



Ruth 1-4

Shall we turn now to the Book of Ruth, as we continue our journey through the Bible.

Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled (1:1),

We have just finished the book of Judges, and in the last five chapters of the book of Judges, we've had a couple of insights to the conditions of the nation of Israel during the time in which the judges ruled. The one insight was concerning a priest that had come from Bethlehem-judah, and was hired out to the house of Micah, who was later enticed by the men of Dan, and he ripped off from Micah some of the artifacts of worship that Micah had in his house. He went with the man, men of Dan, to be their priest, as they established the city of Dan in the northern part of the country. Religiously, a confusing incident. I mean, the priest should be guilty of ripping off his friend of the various artifacts and so forth, is uncongenial.

The next incident that is recorded, and the last one recorded in the book of Judges is that tough, tough incident that we had last Sunday night, where a priest from mount Ephraim, went down to Bethlehem-judah, to retrieve his concubine who had committed whoredom, and had left him, to entice her to come back home to him. How that as they stayed at the city of Gibeah, a Benjamite city, the men of the city, as the men of Sodom came and beat at the door, and wanted the host to release this priest, in order that they might have homosexual relationships with him. How that instead, they sent the concubine out, who the men raped all night, and who was lying at the doorstep dead in the morning.

The civil war that took place between the tribes of Israel, and the tribe of Benjamin. That horrible incident, the horrible things that were happening. During the time of the Judges, it was a time of moral decay, as is evidenced by the stories. It was a time of religious confusion. It was marked by the fact, you remember, and at that time there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Period of anarchy.

In this black background, God was at work. God was preparing a family through which the Messiah would come. God often times works when we cannot see His work. When we look around and we see the moral decay, and we see the corrupted conditions, it seems that God has forsaken man, and God has forsaken His program. Yet, God is at work, and God was working.

So the book of Ruth, chronologically, fits back in the time of the Judges. And, God is at work. It is really a, a book that fits really between the Judges, and Samuel. Because it is not only giving us things that were happening during the time of the Judges, to show that God was at work, but also, it is an introduction for the book of Samuel. For it will bring to us the introduction of David, who became the great king of Israel, who was crowned in the book of Samuel, as the king over Israel. So it's sort of a bridge between the book of Judges, and the book of Samuel.

However, it does not appear in that place in the Hebrew bible. In the Hebrew bible, there are five books known as the Megillot. They are read at the feast times, and they are in a section by themselves. One is the book of Esther, one is the book of Lamentations, another one is the book of Ruth.

The book of Ruth was traditionally read at the feast of Pentecost. Probably, in a sense, that would be a very fitting. Because the feast of Pentecost does celebrate the gathering in at the harvest, at the time of the grain harvest, it really celebrates the harvest being gathered in. Ruth has to do with the time of the grain harvest. So the book is traditionally read among the Jews at the time of Pentecost.

So, "It came to pass in those days when the judges were ruling", when there was moral corruption, when there was confusion in the land of Israel, from a religious standpoint.

there was a famine in the land (1:1).

God often times used famine to wake people up to their moral decay. The Lord said, "When my judgments are in the land, it will cause my people to turn to righteousness". God often used famines to get the attention of the people.

There was a certain man of Bethlehem-judah (1:1),

The word Bethlehem, means, "house of bread". "Beth", is house, and, "lehem", is bread. Judah is "praise". So, "the house of bread and praise".

who went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech (1:1-2),

Which means, “my God is King”. That would be quite a name! Imagine what a testimony that name would be! You see, if he was working, and they called him over the p.a. system, they’d say, “My God is King, line six please”. Ha, ha! So every time they would call him, it would be a testimony. His name was a witness. “My God is King!”

and his wife’s name was [Pleasant] Naomi, the name of his two sons were Mahlon [Which means, “sick”, ha, ha!] and Chilion (1:2),

Which means, “tiny”. Again, children were often named after the circumstances of their birth. When Rachel was giving birth to her son Benjamin, near Bethlehem-judah, she died in childbirth. As she was dying, the midwife said, “It’s a boy!”, to lift her spirits, and she named him, Ben-Noi, which is, “Son of Sorrow”. His father Jacob changed his name from Ben-Noi, “Son of Sorrow”, feeling that would be a rough tag to put on a boy, and called him, Benjamin, “Son of my right hand”.

When Jacob and Esau were born, they were twins, their mother was having a rough pregnancy. She prayed unto the Lord, and said, “Lord what’s going on? This is rough!” And the Lord said, “There are two nations in your womb, they’re diverse from each other, and they’re fighting with each other”. So these two little guys were wailing away at each other in the womb! When they were born, the first one to be born was covered with hair. He was reddish in color, but he was so hairy, they called him Hairy, “Esau”, and, and that means, “hairy”, in Hebrew. When the twin brother was born, he reached out, continuing the fight, and grabbed Hairy’s heel, and they said, “Look at that! Heel Catcher!”, and so he picked up the name, “Yakov”, “heel catcher”.

