Sunday, October 25, 2015 – New Heights Christian Church, Kent, WA – Wayne Dyrness

**Christ in the Old Testament - Part Deux**

I’m preaching today on ‘Christ in the Old Testament: Part Deux” (or two). I am excited to be preaching at New Heights once again. The last time I preached here was March **‘2009’** when I taught on the Spring Feasts. I must have made a very big impression to have been asked back so soon. ☺ And if this sermon goes really well today, I would personally like to invite each of you to come back to hear Part 3 of Christ in the Old Testament………in 2021.

Actually, I value the opportunity anytime I am asked to teach on a topic that I have studied and researched in-depth for the last 40+ years, i.e., the Study of Christ in the Old Testament.

Any Seahawk fans here? On February 2, 2014, the Seahawks won their first Super Bowl Championship, defeating Denver 43–8. The Seahawks' defense performance in 2013 was acclaimed as one of the best in the Super Bowl era. Upon arriving back in Seattle, they were greeted by almost 1 million adoring fans who celebrated their victory.

No one in Seattle was unaware of the victory and win. The event garnered the attention of every news outlet, locally and nationally.

So, imagine two guys talking about the Seahawks shortly after the Superbowl. A visitor from out-of-town approaches the two men and asks them what they are talking about. The visitor has no clue of what’s been happening. “Sea..gulls what??”

The two guys completely astonished, can’t believe he's so ignorant or unaware of the recent event. They query the visitor,

*“Are you the only one visiting Seattle who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”*

A similar event occurred shortly after the crucifixion of Jesus.

Luke 24:13-32

*13 Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven milesfrom Jerusalem. 14 They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. 15 As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; 16 but they were kept from recognizing him.*

*17 He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”*

*They stood still, their faces downcast. 18 One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”*

[It was like the Seattle visitor clueless about the ‘Hawks, *“Are you the only guy in town who hasn’t heard?”]*

*19 “What things?” he [Jesus] asked.*

*“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to* ***redeem*** *Israel.

And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”*

*25 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” 27* ***And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.***

*28 As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. 29 But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.*

*30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 2 They asked each other, “****Were not our hearts burning within us*** *while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”*

[Now there is a bible study I wish I were a part of!] **“Did not our heart burn within us?”** It's that pounding in the heart that says “I get it!” The ‘A-HA’ experience!!!

Later Jesus appears to his disciples and does the exact same thing, i.e., opens up the scriptures to them concerning Him. What “Scriptures” does Jesus refer to?

Paul encouraged Timothy (young pastor) to continue in the things he learned from scripture:

2 Tim. 3:15 *"15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”*

The scripture Paul is referring to was the Torah, prophets, and other writings.

The Torah (also known as the 1st 5 books of the bible, or Pentateuch) were the instructions from God - the basics (like the A,B,C’s). Each night they were taught and memorized.

In Acts 17:2, Paul reasoned out of scripture:

“2 As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

In Acts 18:28 Apollos used the ‘scriptures’

 “For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.”

Paul always quotes from the Torah and Old Testament books and that’s how he proved his claims to be correct and that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Messiah. If you really want to know who Jesus is, and why God sent him to be your savior, then you need to start in the Old Testament. God’s plan of redemption through Jesus is woven throughout the entire Old Testament.

**TYPOLOGY**
I’m going to use a term that some of you may be aware of, and others not. The word is ‘Typology.’

You’re probably already familiar with ‘ology’ (as used in biology, physiology, astronomy, etc.). OLOGY means ‘study of’. Typology is literally, the study of types.

A type is described in the bible like a shadow, a figure, or an exact copy.

Col. 2:16-17  16Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. [referring to Old Testament festivals/Sabbaths] **17These are a shadow** of the things that were to come; **the reality, however, is found in Christ**.

Hebr. 8:5 [ref. to High Priest] 5They serve at a **sanctuary** that **is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven**. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything **according to the pattern** shown you on the mountain."

