

Handfuls On Purpose

Studies in the Book of Ruth

Chapter Nineteen

The Shoeless Redeemer

⁷ 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. ⁸ Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee. So he drew off his shoe. ⁹ 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. ¹¹ 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, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou {get thee riches, or, power} worthily in Ephratah, and be famous {proclaim thy name} in Bethlehem: ¹² And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman" (Ruth 4:7-12).

The word "kinsman" (Ruth 4:1) is from the Hebrew word *ga'al* (gaw-al'). It is a broad term covering a wide range of responsibilities. The "kinsman redeemer" had three basic obligations.

1. If poverty had compelled his brother (or family member) to sell his land or himself to be someone's bondsman, the kinsman was morally obligated (if he had the ability to do so) to buy back the land and/or pay the price to free his brother/relative from slavery.
2. The "kinsman" was also morally obligated to avenge the murder of his brother.
3. Lastly, if he was able, he was held responsible to marry his dead brother's wife and raise up a successor to his brother's name if that brother died without leaving a son. In the case of Ruth and Naomi, this was true of both Elimelech and Mahlon (Ruth's dead husband).

If he was able to marry his brother's wife, but refused to raise up a successor to his brother's name, the Law had specific instructions about what the widow should do. In the case of the unnamed "kinsman," it was not that he would not, but that he could not redeem Ruth.

⁵ If brethren dwell together {detailing they shared an inheritance}, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother {or, her next kinsman} shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. ⁶ And it shall be, *that* the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother *which is* dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. ⁷ And if the man like not 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 refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother ⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and *if* he stand *to it*, and say, I like not to take her; ⁹ Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house. ¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed" (Deuteronomy 25:5-10).

Since the unnamed Kinsman (the Law) could not redeem, he relinquishes all claims of redemption. That is what is signified by giving his shoe to Boaz (Ruth 4:7). In the physical sense, redemption involved removing a person from a place of insecurity and struggles to a place of security and rest. In the spiritual sense, redemption is the release from the bondage of sin and from the fear of the execution of the death sentence upon all sinners.

Therefore, in the spiritual sense redemption releases a person from the fear of condemnation and death (Hell) and delivers him to a place of security in Christ (“rest”) with the hope of resurrection and glorification. It is the Law that pronounces all men guilty of sin and puts us in bondage to the constant fear of death (eternal separation from God). That is why the Law cannot redeem lost souls. The Law pronounces all men guilty of sin, condemns them to death and puts them in bondage on death row awaiting the day of their execution. When Christ redeems us, it is a complete and absolute deliverance.

“And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:15).

“Christ 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:” (Galatians 3:13).

The Law could not redeem because it was the Law that cursed the sinner. When the unnamed kinsman (the Law) gives his shoe to Boaz (a type of Christ), he relinquishes all claims on the sinner, including the curse. The shoe represents the curse of the Law in the handwriting of the ordinances of the Law that testify against us.

Get this visual picture, Christ took the Law’s “shoe” (the handwriting of ordinances against the sinner) and nailed it to the Cross paying its curse (death) for all sinners (Colossians 2:14). If the believer has truly been redeemed and “born again,” his redemption (salvation) is positionally complete in Christ. All that has happened to Christ has happened to the believer positionally.

⁹ For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. ¹⁰ And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: ¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹² Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; ¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Colossians 2:9-15).

Christ presents the redeemed believer to God “holy and unblameable and unrepvable” (Colossians 1:22).

²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven. ²¹ And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled ²² In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unrepvable in his sight: ²³ If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;” (Colossians 1:20-23).

“Holy” is from the Greek word *hagios* (hag'-ee-os) referring to something or someone set apart for God. It means that Christ has presented us as Saints in the “sight” of God. “Unblameable” is from

the Greek word *amomos* (am'-o-mos), which signifies He presents the believing sinner to God morally faultless and perfectly cleansed. “Unreprovable” is from the Greek word *anegkletos* (an-eng'-klay-tos), which means Christ presents the believing sinner unaccusable before God as one who cannot be called into account for sin. The only condition (Colossians 1:23) is that the sinner continue trusting in Christ to save him. Since faith is a product of enabling grace, it is the indwelling Holy Spirit Who will enable the true “born again” believer to “continue” trusting his soul into the care of Christ.

In the redemption of Ruth, Naomi is also redeemed (Ruth 4:10). These two women together represent the Church as made up of both Jew and Gentile. Ruth was a Gentile. Naomi was a Jew. In Christ the Redeemer, the two are made one through faith and together make up the Church.

“¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; ¹² That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; ¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; ¹⁶ And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: ¹⁷ And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. ¹⁹ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; ²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; ²¹ In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: ²² In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:11-22).

Boaz was the son of Salmon and Rahab, the saved harlot of Jericho (Ruth 4:21).

“And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;” (Matthew 1:5).

The significance of this is that Jesus was born of this line. Rahab and Ruth were Gentiles. In Christ’s genealogy is both Gentile and Jew. Therefore, He is the “kinsman” of both Jew and Gentile and can redeem both equally.

“²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:” (Romans 3:21-22).

“²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. ²⁹ *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: ³⁰ Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith” (Romans 3:28-30).

That is the context of the “whosoever” of Romans 10:13.

“⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. ¹² For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:9-13).

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1. List and explain the three basic obligations of a Kinsman Redeemer.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

2. Discuss the significance of the difference between the *would not* and *could not* of the unnamed Kinsman Redeemer's ability to redeem Ruth. _____

3. Read Deuteronomy 25:5-10 and explain the reason why the unnamed nearer Kinsman took off his shoe and gave it to Boaz (Ruth 4:7-8) and why Ruth was not there and does not "spit in his face" (v 9, consider your answer to question #2 regarding the latter). _____

4. Discuss the differences between the physical aspect of redemption under the Law and the spiritual realities it typified. _____

5. When Christ redeems the believing sinner, it is a complete and absolute deliverance. Explain how the following verses relate that truth.

- Hebrews 2:15: _____
- Galatians 3:13: _____

6. Read Colossians 1:20-23 and explain the following terms as they relate to a believer's redemption.

- "Holy:" _____
- "Unblameable:" _____
- "Unreprovable:" _____

7. Read Colossians 2:9-15 and discuss the significance of the words "ye are complete in Him" as they relate to a believer's redemption in Christ Jesus. _____

8. Discuss the significance of the fact Naomi's redemption is wrapped up in Ruth's redemption as it relates to the Church as a spiritual entity. _____

9. Read Matthew 1:5, Romans 3:21-22, 28-30 and 10:9-13. Discuss the significance of the fact that Boaz was the son of Rahab (a saved Gentile) and are in the genealogy of Christ. _____

10. From the context of your above answer, discuss the "whosoever will" of Romans 10:13. _____