So they often named their children by the circumstances of birth. When, “My God is King”, and “Pleasant”, had their first child, he probably didn’t look very well, and so he said, “Oh he looks sick”, and so he picked up the name, “Mahlon”, “sick”. When the second child was born, he looked like he was ready to die, so he picked up the name, “tiny”.

They moved to Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech Naomi’s husband died; [So he probably wasn’t too well himself.] and she was left, with her two sons. And they took them wives of the woman of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, [Which means, “a fawn”, she’s probably athletic, you wonder why she’d marry a sickly guy.] and the name of the other was Ruth: [Which means, “beauty”.] and they dwelt there in Moab for about ten years. Now Sickly and Tiny died, both of them and the [women were left, and the] woman, Naomi was left of her two sons and her husband. So she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard there that the famine was over in Bethlehem, and the Lord had visited his people and given them bread. So she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. But Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, God, and return each to your mother’s house: and may the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead, and with me. And the Lord grant you that you might find rest, each of you in the house of your husbands. Then she kissed them; [And lifted up their voice.] and they lifted up their voices, and wept (1:2-9).

So here was a, a thing where Naomi was saying to the girls, “Look girls, you don’t need to feel responsible for me. I’m gonna go back to Bethlehem, and you girls should go back to your own mother’s homes. I pray that God will be gracious to you, even as you’ve been gracious to me, and to my sons, your husbands. I pray that God will give you sons, and you know, you might have children, and have a nice family life. But don’t feel obligated to go with me, or to take care of me”. There was evidently a very close relationship between Naomi, and her two daughters in law. “And they wept together”...

And they said unto her, Surely we will return with you unto your people. And Naomi said, No, turn again, my daughters: why will you go with me? are there yet two more sons in my womb that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, and go your way; for I’m too old to have a husband. And if I would say that, I have a hope, and if I should have a husband and even tonight, I would bear sons; Would you wait for them to grow up to marry them? would you wait from having husbands? no, my daughters; it grieves me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me. And they lifted up their

voice, and wept again, and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her (1:10-14).

Now going back to the book of Genesis, Jacob's son, Judah had a son, who married a young girl named Tamar. This son died before Tamar had any children, So the next son in line, Onan took her as his wife. But he was reluctant to do so. He didn't want to do so. So he refused to have a son, or to allow conception to take place, and thus God killed him, because he would not raise up a son for his dead brother.

Now Judah had one other son, but having two sons already wiped out by this gal Tamar, he wasn't willing yet to give the other son. He said, "He's too young right now. Wait for him to grow up, and when he grows up, then he can marry you". But as time went on the son grew up, and Judah did not give that son to Tamar, as a husband. So you remember the story how that she dressed in attire of a prostitute, and went out and sat on the wayside, and Judah came by, and struck up a proposition with her, that he had sent a little goat to her, and all. So she said, you know, if she would grant him sexual favors, and so she was failed and all, and she said unto him, "Well how do I know you'll do that?", and he says, "Well, I'll give you a, a pledge". So she says, "Okay I want the ring for a pledge, guarantee you'll send the goat back".

So she took Judah's ring as a pledge. And, Judah went unto her, and then he went his way. He got to his men with the flocks, and he told the one guy, "Take a goat back to the prostitute that's on that corner back there". When he came back, she wasn't there. The guy inquired, said, "Where is the prostitute that usually hangs out on this corner", said, "There's no prostitute around here that we know of".

Tamar had become pregnant by Judah, and word came to Judah, he said, "Hey did you know that Tamar is pregnant?", he said, "That's terrible! She shall be put to death!" So, Tamar came to Judah, and she said, "The man who owns this ring is the man who made me pregnant". He recognized the ring, and he said, "You've been more honorable than I have, in that you know I should've given you the son I didn't".

She had a son named Perez, born unto Judah, or Tamar. That will figure into the end of the story of Ruth. Interesting it figures into this story here, of Ruth.

Incidentally, just as a side note, that's where the custom of wedding rings comes from. It's a pledge, it's a guarantee, "I made a promise, I made a vow, and this guarantees that I plan to keep the vow". "Give me your ring as the guarantee, you know, that you're gonna keep the vows!" When a guy is all excited in love, and passions are high, he'll make all kinds of promises. Get a ring gals! The pledge whereby, I know you'll keep these vows, these promises!

So what Naomi is saying, "Hey girls, I'm an old lady. No sense coming back with me. I can't have any more children. I mean, I don't plan to get married, and even if I did, even if I had a son right now, you wouldn't want to wait. You wouldn't want to rob the cradle, wait till he grew up, and then marry him. So you go back home and, and find husbands there, and be happy!" So, "They lifted up their voices and wept again, and Orpah kissed her mother in law, Naomi, but Ruth clave to her. And Ruth said...