Hebr. 10:1 **The law is only a shadow** of the good things that are coming—**not the realities themselves**. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

God uses that which is known to explain the unknown. Types in the Old Testament (persons, places, things, etc.) serve as shadow pictures to help us learn and know about the reality, i.e., Jesus.
**The Wife and her Husband**
Let me give you an example:

One sunny day, a woman is washing the dishes and hears her husband's car drive up. She hears the car door open and shut, and then footsteps. Looking out the window she sees the shadow of her husband walking up the house. She knows that the shadow is that of her husband because she is intimately involved with him and recognizes the outline.

When she sees the shadow and hears her husband’s footsteps, what does she do? Does she runs outside and embrace the shadow? Of course not! The shadow only reveals the substance. She runs out and embraces the reality, her husband. When the substance comes we forget all about the shadow and we enjoy the reality (blessings, gifts) the substance has to give.

When an object casts a shadow on the ground, it may make the object recognizable, but doesn’t provide all the detail of the object. So it with Biblical types and shadows. We may recognize some aspect of Jesus in a type or shadow, but not all the details. That’s why the Old Testament presents so many different types and shadows of Jesus. With each shadow or type we see, our understanding and appreciation of Jesus and what he has done for us grows.

In the Old Testament, the feasts, tabernacle, offerings, the lives of some people, etc. are mere shadows. They reveal some aspect of the reality and provide some insight as to what the substance is about. The substance or reality is Christ.

**A ROMANCE STORY**
How many of you love romantic stories? The movie “The Princess Bride” is one of my most favorite movies. So many great lines and characters.

Today, we are going to look at an incredible romantic story. It is found in the Old Testament book of Ruth. It’s a classic love story. ‘Girl meets Boy. Boy falls in love with Girl. They get married and they live happily ever after.’ I could stop here, but there’s so much more to the story!

As with any classic love story, the emotional appeal comes from the story itself. I will give an overview of the story, and as I do, I’ll share some faith lesson. Then we will go back and I will show you how this story is a shadow picture of Jesus.

Our story begins with a young Jewish family of four living in the ‘burbs’ outside of Jerusalem. Elimelech and his wife Naomi (means ‘pleasant or happy’), along with their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion (some versions render it as Kilion), live in the bedroom community of Bethlehem just six miles south of Jerusalem.  Famine struck the area, and Elimelech was hurting financially.

Bethlehem was a rich agricultural area (the city name means “House of Bread). The days when the Judges ruled were actually dark days for Israel; the period was characterized by the phrase *everyone did what was right in his own eyes* (Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, and 21:25) *[that sounds like a contemporary phrase, doesn’t it?]*

God specifically promised there would always be plenty in the land if Israel was obedient. Therefore, **a famine in the land** meant that Israel, as a nation, was not obedient unto the LORD (Deuteronomy 11:13-17).

Elimelech chose to leave “the promised land” and move to Moab, a pagan nation, on the other side of the Dead Sea, since he heard they had food and more opportunities.

*[Are their times in your life, when the ‘world’ looks like it has so much more to offer? Kind of like ‘the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence’ or ‘the grass is greener on the other side of the Dead Sea.’ Do you sometimes think that things would be ‘so much better’ if only you weren’t so constrained by rules or laws?]*

Elimelech moved his family from the Promised Land of Israel, and a return towards the wilderness from which God had delivered Israel hundreds of years before. These were clearly steps in the *wrong* direction.

Elimelech thought he would return back to Bethlehem after a short time, but it turned out to be 10 years. Tragically, Elimelech dies in Moab and leaves Naomi a widow with two sons. *[Sometimes we think we can move away from our problems, but find we just bring them with us. No matter where you go, you bring yourself with you - so the same problems can continue in a different place.]*

The two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, grew and took wives among the Moabite women, named Orpah and Ruth. Again, this was in direct violation of God’s command to the Israelites to not marry among the pagan nations surrounding them.

As time passed, both of Naomi’s sons died without producing any children of their own. So now there were three childless widows. To be a childless widow was the worst. Naomi had no family in Moab and no one else to help her. It was a desperate situation.

