah, *which two did build the*

house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem. That word *Ephratah*, you look that up. It's in the Word of God and you'll find that in the book of Micah, *Bethlehem Ephratah*. Look that up and read that. Read that chapter, Chapter 5 of Micah.

Well, we see here the blessing, and the elders and the people speak, and the people and elders present a blessing and said, first of all, we are witnesses. The transaction that the witnesses witnessed was between *Ho! such a one* and Boaz and Ruth. The people and elders pronounced a blessing on Ruth and Boaz in verse 11, the blessing that Ruth would be like Rachel and Leah. Why was this? Because through these two women and their handmaids came the children of Israel. Go back and read Genesis 29:16, 20, 25, and 27, and you'll read more about this.

But notice the blessing that Boaz would be honored in Ephratah and be famous in Bethlehem. Well, in Micah, I'm going to go ahead and read that verse, Micah 5:2: *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

Next time, I'm going to pick up with this verse, Micah 5:2, and we're going to look at the birth of our Savior. We're going to look at the birth of our Redeemer, and we're going to see how this all ties together and where He would come from and what would take place before He was even born and how He was born.

Do you know Him today as your Savior? If you do not know Jesus as your Savior, He's waiting for you. He wants you to know Him as your Redeemer. Why not ask Him to come into your heart today. You could say something like this:

“Lord, I’m sorry for my sin. The best I know how, I’m confessing that sin and I’m asking You to forgive me and come into my heart. I want to see You one day and I want to go to Heaven. Would You save me today so I can be on my way to heaven?”

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