



LESSON TEN

Boaz and Ruth Typifying Christ and the Church

Scripture Reading:

Ruth 4:1-22

- 4:1** Then Boaz went up to the gate and sat there. And just then the kinsman of whom Boaz had spoken came by. And Boaz said, Turn aside *and* sit here, friend. And he turned aside and sat down.
- 4:2** And he took ten men from among the elders of the city and said, Sit here. And they sat down.
- 4:3** And he said to the kinsman, Naomi, who has returned from the country of Moab, has put up for sale the portion of the field that belonged to our brother Elimelech.
- 4:4** So I thought that I should disclose *this* to you and say, Buy *it* in the presence of those sitting *here* and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you can redeem *it*, redeem *it*; but if you cannot redeem *it*, tell me so that I will know; for there is no one to redeem *it* ahead of you, and I am after you. And he said, I will redeem *it*.
- 4:5** Then Boaz said, On the day you buy the field from Naomi's hand, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead man, in order to raise up the dead man's name upon his inheritance.
- 4:6** And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, or else I will mar my own inheritance. You redeem for yourself what I should redeem, for I cannot redeem *it*.
- 4:7** Now such was *the custom* formerly in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging that to establish any matter a man would draw off his sandal and give *it* to his neighbor; this was *the way of attesting it* in Israel.
- 4:8** So when the kinsman said to Boaz, Buy it for yourself, he drew off his sandal.
- 4:9** And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, You are witnesses today, that I buy from Naomi's hand all that was Elimelech's and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's.
- 4:10** Furthermore Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I acquire as my own wife so that I may raise up the dead man's name upon his inheritance and the dead man's name may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. You are witnesses today.
- 4:11** And all the people who were in the gate and the elders said, *We are* witnesses. May Jehovah make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and like Leah, the two who built the house of Israel. And prosper in Ephrathah, and gain a name in Bethlehem.
- 4:12** And may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the seed that Jehovah gives you by this young woman.
- 4:13** So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife; and he went in unto her, and Jehovah made her conceive; and she bore a son.
- 4:14** And the women said to Naomi, Blessed be Jehovah, who has not left you today without a kinsman; and may his name be famous in Israel.
- 4:15** And he will be to you as a restorer of life and a sustainer in your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you *and* is better to you than seven sons, has borne him.
- 4:16** And Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and she became his nurse.
- 4:17** And the women neighbors gave him a name, saying, A son has been born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.
- 4:18** Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez begot Hezron,
- 4:19** And Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab,
- 4:20** And Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon,
- 4:21** And Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed,
- 4:22** And Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

QUESTIONS:

Section 1:

1. How did God in his economy repair the line between God and man?
2. What is the first aspect of Ruth's reward?
3. What is the second aspect of Ruth's reward? How does this apply to us?

Section 2

1. What is the third aspect of Ruth's reward?
2. What is the fourth aspect of Ruth's reward? How does this apply to us?
3. What are the two aspects of Boaz typifying Christ?

Section 3

1. What aspect of Ruth is typifying our old man?
2. What does our old man consist of? Explain what happened to our old man when Christ died on the cross.
3. What aspect of Ruth is a type of church? How does this relate to us?

----- [SECTION 1] -----

We have seen that Ruth made a choice for her goal and that she exercised her right to enjoy the rich land. Under the prodding of Naomi, Ruth sought for a resting place, and finally she received a reward, a gain, for God's economy. A real seeker after God, Ruth eventually gained what she sought after. She chose her goal, she exercised her right, and she sought for a husband and a home as a resting place.

I. GAINING A REDEEMING HUSBAND

According to chapter four, there are four aspects of Ruth's reward. First, in verses 10 through 13 she gained a redeeming husband (typifying Christ as the redeeming Husband to the believers—Rom. 7:4). Ruth's gaining of such a husband was witnessed and blessed by the people and the elders in the gate (Ruth 4:11-12), and it was also blessed by God (v. 13b).

We need to be impressed with the fact that Ruth's reward was for God's economy. Man was created by God with a purpose according to His eternal economy. This economy is not a common plan or merely a small arrangement. In the universe the divine and eternal economy is second only to God Himself. According to His economy God created the heavens, the earth, and man. But God's enemy came in to attempt to break the line that joins man to God and God to man. In Genesis 3 Satan cut this line, but eventually Christ as the promised seed of the woman (v. 15) came to repair the line by redeeming man back to God.

In the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, there were not many on earth who had linked themselves to God. At the time of Ruth the line between God and man was very thin. It was thin to such an extent that it consisted mainly of two persons, a couple—Boaz and Ruth. This couple was brought together in a marvelous and sovereign way. Although Boaz was born an Israelite and Ruth was born in Moab, an incestuous country, Ruth was brought to the good land, even to Bethlehem, the city of David.