And Naomi said, Behold, your sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return after your sister in law. [She's gone back to her home, her customs and so forth.] But Ruth said, Do not entreat me to leave you, or to return from following after you: for wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge: your people will be my people, and your God will be my God (1:15-16):

Ruth's making a spiritual commitment. She had come to trust in the God of Israel. No doubt, through the witness of her husband and all, she'd come to believe in trusting God. She did not want to go back to the gods of her people. She did not want to go back to her family. She wants to go with Naomi.

Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried: and the Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me (1:17).

So this glorious, beautiful commitment of Ruth, and it's one that's traditionally now, just a, a beautiful expression of, of fidelity, and, and of love. "Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge. Your people, will be my people, your God, my God. God forbid that anything but death should part us." You remember something else from the ceremony? "Until death do us part."

So when she saw that she was firm in her mind to go with her, then she quit trying to argue with her. So the two of them came back to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, [the house of bread], that all of the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi? [Or, Pleasantness.] And she said unto them, Don't call me Pleasant, call me Mara: [Which means bitter.] for the Almighty hath

dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why should you call me Pleasant, seeing the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me? So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, [with which] with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest (1:18-22).

Now one thing I note here, and that is Naomi is blaming God for the problems that have befallen her. She's blaming God for the death of her husband and her sons. She talks about the hand of God, against her, and how God has dealt bitterly with her. It is an unfortunate thing that so often in the time of death, we somehow seek to blame God. Especially in untimely deaths. Ruth was bitter, and it is possible for a person to become bitter against God, at the time of death of one of their loved ones, especially a person's children. We somehow blame God for the tragedies. We forget that death came by sin. By one man, sin entered the world, death by sin, so that death passed unto all men for all sin. In a primary sense, man is responsible for death, not God. Had man not sinned, then death would not be an issue. Death came as the result of sin. Not only death, but the sorrows and the miseries and the griefs. But so often we blame God, because we reason that God could have averted if He had so desired, or was inclined to do so. That, in, in a sense, is true.

When Mary and Martha had sent the urgent message to Jesus, concerning their brother who was very sick, and they said, "Come quickly, the one you love is very sick". Jesus was down at the Jordan River with His disciples. He was a two day journey away from Bethany, where Mary and Martha lived with their brother Lazarus. So it took the courier a couple of days to get the message down to the Jordan River. Rather than immediately responding, Jesus waited for two days at the Jordan river, without explanation. Then He said to His disciples, "Let us go up to Bethany, that we might see Lazarus". So, Lazarus is a close friend, the disciples were talking to Jesus about Lazarus, and Jesus said, "Well he's sleeping". One of the disciples said, "Well that's probably a good sign, means he's getting better if he can sleep". The Lord said, "No, no. He's dead, and I'm glad for your sake that I wasn't there". So that when Jesus finally arrived at the city of Bethany, His two day journey from the Jordan river, his friend Lazarus had now been dead for four days, had been buried.

When Martha came out of the village, she was blaming him for the death of her brother. She said, "Lord, if you'd only had been here, my brother wouldn't have died!" Blaming Him for the death. And, hers was, "Lord you could've averted this. We didn't have to experience this grief and sorrow Lord, you could've averted this tragedy, if you'd only been here Lord! It wouldn't happen!" She was in essence saying, "Where were you? What took you so long to get here? Why didn't you respond to our prayer, our cry?", and we often feel the very same thing, in death. Somehow it's God's fault. "God where were you when we needed you? God why didn't you respond when we cried? Lord, if you'd only have been here, this would not have happened!"

Our reason for our attitude of death, being as it is, is our lack of understanding of the glory of the eternal, and being there with God. Really, for a child of God, death is not some kind of horrible monster, but it's a blessing! I, through death, am gonna pass through the veil and come into the presence of the Lord, whom having not seen, I love! I'm gonna enter into the fulness of joy, and glory, and blessing, excitement, when I'm there in the presence of Jesus! Nothing on earth can compare with the glory of one moment with Him in heaven. Standing there in His presence, every grief, every problem, every trial, will be totally, immediately forgotten, and we'll be so caught up and taken in the beauty and the glory of, of this presence of Christ, and dwelling with Him there, that everything will just fade into oblivion!

Then what's our big gripe? "I'm gonna miss that person because they did so much for me, and I'm just selfish enough to keep them here, that I can still enjoy them for my pleasure, and for my comfort, and for all that they have meant to me. They've made so much input, I don't want them to go to be with the Lord! I don't want them to have that joy, and that blessing, and that glory. I'm selfish, and I would hold them here in the misery, and the corruption of this world, in the sorrows, and in the griefs, and in the pains, I would hold them here! In order that they might continue to minister to me. Oh you can be glad I'm not running things friends. I could really make a royal mess of things, I could keep you out of heaven, just for my own sake, and my own benefit. I could keep you from the glory that God is wanting to reveal and to show unto you. That I might have the comfort of your presence, and of your love, and of your input into my

life.”