After living in Moab for 10 years, word came that there was once again food available back in Judah:

*Ruth 1:6 “When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. “*

Naomi could have stayed living in Moab for the rest of her life, but it would have continued to be a life of sadness and bitterness. She saw that God was doing good things among His people and wanted a part of it*. [If you a living a life of disobedience, return to God and his people.]*

Naomi tried to make both her daughter-in-laws stay behind and find husbands for themselves. She said in verse 13, *“It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD's hand has gone out against me!"*

*[Do you ever feel that God is against you? Do you unjustly blame God for situations you find yourself in? Sometimes we justify wrong choices because of difficult circumstances.]*

In spite of her initial disobedience, Naomi wanted to return to the Lord. *[When you are disobedient to the Lord, don’t move further away. Instead, draw closer to God. He is a good God that blesses.]*

Orpah chose to stay in Moab, but Ruth would not leave Naomi’s side. Ruth said one of the most beautiful statements that the Bible has recorded in it; *“Wherever you go, I will go: and where you lodge, I will lodge: your people shall be my people and your God my God” (1:16).*

Ruth is a gentile pagan woman. She not only made a decision to move to a new address with Naomi, but states that she was willing to leave the Moabite gods behind and follow the God of Israel. This was a conversion moment. Naomi, though having had a bitter life, had been a positive influence on Ruth. *[What about you? Do you live a life, though difficult at times, which causes others to say, “I want your God to be my God!”?]*

The last 10 years had been a bitter time for Naomi. She had lost her husband and both her sons. She barely made enough to live on. Upon arriving home back in Bethlehem, she asked the townspeople to call her Mara instead of Naomi. Mara means ‘bitterness.’ She was being honest. Her time spent ‘away from the Lord’ had not been pleasant (the meaning of Naomi’s name), but bitter (Mara).

Now back in Bethlehem, Naomi and Ruth were without money, position, or land. It just so happens to be harvest time. So, Naomi sends Ruth out to glean in the fields, picking up leftover grain from behind the harvesters.

Leviticus 19:9-10 commanded farmers in Israel that they should not completely harvest their fields. They were always to leave some behind. Also, if they happened to drop a bundle of grain, they were commanded to leave it on the ground and to not pick it up. This was one of the social assistance programs in Israel. The poor and needy could come and glean the remains for themselves.

As it just so happens, Ruth gleans in a field owned by a man named Boaz, who unknowingly is a relative of Naomi and from the clan of her late husband Elimelech. What an amazing coincidence! Was it just “so happens” or was God actually guiding her?

**Girl Meets Boy, Boy Falls In Love with Girl**

Here’s where the love story gets good!

Ruth catches Boaz’s eyes and he is very impressed. It was love at first sight. Boaz has compassion on Ruth, and offers his hand of protection. He had heard about her good character, her loyalty and faithfulness to Naomi, and her turning away from the gods of Moab to the one and only true God of Israel. He tells her to glean only in his field and instructs the male harvesters not to lay a hand on her. He also tells Ruth, “whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.” Ruth 2:9

Furthermore, in verse 2:15, Boaz gave orders to his men, "Even if she gathers among the sheaves, don't embarrass her. **16** Rather, pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her."

When Ruth arrives home with an unusually large amount of barley, her mother-in-law Naomi is shocked. She discovers that Ruth had been gathering on the farm owned by Boaz, which turns out to be a close relative.

2:20 “… "That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers."

So here we are in the love story. Ruth may be a widow after her husband died, but she had one great asset working for her, i.e., a shrewd old Jewish mother-in-law who loved her. Naomi literally sees this as a match “made in heaven.”

Naomi’s mind is percolating with ideas. On one side you have a young girl in need of a husband. On the other side, you have a kind, generous man who just so happens to be a single bachelor, childless, well respected and, if that wasn’t enough, rich!!! This is a Jewish mother-in-law’s best dream come true! The question was, how to get him to propose...

**Kinsman Redeemer**

Just what is a Kinsman Redeemer?

