

Lectures on the Book of Ruth

Part 4

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[00:00:00] Ruth, chapter four.

And Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there.

And behold, he that had the right of redemption, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by.

And he said, Thou such a one, turn aside, sit down here.

And he turned aside and sat down.

And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, Sit down here. And they sat down.

And he said to him that had the right of redemption, Nehomai, who has come back out of the country of Moab, sells the allotment that was our brother Elimelech's.

And I thought I would apprise thee of it and say, Buy it in the presence of the inhabitants [00:01:02] and in the presence of the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem. But if thou wilt not redeem, tell me that I may know. For there is none to redeem besides thee.

And I am after thee.

And he said, I will redeem it. And Boaz said, On the day thou buyest the field of the hand of Nehomai, thou must buy it also of Ruth, the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

And he that had the right of redemption said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance.

Redeem thou for thyself what I should redeem, for I cannot redeem it. Now this was the custom in former time in Israel concerning redemption and concerning exchange to confirm the whole matter.

A man drew off his sandal and gave it to his neighbor, and this was the mode of attestation in Israel.

And he that had the right of redemption said to Boaz, Buy for thyself. [00:02:05] And he drew off his

sandal. And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's and all that was Caelion's and Magallon's of the hand of Nehomai. Moreover, Ruth, the Moabite, the wife of Magallon, 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. And all the people that were in the gate and the elders said, We are witnesses. Jehovah make the woman that comes into thy house like Rachel and like Leah, which too did build the house of Israel, and acquire power in Ephrathah, and make thyself a name in Bethlehem, and let thy house become like the house of Pyrrhus, whom Tamar bore to Judah, [00:03:03] of the seed which Jehovah shall give thee of this young woman. And Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife.

And he went in unto her, and Jehovah gave her conception, and she bore a son.

And the women said to Nehomai, Blessed be Jehovah, who has not left thee this day without one that has the right of redemption, and may his name be famous in Israel. And he shall be to thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age. For thy daughter-in-law, who loves thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, has born him.

And Nehomai took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse to it. And the women, her neighbors, gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Nehomai. And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Phares. [00:04:02] Phares begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amenadab, and Amenadab begot Nachshon, and Nachshon begot Salmon, and Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed, and Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

Now with the Lord's help and your prayers, we might look into this chapter, which is surely the climax of this little, wonderful book.

As we have seen before, we could read this book as a, I say reverently, as a love story. There is certainly lots to be learned in connection with love and marriage.

We could read it as a history, as a novel, which really happened.

Next time, Lord willing, if the Lord will still leave us here, we might look into the [00:05:05] prophetic application of this wonderful book.

Like Jonah, the story is in itself prophecy.

So this book, the story, is prophecy at the same time. But we might look now tonight, in a special way, to the spiritual, moral meaning for us.

And we have seen, among other passages in 1 Corinthians 10, that all these things have been written for us in the first place.

Now we have seen that the setting of this book was in the days when the judges judged, a time when everybody did, belonging to the people of God, did his own will.

And we have seen how one of them left the country because God had sent a famine. He didn't want

to humble himself to recognize maybe his faults, his mistakes, maybe to humble [00:06:03] himself like Daniel did, Daniel 9, for the sins of the whole people, though he might have been blameless himself, he didn't want it. He went to Moab.

Now we'll come back on the meaning of Moab in verse 3 again. I think it is very important to understand what Moab means. And then we have seen how this man died and his two sons, and how before these sons died, they married Moabitish wives. And how one of them, Ruth, went back with Nehemiah when she had heard, Nehemiah, that God had visited his people again and had given them bread.

And we see in Nehemiah real restoration. We see that he recognized God's hand, and we will see this also in connection with the future history of Israel and the remnant. They will recognize God's dealings and humble themselves. Then we find in chapter 2, and we have meditated upon that, how Ruth has become now the head [00:07:07] person.

And all is highlighted, as it were, around Ruth. And then Boaz is introduced already, the field of Boaz, and the many provisions he gave. Then we find what Boaz is for Ruth, a wonderful chapter, and how she was very active. And we have seen how this would give many lessons for us, for a believer, for spiritual growth.

But then in chapter 3, we have found that there was a problem. You know, there were two laws. One law said, and we will look into that now in chapter 4, in connection with the right of redemption, that Nehemiah could sell her land.

And then there was another law which said that the widow would be married to that man, to the Redeemer.

But the same law said that a Moabite or a Moabiteess could not come into the meeting [00:08:08] of the Lord, Deuteronomy 23.

So there is a conflict.

And probably during these 50 days, we have seen that Ruth was on the field of Boaz, or on the fields of Boaz, about 50 days.