So, we sorrow over death, but not as those who have no hope. We sorrow for our own loss. We grieve for what we have lost of the input. But in thinking of those that are with the Lord, you can't really grieve. If you have a proper understanding of what heaven is all about, you could only rejoice for them, and say, “Oh! They're so lucky! They're so blessed!”

I used to work for a mortuary. When I was pastoring a small church, and I needed money for the family, I used to make first calls. Go out and pick up the bodies. Oh I'd drive family's cars, and flower cars, and did, you know, the normal stuff around the mortuary. But I remember going to a house where there was a prayer meeting, and the man whose house the prayer meeting was, was kneeling with the others who were at the bible study that night, and they had been praying. He finished the prayer, his prayer, and just as he finished his prayer, he had a heart attack, and fell over on the floor, was dead. So I had to go out with this other fellow, to pick him up.

I knew the families, I knew the people. I went in, and they were happy to see me, and we ministered to them some, as we picked up the fellow. As we were carrying him to the coach, the attitude that the people had was, was a proper attitude, they were, you know, they were sorrow, they were sorrowing, and yet, they were rejoicing. You know, they say, “My isn't that a thrilling thing! He's talking to the Lord here, and suddenly he's talking to the Lord there”. You know, before he could even finish the sentence, whoa, there's Jesus right there in front of you, you know! So they were sharing how he was praying, and the things he was saying and all, just, and then, he was quiet, and they looked, and, and he was gone. So I turned to this fellow that was carrying the body with me, and I said, “This lucky stiff!” “Think! He's with Jesus right now!” Oh how blessed, how glorious!

Chapter 2

Now Naomi had a kinsman [So introduction now of this fellow Boaz, kinsman in the Hebrew, is “gaal”, he's a member of the family.] of her husband's, [That is of Elimelech.] he was a mighty man of wealth, he was of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter (2:1-2).

Now in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter twenty four, also in the book of Leviticus, there are areas that deal with this same thing. It's the laws concerning the land, and the reaping of your harvest. Verse nineteen of Deuteronomy, twenty four, “When you cut down your harvest in your field, and you have forgot and left a sheaf in the field, you are not to go again to fetch it. It shall be for the stranger, and for the fatherless, and for the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive trees”, that is, to get the olives off, “you shall not go over the boughs again. It shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And when you gather the grapes of the vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward, it shall be for the strangers, the fatherless, the widow, that you shall remember that you were once a bondman in the land of Egypt, therefore I command you to do this thing.”

So it was a welfare law that you could not pick up the grain that had fallen on the ground. You had to leave that for the poor people. You could not go back into the fields and get a sheaf of grain.

So Ruth is saying, “I'm gonna go out and glean. Maybe I'll find grace in the eyes of one of the land owners, and he'll let me glean in his field”.

And so she went, and [it] came, and gleaned [rather] in the field after the reapers: and her hap [Or, by happen stance, or, by chance.] she came unto the part of the field that belonged to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech (2:3).

Now these happenings, ha, ha! A lot of times as we explained the things that took place, say, “Well it just so happened that I was here, and this happened...”. You know, it's interesting that God guides us in very natural ways, in such natural ways that we're often not aware that God is guiding! Somehow we have in our minds a concept, that when God is guiding us, there's some kind of a mystery, and you know, things become very mystical, and there's, this sort of, “Hmmm”, you know, and just when I'm tuning in, “Wait a minute, hmmm”, and, and you know, God is leading me, and there's all this hocus pocus kind of, “ooh”,

you know. There's the, "Beep, beep, beep, go left", and "beep, beep, beep, go straight ahead", and you think, "God is now guiding me". Not so, I've never been guided that way by God. God guides us in very natural ways. So natural that many, many times we're not even aware that God is guiding, until after the thing has made it's cycle, and we say, "Wow look at that! If I had not been there at that time, that precise time, then I would've missed...", and, "Wow! That's exciting God's hand is on me!"

I was working at Alpha-Beta markets in Corona, and my, ha, ha! Another job. My battery was going dead on my car. So at lunch time, I thought, "Well I'll run over to this car wreckers, on Lincoln Avenue, and you know, pick up a used battery". Six bucks instead of thirty five. So I went over to the wrecker on my lunch hour, the wrecking yard, I said, "You have any batteries for this Oldsmobile of mine?". The guy says, "Oh I think we've got a wreck out there, you'll have to get it out yourself. I don't have time to do it". So I said, "Well give me some tools", so, took the pliers and all, and I went out and I took this battery out of this Oldsmobile. I put it in my car, and the thing was no good. So I had to take it out again.

As I was taking it out, this guy came walking out, and I looked, I said, "Charlie!", and he stopped and looked, and said, "Chuck!" I said, "What are you doing here?" He said, "Oh I came over to get a piece for my car, and I'm living in Riverside now". He was a kid who had been in my Sunday School class in Tucson, Arizona, years ago. Started talking, started talking about the Lord. He had gotten away from the Lord. I had a chance to talk to him about the Lord, and we prayed together and all. Then I took this dumb battery back into the guy.