Ruth had the right to glean from many different fields, but she went to Boaz's field. When Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, learned that Ruth had gleaned in Boaz's field, she was very happy. Desiring to find a resting place for Ruth, Naomi

instructed her about what to do (3:2-4). Ruth followed Naomi's direction, and she and Boaz were brought into a courtship. When they were at the threshing floor, she applied to be his wife. He said to her, "All that you say, I will do for you; for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman. And now it is true that I am a kinsman, yet there is a kinsman closer than I. Stay for the night; and in the morning if he will do the kinsman's duty, fine; let him do it. But if he is not willing to do the kinsman's duty for you, I will do it for you, as Jehovah lives" (vv. 11-13). In a very kind way Boaz was indicating that he would act in accordance with God's ordinances (Lev. 25:25; Deut. 25:5-10). Their courtship led to their marriage. Through that marriage Ruth, a Moabite widow, gained the holy citizens' citizenship, becoming one among God's elect.

The crucial point here is that, as part of her reward for God's economy, Ruth gained a redeeming husband, who typifies Christ as the redeeming Husband to the believers. Only Christ can be both our Husband and our Redeemer. Before we were saved, we were in trouble and could not get out of trouble. Now as believers in Christ, we have a Husband who is our eternal, present, and daily Redeemer, rescuing us, saving us, delivering us, from all our troubles. What a gain this is!

II. REDEEMED FROM THE INDEBTEDNESS OF THE DEAD HUSBAND

In addition to gaining a redeeming husband, Ruth was redeemed from the indebtedness of the dead husband (Ruth 4:1-9). This typifies being redeemed from the sin of the believers' old man. Ruth's dead husband had sold his field, and the indebtedness of that transaction had fallen upon her in the marriage union and needed to be redeemed. Boaz said to the kinsman who was closer than he, "On the day you buy the field from Naomi's hand, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead man, in order to raise up the dead man's name upon his inheritance" (v. 5). That kinsman replied, "I cannot redeem it for myself, or else it will mar my own inheritance. Redeem for yourself what I should redeem, for I cannot redeem it" (v. 6). Boaz did so, redeeming Ruth from her indebtedness.

Our Husband, Christ, is not merely capable; He is almighty. He has redeemed us from the indebtedness of our dead husband. According to Romans 7 the dead husband, our old husband, is our old man. God created us to be His wife, but we rebelled against Him. We gave Him up and assumed the position of the husband for ourselves. Our sinful husband encumbered us with many debts. But on the day we married Christ, we received a Husband who is our almighty, omnipotent Redeemer. We all need Christ to be such a Husband to us. Having Him as our Husband, we should come to Him and simply say, "Lord Jesus, I need You."

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III. BECOMING A CRUCIAL ANCESTOR IN THE GENEALOGY TO BRING IN THE ROYAL HOUSE OF DAVID FOR THE PRODUCING OF CHRIST

Another aspect of Ruth's reward is that she became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy to bring in the royal house of David for the producing of Christ (Ruth 4:13b-22; Matt. 1:5-16). This indicates that she had an all-inclusive and all-extensive gain with the position and capacity to bring Christ into the human race. She is thus a great link in the chain that is bringing Christ to every corner of the earth. We all are indebted to Ruth, for without her Christ could not have reached us. But wherever we may be on earth, Christ has reached us through Ruth.

The burden of this ministry is to produce Christ in the believers. This means that the goal of this ministry is not to teach you to be humble or merely to glorify God in your behavior. Rather, the goal of this ministry is to "inject" you with Christ, to impart Christ as an "antibiotic" to you. The more we receive such an injection, the more we will be able to sing, "Christ liveth in me, / Christ liveth in me; / Oh! what a salvation this, / That Christ liveth in me" (*Hymns*, #507). On the one hand, this injection of Christ will kill our old man; on the other hand, it will make us producers of Christ, those who minister Christ to others.

IV. TO CONTINUE THE LINE OF THE GOD-CREATED HUMANITY FOR THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

Ruth not only became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy for the producing of Christ, but she also continued the line of the God-created humanity for the incarnation of Christ (Matt. 1:5-16). The incarnation of Christ was a matter of His being brought out of eternity into time with His divinity. In a practical way, this needs to take place in our daily living. Every day of our Christian life should be a continuation of Christ's incarnation, with Christ being brought forth in order to be born into others through our ministering Christ to them. In order for this to happen, we all need to speak for Christ, to speak forth Christ, and even speak Christ to others. Ministering Christ in this way will surely change us.