The word kinsman-redeemer or guardian-redeemer (as some versions show) is a legal term for someone who has the obligation to redeem a relative facing extreme hardship (Leviticus 25:25-55). When someone was widowed, it was the responsibility of a relative, an unmarried man in the family, to take her as his bride, so that she was not destitute. This was called a levirate marriage, or a kinsman marriage.

Naomi, who wants to play matchmaker, thinks this is awesome opportunity to marry off her widowed daughter-in-law.

There was one problem, though. Since Boaz, being a generation older, would not approach her (according to ancient eastern tradition), Ruth would need to make the overture for a proposal. So Naomi, being the good Jewish mother-in-law, instructs Ruth on how to follow the custom of the nation Israel.

Ruth washed herself, anointed herself with perfume, put on her best apparel so that she could lie down at the feet of Boaz and uncover his feet.  Boaz wakes up from sleep and discovers Ruth. Startled, he asks, “Who are you?”  *[I can’t help but think of ‘The Princess Bride’ when I read this].* Ruth said “I am Ruth your handmaid:  therefore spread your skirt over your handmaiden; for you are a near kinsman” (3:9).

What’s she saying is, “Marry me.” Right now, a lot of single guys here may be wishing that would happen to them. Let me assure you. It won’t! It was an ancient eastern custom.

Boaz says he is willing to be her kinsmen redeemer, but there is a closer relative that has first dibs. Boaz needs to see what he will do first. So, Boaz sends Ruth home in the morning with a lot of barley. Can’t you just imagine that her excited Jewish mother-in-law is standing by the door, anxiously awaiting.

Naomi, the matchmaker, asks, “How did it go, my daughter?” Ruth 3:16

In other words, “Are you still Ruth the Moabitess or are you the prospective future Mrs. Boaz?” Can you imagine how Ruth could have answered, “Well, I think it went pretty well…actually pretty darn well!”

The other kinsman, upon finding out that Ruth and Naomi had no inheritance, declined to take her and so she married Boaz and Boaz became her kinsman redeemer (4:6).  Boaz then bought all that Elimelech had, which was really only Elimelech’s daughter and widow, and Boaz and Ruth ended up marrying.

Ruth is mentioned directly in the genealogy of Jesus and is the great-grandmother of David and direct ancestor of our Savior, Jesus Christ. God’s promise to Abraham to found a nation from which a Savior would come was fulfilled through Ruth.

*“Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,* ***6****and Jesse the father of King David.”* (Matthew 1:5)

**TYPOLOGY/SHADOWS OF JESUS**What great faith lessons there are in the book of Ruth! But there is so much more. Woven within the story of Ruth is a marvelous picture of our redemption through Jesus Christ. Let me share some of the shadow pictures in this book.

Boaz was a wealthy land owner from Bethlehem in Judah. It is here that Boaz and Ruth had a son, Obed. Obed had a son, Jesse. Jesse had a son, David. All born in Bethlehem.

Does the name of the town Bethlehem ring any bells in your mind? Where was Jesus born?

When Joseph and Mary were about to have the Baby Jesus, they were required to go to Bethlehem, because they were of the lineage and descent of King David who came from the House of Judah.   Thus, Jesus was born in the prophesied location, even though his parents did not live there.  Micah 5:2 famously foretells the birth of Jesus in the town of Bethlehem. Bethlehem literally means “house of bread.” Jesus declares Himself to be “the bread of life” (John 6:48).

**Ruth**

Ruth is the star or main character of this book. After all, it is named after her. She wasn’t a Jew. She wasn’t an Israelite. In fact, she was a gentile, worse…a pagan Moabite, a foreigner from the barren desert of Moab. Moab was a land cursed by God, and she, as a citizen of that land, was cursed as well. The Moabites were an idolatrous nation, practiced child sacrifice, and continually the enemy of Israel.