I realized, God didn't send me there to get a battery, because I didn't get a battery. Ha, ha! Now generally I don't buy batteries from car wrecking yards. I just had a crazy idea. "Well you know, save some bucks, and get it from a wrecking yard. Might be able to get a good one!" Yet, God put that in my mind, yet not really to get a battery. He had something else in mind for me to do when I was there. After I was driving back, having witnessed to this kid again, and prayed with him, suddenly I realized, "Wow! God is leading me!", you know. Neat that God led me! You go back over the circumstance, you see. But yet as He was leading it was in such a natural way, you're not really aware, "God's hand is on me, God is guiding me".

Ruth wasn't aware that God was guiding her to this field. She was just looking around for a field. "Oh there's some people over there. I don't feel like going over there. He looks mean. They look pretty nice, I'll go over that way", you know. She comes into this field, "it just so happened". No, no, it just didn't so happen, God was guiding her, and she was unaware of it. "Happened that she came into the field of Boaz."

And she gleaned in the field with the reapers, and, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and he said to the reapers, The Lord be with you. [That's capital speaking to labor.] And they answered him, The Lord bless you (2:4).

That's labor speaking to capital! Oh my that we could have that kind of relationship between capital, and labor today. Where the capitalist comes in and says to the laborer, "The Lord be with you!", and they answer, "Oh the Lord bless you!" Be a different story wouldn't it?

Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, Whose damsel is this (2:5)?

Now that's King James language, really what he said is, "Wow! Who's that beauty over there!" He probably let out a whistle, said, "Whew, whew! Who in the world is that?" Ha, ha!

And the servant that was set over the reaper said unto him, It's the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab. And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: and so she came, and has continued with us from the morning until now, only that she stayed just a little while in the house. Then Boaz said to Ruth, I want you to listen to me, my daughter. Go not to glean in any other field, neither go from here, but abide here by my maidens: And let your eyes be on the field that they reap, and go after them: for I have commanded the young men that they should not touch you. when you're thirsty, you can go to their vessels, and drink of the water which they have drawn. And she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said to him, Why have I found grace [in the eyes] in your eyes, that you should take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger. Boaz answered and said unto her, It has been fully shown to me, all that you've done to your mother in law since the death of your husband: how you left your father, your mother, and the land your birth, and you've come to a people which you did not know before. And the Lord repay you, and give you a full reward for the Lord God of Israel, under

whose wings you have come to trust (2:5-12).

That's a beautiful scripture. "The Lord recompense your work, and give you a full reward from the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to trust." "Your God will be my God." She had come to trust in the true and the living God, "May God reward you".

So then she said, Let me find favour in your sight, my Lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken friendly unto your handmaid, though I not be like one of your own handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come and dip your morsel in the vinegar, eat of the bread, dip your morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached for her some parched corn, and she did eat, and was satisfied, and she left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Now let her glean even among the sheaves, [That is, the areas where you haven't yet harvested.] and reproach her not. And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and don't rebuke her. So she gleaned in the field until evening, and when she beat out that which she had gleaned: she had about a bushel of barley. [Which is quite a bit.] And she took it up, and went into the city: and to her mother in law, and when she saw how much she had gleaned: she gave to her that which she had reserved after she was satisfied. And her mother in law said to her, Where in the world were you gleaning today? where were you? and blessed is he that took knowledge of you. And she showed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and she said, The man's name with whom I wrought today is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her, Daughter in law, blessed be he of the Lord, who has not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi [And so she blesses the Lord, "God has not forgotten kindness unto me".] For, she said, The man is near of kin to us, he is one of our next kinsman. [He's a gaal, he's one of the family, close, redeemer.] And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, You shall stay by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his maidens, and that they do not meet you in any other field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean to the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother in law (2:13-23).

Chapter 3

Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? And now is not Boaz of our family, with whose maidens you have been? Behold, he is winnowing the barley tonight in the threshingfloor. So you wash yourself therefore, anoint yourself, give you some good perfume, and put on that beautiful party dress that you have, and get down to the threshingfloor: but do not make yourself known unto the man, until he is finished eating and drinking. And it shall be, that when he lies down, that you shall mark the place where he is lying, and you shall go in, and uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you shall do. And she said unto her, All that you say unto me, I will do. And she went down to the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and laid down. It came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and he turned himself: and, behold, there was a woman lying at his feet. [He probably felt a little peculiar, and suddenly he discovers a woman lying at his feet.] And he said, Who are you? And she answered, I'm Ruth your handmaid: spread therefore your skirt over your handmaid; for you are a near kinsman (3:1-9).

"You are a gaal?"

