

# Handfuls On Purpose

## Studies in the Book of Ruth

### Chapter Seventeen

## The Miracle of Redemption

“<sup>11</sup> And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou *art* a virtuous woman. <sup>12</sup> And now it is true that I *am thy* near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I. <sup>13</sup> Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, *that* if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman’s part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, *as* the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning. <sup>14</sup> And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor. <sup>15</sup> Also he said, Bring the vail {sheet or apron} that *thou hast* upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six *measures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city. <sup>16</sup> And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who *art* thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. <sup>17</sup> And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law. <sup>18</sup> Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day” (Ruth 3:11-18).

Have you ever considered what is necessary before something is considered a miracle? A miracle is when God supernaturally intervenes and does what man considers impossible. The more impossible something appears from the human perspective, the greater the miracle appears to be. The reality is it is no more difficult for God to do a miracle than it is for us to breathe.

“<sup>26</sup> Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, <sup>27</sup> Behold, I *am* the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me” (Jeremiah 32:26-27)?

Creation is a miracle to us because we cannot understand how something can be made from nothing. Creation is a great miracle to us simply because of its scope and magnitude. Creation is not a miracle to God. It was no more difficult or less difficult than anything else God does.

On one occasion (Joshua 10:12-13) Joshua prayed and asked God for more time to win the battle at Gibeon and time stopped for almost “one whole day.” The Sun just stayed in the same place in the sky for about 24 hours. We look at that and say, “Now that is a great miracle.”

On another occasion, Israel was leaving Egypt after 400 years of bondage, fleeing from the pursuing armies of Pharaoh (the most powerful army in the world at that time). God opened the Red Sea, dried the ground under the feet of 3,000,000 people to pass through safely only to watch as God closed the same waters upon the army of Pharaoh drowning them. We look at that and say, “Now that is a great miracle.”

When Israel came to the Promised Land after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, they came to the Jordan River, swollen and at flood stage (Joshua 3:15). When the feet of the priests stepped into the flood waters of the Jordan as God directed them to do, the waters retreated and stood in a wall 21 miles up river almost to the city of Adam (Joshua 3:15). We look at that and say, “Now that is a great miracle.”

Now let me tell you about the greatest miracle in the Bible. The greatest miracle in the Bible is the redemption of sinners fallen in sin redeemed by a Holy God. The greatest miracle ever recorded was when the Holy God of glory stepped into mankind through the womb of a woman to become a man so as to go to the Cross of Calvary and pay the wages of sin to redeem fallen mankind from the curse of death. The greatest, most incredible miracle in the Bible is the miracle of redemption.

**When we think of redemption, seldom do we think of the miraculousness of it or the cost of our redemption to God.** We talk of the Cross, of the Blood sacrifice of Jesus, of His death and resurrection, but do we really stop to think of the enormous sacrifice God made in order to accomplish our redemption? Read Psalm 49:6-7 and 9 (reading verse 8 after verse 9).

“<sup>6</sup> They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; <sup>7</sup> None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: <sup>8</sup> (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) <sup>9</sup> That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption” (Psalm 49:6-9).

If a man possessed the whole accumulative wealth of the whole earth, it would not be enough to pay the price of redemption of just one lost soul (v 6-7). Real redemption not only removes us from the condemnation of sin and fallen creation, but it restores us to the original, perfect and sinless specifications of the original creation in the Lord Jesus Christ (v 9).

The word “precious” in Psalm 49:8 is from the Hebrew word *yaqar* (yaw-kar') and refers to the appraisal of something extremely valuable. The reference is to the cost of redemption and the value God puts upon the human soul. God loves us so much He was willing to go beyond the wealth of this world to pay the price of our redemption. He was willing to give Himself for our redemption.

“Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father” (Galatians 1:4).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” (Ephesians 5:25).

“Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (I Timothy 2:6).

“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14).

**When God redeemed fallen mankind in the work of Jesus Christ, He went far beyond any miracle He had ever done before, even beyond the miracle of creation itself.**

“<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: <sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: <sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).

We read these words, but do we understand their significance? The one, only, eternal, holy, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, Creator God stepped out of the glories of heaven (the glory He created by His presence) and stepped into this fallen creation by becoming a man and putting on a body of flesh with the sole purpose of righteously paying the death sentence He put upon mankind just so people (like you and I who have rebelled against Him from day one) could be redeemed. The Creator humbled Himself before His own creation and died in their place.

We hear of that enormous overwhelming love for us and set with stoic faces and hard hearts complaining about coming to church on Sunday, or the demands on our time to serve the Lord. I think the greatest miracle of the Bible is not that God was able to redeem, but that He was willing to redeem us.

**“For the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day” (Ruth 3:18b).** From the moment of the fall of man into sin, God has been preoccupied with redemption and man’s restoration to His grace. In John 4:32-34 (the Samaritan woman), Christ had sent His disciples (all of them) into the city to buy food (4:8). When they returned, they offered Him some to which He replied, “I have to eat that ye know not of.”

“<sup>32</sup> But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. <sup>33</sup> Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat? <sup>34</sup> Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:32-34).

His disciples began to question each other about who had given Him food to eat. To which Christ answers, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.” The unfinished work was the work of redemption. He would not rest until the work of redemption was finished. Everything else was just a prelude to that.

“But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (John 5:17).

“<sup>24</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. <sup>25</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. <sup>26</sup> For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; <sup>27</sup> And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. <sup>28</sup> Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, <sup>29</sup> And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:24-29).

According to John 5:17, both the Father and the Son would never cease working until the work of redemption was finally complete. According to verses 24-29, until the work of redemption was complete, no one could pass “from death unto life” (referring to eternity as an existence).

“<sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. <sup>29</sup> Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost” (John 19:28-30).

“It is finished.” Say that out loud. The work of redemption is finished. Amen! Glory to God! Redemption is not finished in the waters of baptism. Redemption is not finished by your speaking in some ecstatic language. Redemption is not finished by your good works or by your participation in some religious ritual or ceremony. Your redemption was finished by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ and His substitutionary death on the Cross of Calvary 2,000 years ago.

“<sup>18</sup> Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; <sup>19</sup> But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: <sup>20</sup> Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, <sup>21</sup> Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God” (I Peter 1:18-21).

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**Three Requirements of a Redeemer**

1. He must be able to redeem.
2. He must be willing to redeem.
3. He must have the right to redeem.

1. Define what constitutes a miracle. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. Discuss some of the miracles discussed in this lesson and why they are considered *great* miracles. \_\_\_\_  
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3. Discuss why redemption is the greatest miracle in the Bible. \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. Explain Psalm 49:6-9 and discuss the cost of redemption. \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. Read Philippians 2:5-8 and discuss the statement, "When God redeemed fallen mankind in the work of Jesus Christ, He went far beyond any miracle He had ever done before, even beyond the miracle of creation itself." \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. Read John 4:32-34 with Ruth 3:18. According to John 4:34, what two things was Jesus preoccupied with? \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. Read John 5:17 and 24-29. Explain these verses in the light of the doctrine of redemption. \_\_\_\_\_  
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8. Read John 19:28-30. When Jesus said, "It is finished," what was finished, what does that mean and what practices of *Christianity* are excluded by that statement? \_\_\_\_\_  
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9. Explain 1 Peter 1:18-21 from the context of your answer above. \_\_\_\_\_  
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