When Israel came out of Egypt and went into the Wilderness, they asked the Moabites for food and water, which they gladly would pay for. But, the King refused assistance. Because of this, in Deuteronomy 23:3, God commands that *“No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants may enter the assembly of the Lord…”*

Yet, in Isaiah 56:3, it says, *“Let no foreigner who is bound to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.’” And a little later in the same chapter it says:*

*v. 6-7 “And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—* ***7****these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”*

Wow! So there are exceptions. The curse is only in place until a foreigner and a cursed person, alienated from and separated from God, turns to God, joins himself to the Lord, holds fast the covenant, observes the Sabbath, and does what pleases God. The curse is only in place, unless there's a turning to Him.

At first, Ruth is a picture of the ‘unsaved world.’ But when she takes the God of Israel as her God, she changes to the picture of the ‘church, the bride of Christ.’ As unsaved people, we have no part in the great promises of God. But God extends his great hand of mercy to us:

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.****22****But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— (Col 1:21-22 )*

# ***10****Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Peter 2:10)*

***37****All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away [cast out]. (John 6:37)*

>You might say: “But I am a great sinner. You don’t know the things I have done or said.” Jesus answers: “I will never cast you out.”
>You say: “But I am a [backsliding](http://biblestudyplanet.com/overcoming-backsliding-2/) sinner.” Jesus answers: “I will never cast you out.”
>You say: “But I have nothing to offer God. I’m a nobody.” Jesus answers: “I will never cast you out.”

If you [come to Christ](http://biblestudyplanet.com/the-3-steps-of-repentance/) for forgiveness of sin He will forgive you. Romans 19:13 says, *“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* And, again in 1 John 1:9, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

**The key concept in the book of Ruth is that of “Redemption.”**

To ‘redeem’ literally means to ‘buy back’. ‘Redemption’ is the act of ‘buying back’.

The property you are ‘redeeming’ once belonged to you. It was in your possession, and then someone took it, either legally (by right) or by force. You are not happy about this and you wish that it still belonged to you. The only way is for you to buy it back, ‘redeem’ it.

‘Redemption’ can also work this way: you own nothing. Because you are so poor, you accumulate debts. The only way out of the debts is to sell yourself as a slave to pay off the debts. The only way out of this slavery is if someone pays the full cost of your debts and releases you.

Let’s see how Jesus is our Kinsmen-Redeemer. To be a Kinsman-redeemer. You need to:  **Be blood related**Jesus became a man, like one of us.

*John 1:14 The Word [Jesus] became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*

[*Galatians 3:29*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+3:29&version=NIV) *“If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

[*Ephesians 3:6*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+3:6&version=NIV) *“This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”*

**Have the ability to pay**
Redemption began with death on a cross at Passover. Right before Jesus dies on the cross, he says, *“It is finished.” (John 19:30)* In the Greek, the word is *tetelestai.* This word is an accounting term. It was used in New Testament times on business documents or receipts to show that a bill had been paid in full.

So, what Jesus was saying on the cross when he uttered the word “*tetelestai* ,“ is that he has paid in full the debt you owe God for your sin. Jesus met the demands of God’s law. He had the ability to pay in full for our sins, because he was without sin.

The church is said to be bought with a price and we have become his property by the purchased price of His shed blood.  This is exactly the transaction that took place in the book of Ruth.  Boaz redeemed the property of his dead brother and also bought the woman Ruth to be his wife in the transaction.  This is what God did.

**Be willing to redeem**Boaz said he would be willing to fulfill the role of kinsmen-redeemer. Jesus was willing:

***18****No one takes it from me [my life], but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” (John 10:18)*

**Actually redeem the property and the person put into slavery**

*“He****redeem****ed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ****Jesus****, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.” (Gal 3:14)*

*For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, (Col 1:13)*

Jesus meets all of the requirements of the Kinsmen-Redeemer!

**Let’s see how the life of Boaz typifies Christ, and the life of Ruth is a shadow picture of the Church:**

> When Ruth married Boaz, she enjoyed the benefits her husband provided. All that was his was hers. The New Testament states:

*Rom 8:16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

>In Boaz, we see him as lord of the harvest, dispenser of bread, man of wealth, advocate, kinsman-redeemer, bridegroom, and life-giver. So it is with Jesus.