Now let's go back to Deuteronomy, twenty five and look at the law concerning the obligation of the gaal to the dead brother. Verse five, Deuteronomy, twenty five, "If brothers dwell together and one of them die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry unto a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her as his wife, and perform the duty of the husband's brother unto her. It shall be that the first born that she bears, shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead: that his name is not put out of Israel. And if a man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders and say, My husband's brother refuses to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, and he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother. Then the elders of the city shall call him, and shall speak unto him, and if he sticks by it and says, I don't want her, then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the

presence of the elders, and shall loose his sandal off of his foot, and spit in his face. And shall answer and say, so shall it be done unto the man that will not build up his brother's house, and his name will be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his sandal loosed". So it was just the law, they wanted to keep the inheritances in the family. Keep a family name alive, and thus it was the responsibility of the brother to take her as a wife.

Now you remember in the new testament, when the Sadducees were seeking to sort of ridicule the idea of resurrection, and they came to Jesus, and they made up a hypothetical case, in order that they might show that the resurrection could have some real problems. They said, "There was a certain man who married a wife, and he died without any children. His brother took her as his wife, and he died without any children. The next brother took her, and he died without any children, until finally, all seven brothers had married this gal, and the last one died without any children. Now in the resurrection, whose wife is she gonna be?" You know, they were making up this hypothetical case that makes the resurrection a time of great confusion and all. Jesus said, "You do err. Because you don't really know the scriptures. You don't know about the resurrection. For the resurrection will be as the angels, who neither marry, nor are given in marriage". Then He went on to show that there is a resurrection. "For God said, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He's not the God of the dead, but of the living." They didn't have any answer for that one! But they were referring to this Jewish law.

So basically what Ruth is saying to Boaz is, "Fulfill the obligation of a, for your dead brother, Elimelech, and raise up a son to carry on the name, the family name. That the family name not be lost in Israel". So she's actually proposing marriage, which, was something very exciting to Boaz! He is already in love with her, he's already attracted to her, and he was amazed that she would even be interested in him, because he was an older man, and probably the most eligible bachelor in all of Bethlehem! He probably been???, had been invited by many mothers to dinner and all, that they might show off their daughters, you know. But, he was really attracted to Ruth. So when she had made this proposal...

He said, Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter: for you have shown more kindness at the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as you did not follow after young men, ["You didn't go out after some of these young guys who were either rich, or poor."] And now, my daughter, don't fear; for I will do unto you all that you require: for everyone in the city of my people knows that you are a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am a near kinsman: however there is a kinsman who is near than I. So you tarry here tonight, and it shall be in the morning, [that if he does not perform unto you the part of the kinsman], alright; If he will perform unto you the part of the kinsman, fine. Let him do the kinsman's part. But if he will not do the part of the kinsman to you, then I will do the part of the kinsman to you, as the Lord liveth: lie down until morning. And so she lay at his feet until morning: and she rose up before one could know one another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came to this floor. And he said, Bring your veil that you had on you, and hold it. And so she held it, and he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city. She came unto her mother in law, knocked on the door, and she said, Who are you, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. And she said, These six measures of barley he gave to me; for he said, Do not go home empty to your mother in law. Then she said, Sit still, my daughter, until we know how the matter will fall: for this man will not rest, until he has taken care of everything today (3:10-18).

So old wise Naomi. She knew what was going on! She knew that Boaz was interested extremely in Ruth.

Chapter 4

So Boaz went to the gate, and sat down there: and, behold, the kinsman the one that Boaz was speaking about came by; and he said, Hi, come on over for a minute! And so the guy came over to sit down. And he took ten men of the city, the elders of the city, and he said, Now why don't you guys sit down here. And so they sat down. And he said to the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, is selling a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: And I thought to advertise you, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If you redeem it, redeem it: but if you will not

redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside you; and I am after you. And he said, I will redeem it. [I imagine Boaz's heart sunk.] Then said Boaz, Now the day that you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must buy it of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead on his inheritance. And the kinsman said, Oh, I can't redeem that for myself, my wife will never go for that, I'll mar my own inheritance: ["I mean, my family will be just a mess if I do that!"] and he said, Redeem it for yourself; for I cannot redeem it. Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, to confirm all things; a man took off his sandal, and he gave it to his neighbour: and that was a testimony in Israel. So the kinsman said to Boaz, But it for yourself. And he drew off his sandal. And Boaz said to the elders, and to all the people, You are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, [the son, the hand] of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I have 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, from the gate of his place: and you are witnesses this day. And all the people said, We are witnesses. So the Lord make [And so, then they, they pronounced sort of a blessing, "The Lord make",] the woman that is come unto your house like Rachel and like Leah, [He's from the tribe of Judah, and of course Rachel and Leah were the two mothers of the tribe of Judah, the wives of Jacob.] which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem (4:1-11):

The whole nation of Israel sprung from these two. But then he said...

Let your house be like the house of Pharez, [Now I told you about Tamar earlier in Judah, and this affair.] who Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman (4:12).

Recognizing that the same kind of a thing took place with Judah, and Tamar. That is, taking the daughter of the dead son, and she, raising up Pharez, and from Pharez, the line came unto David. so, which of course ultimately came down to Jesus.