V. FIRST SAMUEL TO MALACHI BEING A LONG RECORD OF THE GENERATIONS FOR THE PROLONGED LINE OF HUMANITY FOR CHRIST'S INCARNATION

First Samuel to Malachi is a long record of the generations for the prolonged line of humanity for Christ's incarnation (Matt. 1:17).

VI. BOAZ TYPIFYING CHRIST

A. Two Prominent Persons Typifying Christ

At the beginning and at the end of the portion of Israel's history from Joshua to Ruth are two prominent persons typifying Christ (Josh. 1:1; Ruth 4:21). These persons are Joshua and Boaz, who signify two aspects of one person.

1. Joshua at the Beginning

At the beginning Joshua typifies Christ in bringing God's chosen people into God's ordained blessings (Josh. 1:2-4; Eph. 1:3-14). As typified by Joshua, Christ has brought us into the good land, has taken possession of the land for us, and has allotted the land to us as our inheritance for our enjoyment. Christ has gained the good land for us, and eventually He is the good land for us to enjoy.

2. Boaz at the End

At the end Boaz typifies Christ in other aspects. In particular, he typifies Christ as our Husband for our satisfaction.

B. The Aspects in Which Boaz Typifies Christ

Boaz typifies Christ in two aspects.

1. As a Man Rich in Wealth and Generous in Giving

As a man, rich in wealth and generous in giving (Ruth 2:1, 14-16; 3:15), Boaz typifies Christ, whose divine riches are unsearchable and who takes care of God's needy people with His bountiful supply (Eph. 3:8; 2 Cor. 12:9; Phil. 1:19b).

Sadly, in their experience many of today's Christians do not have Christ in His riches, and they do not have Him as the Husband. In the church we have Christ as our riches, and we also have Him as our Husband. In Ephesians Paul speaks of the unsearchable riches of Christ (3:8). He speaks also of Christ as the Husband of the church (5:23-32). In Revelation our Husband is unveiled as the Lamb, the redeeming God (21:2, 9). The Bible reveals, therefore, that Christ with His unsearchable riches is our Husband. In the last two chapters of the Bible, we see that Christ, the Lamb, is our Husband and that we, the believers in Christ, are the Lamb's wife.

2. As a Kinsman of Mahlon

As a kinsman of Mahlon, the dead husband of Ruth, who redeemed the lost right of Mahlon's property and took Mahlon's widow, Ruth, as his wife for the producing of the needed heirs (Ruth 4:9-10, 13), Boaz typifies Christ in redeeming the church and making the church His counterpart for His increase (Eph. 5:23-32; John 3:29-30).

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VII. RUTH TYPIFYING THE CHURCH

A. Ruth, Being a Woman in Adam in God's Creation and a Moabitess in Man's Fall, Thus Becoming an Old Man with These Two Aspects

Ruth, being a woman in Adam in God's creation and a Moabitess in man's fall, thus becoming an old man with these two aspects, typifies the

church, before her salvation, as men in God's creation and sinners in man's fall being "our old man" (Rom. 6:6). Ruth became a Moabitess not *because* of man's fall but *in* man's fall. The Moabites, an incestuous people, typify all sinners, because all sinners were born of incest (John 8:41, 44a). This means that Ruth was not the only one with an incestuous background. We all have the same background. Adam and Eve joined themselves to Satan; that is, they married Satan. As human beings created by God, we should have married our Creator, taking Him as our Husband (Isa. 54:5), but instead we married a fellow creature, Satan. This is incest.

B. Ruth, Being a Widow Redeemed by Boaz, Who Cleared the Indebtedness of Her Dead Husband for the Recovery of the Lost Right of Her Dead Husband's Property

Ruth, being the widow of the dead husband, redeemed by Boaz, who cleared the indebtedness of her dead husband for the recovery of the lost right of her dead husband's property, typifies the church with her old man as her crucified husband (Rom. 7:4a) redeemed by Christ, who cleared away her old man's sin for the recovery of the lost right of her fallen natural man created by God.

We need to realize that the believers' old man consists of a natural part created by God and a fallen part corrupted by sin. In God's creation we are good—we are "doves"; but in the fallen Adam we are evil—we are "serpents." The natural part is good and desires to do what is good, whereas the fallen part practices what is evil (Rom. 7:19, 21). From this we see that in the old man typified by Ruth, we have two natures and that one of these natures is good and the other is evil. The evil nature, acting with the good one, assumed to be the husband, and together they became the old man, our incestuous husband.

