

Transforming Daily
“... *restorer of life* ...”
Ruth 4:15

Believe it or not, the book of Ruth is all about Jesus Christ. Of course the storyline in the book of Ruth includes all the players, Naomi, Elimelech, Ruth, Orpah, Mahlon, Chilion, and Boaz. However, the main person is Jesus. How so? Read the last six verses of chapter four. Contextually specific, the book of Ruth is about the Jewish custom of the kinsman redeemer or more generally referred to as redemption.

In the beginning of the story, the reader finds Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah without husbands in the “country of Moab.” Without husbands or adult sons, the women stood alone without legal provision or protection. The situation leads Naomi back home and counseling her daughters-in-law to go back to their families. Orpah does, but Ruth pleads with Naomi to allow her to accompany her mother-in-law to Bethlehem. After a beautiful recitation of love and commitment (1:16-18) they proceed on to Bethlehem, Judah. At this point the story begins to take shape and the plot thickens. Naomi has her eye on a man named Boaz. She sets Ruth’s direction after him, and basically, he chases her until she catches him.

It is the spiritual dynamic of the story that is so compelling. The story is a wonderful illustration of one who is without hope and most certainly heading for abuse and destruction and finds favor in the heart of one who has no legal or customary responsibility to provide for and protect, but does so all the same. You see, Ruth was not an Israelite, she was a Moabite. Boaz was kinsman to Naomi (more specifically Elimelech) not Ruth. In this picture, Ruth is the sinner, lost, undone, and without hope. Boaz is the savior willing to give all that he has to establish a relationship with her.

Obviously the comparisons to the spiritual regeneration of a believer are self-evident. But let me point out this one thing. Not only was this story an illustration of salvation, redemption and right relationship, but this historical event made it possible for you and I to literally experience spiritual salvation, redemption, and right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. If you read the last few verses carefully, you will see that after Boaz and Ruth married they had a son named Obed, and he had a son named Jesse, and he had a son, a little shepherd boy turned king, named David. Now if you fast forward to Matthew 1:17 (ff. Luke 3:23, 31-32) you will find that Abraham is mentioned, David is mentioned and Jesus is mentioned. Jesus is a direct descendent of Obed who was the son of Boaz and Ruth. What if Boaz and Ruth never married (it should raise goose pimples on the back of your neck, and all over your body!)?

What a wonderful God we have! What a wonderful Savior who has us! Do you know Him today? Are you rejoicing in His infinite wisdom and wonderful story of redemption (*heilsgeschichte* – “salvation history”) through Jesus Christ our restorer of life?