So Boaz took Ruth, she was his wife: and he went in unto her, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. And the women said to Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, which has not left you without a redeemer, a kinsman-redeemer, a gaal, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto you a restorer of your life, a nourisher in your old age: for your daughter in law, which loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him. And Naomi took the child, laid it in her bosom, and became a nurse unto it. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: [Which means, "worshiper".] and he is the father of Jesse, who was the father of David. So these are the generations of Pharez: [Pharez was of course born of Tamar, and Judah.] Pharez begat Hezron, Hezron begat Ram, Ram begat Amminadab, And Amminadab begat Nahshon, Nahshon begat Salmon, Salmon begat Boaz, Boaz begat Obed, And Obed begat Jesse, Jesse begat David (4:13-22).

So you have the genealogies from Judah, down to David. These same genealogies are mentioned in Matthew's gospel, and so Ruth actually is mentioned in the gospel of Matthew, as one of the descendants in the line of Joseph. Showing that Jesus was a rightful heir to the throne of David.

Now this business of kinsman-redeemer. There was the law in Israel that if you were poor, and you sold your property, you had to sell your property, you had to take a mortgage on it. If you sold a house that was within a city limit, within the walls of a city, you had one year's time in which you could redeem that house back. You could buy it back within a year's time. If you did not buy it back within a year's time, it remained with the new owner for ever. If you sold your field, then a family member could come and redeem the field back. They could pay whatever the price was of the field. The field had to come back in the fiftieth year. Everything reverted back to the original ownership in the fiftieth year. So it all, the fiftieth year, all came back, original owner, came back to the family. That way God perpetuated the inheritance in the land of the various families and tribes. But, if you sold, you needed money, and you were desperate, you were poor, you sold the field, a family member could come and redeem the field back. He was called the gaal by paying the full price for the field. He was the kinsman-redeemer.

The same was true if you sold yourself as a slave. You could only be sold as a slave for six years, the seventh year you had to be set free. But a person needing money would often sell his services. "I'll just become your slave." The kinsman-redeemer though, could buy you back from slavery. They could come

along and say, "Oh I can't stand seeing you like that!", and they could purchase you from your slavery.

Now the world originally belonged to God. He created it. God gave the world to man, when He placed Adam on the earth, He said, "Have dominion over the earth, over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, over every moving and creeping thing, for I have given it unto you." "Your possession, enjoy it!" Adam, in turn, forfeited the earth over to Satan. So that, in reality, it is wrong to blame God for the tragedies, for death, for the calamities that happen to us on this earth.

We sing, "This is my Father's world". That's only true in a secondary sense. In a primary sense, this world belongs to Satan tonight. He is the prince of this world. Jesus called him that three times. He is the god of this world. Paul called him that. The world is under the power of darkness, the world is under the power of Satan. Satan is ruling in this world, except in those lives who have committed themselves to the rulership of Jesus Christ. But Satan is ruling.

Now the purpose of Jesus coming to the earth, was to redeem the world back to God. He said, "I've come to seek and to save, that which was lost". That which was lost from God, because He gave it to man; that which was lost from man, because he turned it over to Satan. Jesus came to redeem the world back to God, by paying the full price, which was His death on the cross. The shedding of His blood was the price for this world.

So throughout the new testament, you find the word, "redemption", but you always find it relating to the blood of Jesus Christ. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins", Ephesians, chapter one. All the way thorough, you're reading of redemption, through the blood of Jesus Christ. He's talking about the redemption of this world, that Jesus paid the price to redeem this world from the power of Satan.

Now, though He paid the price, He has not yet taken possession. That's the whole problem today! The world in a technical sense belongs to Jesus, however He has not yet come to claim that which is His. That's what we're praying for, that's what we're longing for, that's what we're prying for when we say, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in this earth, even as it is in heaven". Lord come, and set up your kingdom on this world, throw Satan out! We want to see a world that's filled with righteousness, we want a world that's filled with love, we want a world that's filled with peace. It can't happen as long as Satan's ruling.

I don't care how much you march, and how much you meditate, or whatever, for peace, it's not gonna happen until Jesus comes and establishes His kingdom upon the earth! I don't care about how much you talk about love, or write about love, or draw hearts! It's not gonna happen until Jesus comes, and establishes His kingdom of love! We long for it! We long for it! How I wish that man could live together in peace! How we wish that we could live together in love. How we, you know, we see people parading, and carrying placards and all, and I agree with them. But, I am enough of a pessimist, and a realist to know that it's not going to happen as long as sin, and Satan are ruling in this world. It's not gonna happen until we start living in full obedience to Jesus Christ. It's just a pipe dream in the minds of man! It cannot become a reality while Satan is ruling.

Now Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, to bring God's kingdom, to purchase the earth. Satan took Him up to a high mountain, he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory, and he said, "Look I'll give you all of these if you'll bow down and worship me!" Jesus came to pay the full price, which was His death on the cross. Satan is saying, "You don't have to take the cross, you can escape the painful cross. I'll give it to you right now, if you'll just worship me!" Immediate fulfillment without the cross.