Our old man has been crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6). Christ's crucifixion destroyed the fallen part of our old man, but it redeemed the created part. Christ did not redeem the fallen part of our old man; on the contrary, He terminated it. However, He redeemed our created part in order to recover us. Therefore, Christ's death on the cross terminated the fallen part of our old man and redeemed the part created by God.

C. Ruth, after Being Redeemed by Boaz, Becoming a New Wife to Him

Ruth, after being redeemed by Boaz, becoming a new wife to him typifies the church, after being saved, through the regeneration of the church's natural man, becoming the counterpart of Christ (Rom. 7:4b). Just as the redeemed Ruth became a new wife to Boaz, so the saved and regenerated church has become His new wife, His counterpart, in the organic union with Him.

D. Ruth Being United with Boaz

Ruth being united to Boaz typifies the Gentile sinners being attached to Christ that they may partake of the inheritance of God's promise (Eph. 3:6).

The more we consider these aspects of Ruth as a type of the church, the more we can know our status as believers in Christ today. First, we were created by God. Second, we became fallen persons. Third, we were redeemed by Christ. Fourth, we were regenerated by the pneumatic Christ as the life-giving Spirit. Thus, we may summarize our status in four words: created, fallen, redeemed, and regenerated.

Let us now consider further how, in typology, the various aspects of Ruth's situation apply to us today. In God's creation Ruth was good, but she became fallen in Adam. When she turned to Israel, she believed in the saving God and was redeemed. Then, having become a new person, she married Boaz and became his new wife.

As signified by the type of Ruth and her dead husband, Ruth's natural part created by God and her fallen part cooperated to assume to be the husband, forsaking God as the Husband. This husband was the main part of her old man, which was composed of her God-created part and her fallen part. The old man as the illegal husband made many mistakes and incurred a great deal of debt, thereby selling himself and losing his right as a God-created being because of his sins. After Ruth's husband died, she was not only a widow but was also in a condition of indebtedness. The only way out of this condition was to be united in marriage to the proper person. When Ruth married Boaz, she was redeemed from her indebtedness, and she became his new wife for the producing of the needed heirs.

This is a picture of our situation today. Christ, our Husband, died to redeem us and to clear the indebtedness caused by the sins of our old man. Then in resurrection He, as the life-giving Spirit, regenerated us to make us, as created, fallen, and redeemed persons, a new creation married to Him. Now, in the organic union between Christ and us, we can bring forth Christ and spread Christ for His increase.

At this juncture, I would ask you to note the following five matters related to Ruth typifying the church. I hope that these matters will help us to grasp the intrinsic significance of Ruth as a type of the church.

1) The believers' old man is composed of two parts: the natural part created by God and the fallen part corrupted by sin. This old man of ours has been crucified with Christ. This crucifixion of Christ has redeemed our natural created part and destroyed our fallen part and cleared our sin caused by this fallen part.

2) Our natural man was created by God to be God's counterpart taking God as our Husband and Head, but in our fall our natural man put God aside and made himself our husband and head, thus becoming the main part of our old man.

3) After being redeemed and regenerated, our natural man, not including our fallen part, becomes our new man and takes Christ as our new Husband in the divine organic union with Him (Rom. 7:4).

4) Ruth's old husband typifies our fallen part of our old man, and his indebtedness typifies our sin caused by our fallen part. Ruth herself typifies our natural man created by God and redeemed and regenerated to be the new man as the counterpart of Christ.

5) The first kinsman of Ruth's husband typifies our natural man who cannot and will not redeem us from the indebtedness (sin) of our old man. Boaz, the second kinsman of Ruth's husband, typifies Christ, who partook of blood and flesh (Heb. 2:14) to be our Kinsman and who can redeem us from our sin, recover the lost right of our natural man in God's creation, be our new Husband in His divine organic union with us, and take us for His counterpart for His increase.

Some may say that Christ has redeemed our fallen man, but this kind of speaking is ambiguous. Actually, Christ will not redeem anything that is fallen. Within fallen man is a part that was created by God and that can still be used by Him. Christ redeemed this God-created part of the old man, destroying the fallen part and clearing away the sin caused by this fallen part. Therefore, with respect to the believers' old man, Christ's crucifixion accomplished three things. It redeemed the God-created part of our being, it destroyed the fallen part of our being, and it cleared away our sin, which was caused by this fallen part.

Christ can be regarded as our Kinsman because He partook of blood and flesh to be a man. However, as our Kinsman He is not as close to us as our self, our natural man—our first kinsman. The natural man created by God is the first kinsman, and Christ is the second. Because the first kinsman, typified by Ruth's closest kinsman, did not have the capacity to redeem us, Christ came as the second one to redeem us, to recover our lost birthright, to become our new Husband in the divine organic union, and to take us for His counterpart for His increase.