> In Ruth we see her as a ‘type’ of the Believer: She cast herself at his feet. 3:4-6; She claimed him as her redeemer: 3:9; She received his promise: 3:10-13; She accepted him, and he her: 4:13a; She bore fruit: 4:13b (see John 15:4)

>Ruth the gentile Moabitess and Boaz the Jew, become one in the Lord. In the New Testament: *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* (Gal 3:28)

>Boaz set his eyes upon Ruth, took notice of Ruth, and had compassion on Ruth before she even knew who he was. Even so, the Lord Jesus Christ took notice of us, loved us, and chose us before the world was made. (Eph 1:4)

>Boaz commanded his young men not to touch Ruth. So is the Lord’s hand of protection of his people, saying, *"touch not mine anointed!" (Psalm 105:15)*

>As Boaz loved Ruth, so Christ Jesus freely loved us. *"We love him, because he first loved us!" (1 John 4:19)*

>Boaz went up to the gate of the city where men transacted business and met Ruth’s nearer kinsman. He said,

*"You have* ***first claim*** *upon Elimelech’s field. If you want it buy it." So the man said, "I’ll buy it!" Then Boaz said, "If you buy the field, you must also marry Ruth, his daughter-in-law." Then the man said to Boaz, "I cannot do that, lest I mar my own inheritance. You redeem her."* So Boaz bought the field and married Ruth (vv. 9, 10, 13).

As Boaz promised to redeem Ruth, so the Son of God promised to redeem us in the covenant of grace before the world began (Heb. 7:22). But, as with Ruth, there was one who had first claim upon us. The law of God held us as its captors (Job 9:2; 25:4-6). But the law of God says, "I cannot redeem the fallen one, lest I mar my righteousness."

The law has claim upon us, but not the ability to redeem us. The law is our *‘kinsman condemner,’* but could never be our deliverer (Rom. 3:19-20). So the Lord Jesus willingly paid the price of our redemption, the price demanded by the justice of God. By his life of obedience, he magnified the law and made it honorable, and brought in everlasting righteousness for his people. By his sin-atoning death, he fully satisfied the wrath and justice of God as our Substitute.

>Ruth rejoiced in her redemption through Boaz. So do we, through Jesus:

*Eph. 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

Eph. 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Eph. 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Were we to have the time, we could spend hours more to explore the shadow pictures in the book of Ruth. We have barely scratched the surface of seeing Jesus in this wonderful love story. This is the story of every book in the bible. It is the greatest love story from God, all about Jesus.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16*

Think for a moment all that worked against such an extraordinary outcome:

> *By chance*, Ruth met Naomi’s son, Mahlon, whose family was forced by hardship to live as resident aliens in her country of Moab.
> *By chance*, she married Mahlon.
> *By chance*, her father-in-law, her brother-in-law and her husband all died in her homeland.
> *By chance*, she insisted on returning with Naomi to Israel, to live as an alien in a strange land, away from her family, relatives, religion, and homeland.
> *By chance*, she met Boaz and gained the opportunity to be redeemed and married.
> *By chance*, Boaz married her, and together they had a son who figured in the direct lineage of the very Son of God.
*>And by chance*, Boaz, Naomi, and Ruth all lived their lives, unknowingly, as shadow pictures of Jesus and the bride of Christ.

Or did all of this occur *by chance*? To the casual observer, it might seem that way. But, for those who live by faith (the same faith that Jesus Christ exercised here on earth), it becomes obvious that these miraculous events were directed by Almighty God.

Remember that God is continually at work in your life. When you encounter those difficult moments that seem overwhelming or insurmountable, don’t ask “Why Lord? Why did this have to happen to me?” Instead say, “I may not understand why, but I want your will to be done. Help me to be faithful and obedient to you. I will trust in your ability to turn any situation into one that will honor you.”

May God Bless you to be faithful to Him. You are the bride of Christ. Praise be to our Kinsmen-Redeemer, Jesus! AMEN

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