Satan says the same thing to you today. "You can have immediate fulfillment without the cross. You don't have to deny yourself, and deny your cross. You can have immediate fulfillment, just here it is. It's in the bottle, it's in the pill, it's in this sexual relationship. It's in this, that or the other, and he is holding out these things, and saying to you, lying to you, and deceiving you saying, "Hey you can have it right now. You don't have to deny yourself. You don't have to take the path of the cross. God's path is a painful path, it's a hard path. The path of self-denial, it's something we don't want. Yet, God says this is the path by which you'll find real fulfillment, "You seek to save your life, you're gonna lose it, but if you'll lose your life for

Christ's sake, you'll find it". But Satan says, "No that's not true. You don't have to lose your life for Christ's sake, you can have it right now! Just follow me, worship me, and I'll give it to you right now".

Jesus did not fall prey to Satan's temptation, but said, "It is also, it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve". Finally He said, "Just get behind me Satan". He went the path, God's path to the cross, and He paid the price of redemption. He shed His blood, there on the cross, to redeem you and I, from our sins, and to redeem this world from Satan's power.

Now, in Hebrews it says that, "God has put all things under Jesus, but we do not yet see all things under Him". In other words, the world is still being controlled by Satan. Men's lives are still being controlled by the powers of darkness. The day is coming when the redemption will be complete. Paul tells us in Romans, eight, "We and all of creation, are groaning and travailing to this present moment, as we're waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, to wit, the redemption of our bodies".

I have a redeemed spirit, but I'm living in an unredeemed body, I'm living in an unredeemed world, as far as, Christ hasn't yet taken full control. I long for that day! I long for the day when I'll no longer have the problems with my flesh, I'll no longer be struggling against the desires of my flesh, when I'll be in my new body, my redeemed body, and I won't be tempted or, or pushed towards the fulfilling of the lusts and the desires of my flesh. So, I groan, I travail, I long for that day, the redemption of my body, and this whole world is longing for the day of redemption.

In the book of Revelation, we see its fulfillment, when, "Jesus takes the scroll", the title deed of the earth, "out of the right hand of the Father sitting upon the throne". In chapter five, "and all of heaven begins to rejoice, and we the church, sing our song, "Worthy is the Lamb to take the scroll, and loose the seals, for He was slain, and has redeemed us by His blood. Out of every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, and has made us unto our God, kings, and priests". We're gonna reign with Him on the earth. We're gonna come back, and we're gonna see the earth as God created it, as God intended it, we're gonna see the glory of God covering the earth, as the waters cover the sea! But that day is yet future. We long for it, we are looking for it, we are praying for it, and we are working towards that end.

But don't blame God for death. Don't blame God for the atrocities. Don't blame God for the famines. Don't blame God for the children that are born with handicaps. It's a world that is filled with sin, and governed by Satan, and that is the reason why we have these malformities, and that is the reason why things are not in harmony and in order. One day they will be.

When Jesus reigns, what does it say? "They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. They'll study war no more." Wars will cease. "When Jesus comes", it says, "the lame will be leaping for joy, the blind will behold the glory of God and the dumb will be singing His praises!" There won't be handicaps, there won't be sickness, there won't be suffering. There won't be pain. But we will live together in a kingdom of peace and love, ruled over by Jesus Christ, as Satan is bound and placed into the Abussofor a thousand years. We will live, and reign with Him upon the earth, in that glorious kingdom age.

That's the hope of the child of God, because our Kinsman-Redeemer was so in love with His bride, that He purchased the field, in order that He might take His bride out of it. So Jesus purchased the world to receive you as His bride, that you might be a part of His eternal kingdom. He's in love with you. He loves you so much, He gave His life to redeem you from the corruption of sin, and from the hopelessness of a life that was governed by Satan's power. He set us free, that we might serve Him, and love Him, and live with Him, in His kingdom, in a kingdom that shall know no end. Of the increase of His righteousness, and peace, there shall be no end! For ever, and ever! Oh praise God! What a glorious redemption is ours through Jesus Christ!

This is a beautiful story of redemption, the story of Ruth. It gives you a, a picture, a classic picture of what redemption is all about. The redeeming of the field to get the bride, who Boaz loved. Even as the kingdom of God is like a treasure hid in a field, who, when a man discovers it, for the joy thereof. Goes out and sells everything he has, so that he can buy the field, and obtain the treasure. So Jesus gave all He had, His life, to purchase this world, that He could take you, His church, His treasure out of it, to be His own. God bless you.

Father, we thank You tonight for the glorious truths of Your word. We thank You for the marvelous love of Jesus, for us, how He gave Himself, how He shed His blood, that He might redeem us from our hopeless state of sin. To make us children of God. Lord bless, we pray, your bride, your people. As we go out into this world, still marred by sin, may we shine forth as lights in a dark place, bringing hope to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

May the Lord be with you, bless you, and give you a beautiful week, as you walk with Jesus Christ.