And then the harvest, at least the harvest of barley and wheat, was over. And now, what was going to happen? Boaz didn't take the initiative, and we find in chapter 3 that Ruth, or better, Nehemiah took the initiative.

And then we have seen that in God's grace, the conflict can be solved.

And we have seen how Ruth was really prepared now, and prepared herself for Boaz.

So you see the difference, Ruth too, is what Boaz is for Ruth, and what she receives. [00:09:03] But there is formation, as it were, in Ruth. She's growing.

And now she is, I think, very attractive for Boaz.

Boaz loves her, surely. But there was this law which withheld him from taking steps.

And not only that, he was not the first Redeemer, he was the second, so he had to wait anyway. Though he loved her, that's clear when you read his book. And then we find in chapter 3 how she presented herself, according to the counsel of Nehemiah, to Boaz, and how Boaz acted in grace, and received her, and spoke words to her which comforted her.

She was at his feet, and we have meditated upon that, to be at the feet of the Lord Jesus. And we could say this is our place during the night of the rejection of the Lord Jesus. That's our place, at his feet.

[00:10:03] But there would come a moment that she would be at his side, and that's chapter 4. We will see in the future also, in Revelation 19, how the bride, the wife of the Lamb, will be at his side.

But during the time of his rejection, we are at his feet. In the kingdom of God we are slaves, we are subjects to the Lord. Though we love him, though we are already his bride and his wife, but during his rejection, in this night where the world is, we are at his feet.

But things will change.

And now we see in chapter 4 the public aspect.

Of course, this relation has been established now between Boaz and Ruth, that is very clear. But as to the public development of these things, the public side of it, we find that Boaz has to do something. And that is now the point where we have arrived, in chapter 4. [00:11:04] And this is very, when you read it, and you would not know the end of the story, you would really wonder how is this problem going to be solved.

Now we find that in the end of chapter 3, Nehomai had full trust in Boaz.

He said, Be still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall, for the man will not rest until he hath completed the matter this day. And so we ended last time with the thought of completion. The Lord wants to complete things, to accomplish things, in our lives, and we see that in Philippians and in Colossians, I think, but there are different references where we find how the Lord starts a work and how he will accomplish this work. That's a work of God in us.

So what we see, especially in chapter 3, is a work of God in us to prepare us for the [00:12:06] bridegroom.

That's the thought.

And of course, we have seen also our responsibility to wash ourselves, to anoint ourselves, to put raiment upon us, that is, in order to be acceptable in his sight.

But now it's his turn, so to speak. He is going to do something to complete this matter, to solve this matter and bring it to completion.

Now the thought of the gate we find here in chapter 4 is linked, as I said, with the public aspect of the

things.

What was hidden, what was for no other eyes in chapter 3, though I want to be very clear, I don't think that they had already marital relationship at that time.

When you know the scripture, then it is very clear that that was not the case. But this relationship in itself, though it was very pure, without doubt, was not for [00:13:05] other eyes.

But at the same time, we find here in chapter 4 that there is also a public aspect. And we will see also the same line in connection with the future remnant. But now in connection with the Assembly, it is clear that now, during the time of the rejection of the Lord Jesus, that he would appreciate very much when we would follow the same steps as Ruth did.

The Lord would appreciate it very much when we would show such a love for him. But there is also the other side, as we find now in chapter 4, that Boaz will take up our case, as it were, and that this relationship will be established in a public way.

The gate you find in many passages, and it would suggest administration, it would suggest also that there was authority, that there was rule.

[00:14:03] I would refer also to Deuteronomy, I think in Deuteronomy 25, there is a beautiful verse on this.

Oh yeah, maybe we could read it, because we have then at the same time some information about these points which will be before us in connection with the right of the Redeemer and the marriage of the one who redeemed.

In Deuteronomy 25, in verse 7 we have the thought of the gate, but we will read the whole passage, verse 5 to 7.

If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no son, the wife of the dead shall not marry a stranger abroad. Her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him as wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her.

And it shall be that the firstborn that she bears shall stand in the name of his brother [00:15:03] who is dead, that his name be not blotted out from Israel. But if the man like not to take his brother's wife, his brother's wife shall go up to the gate unto the elders.

And so on.

And then you see some details in connection with the fact that this man refused to marry her. We do not find a clear indication that the right of redemption and this right to marry the widow of a brother, that it goes together.

But it is very clear that it had become a custom that the one who redeemed the land, and maybe it should be good to read also a passage about that, that this man would also marry the widow who would be linked with this land.

I think it is helpful to read this passage because then we can better understand what we have read in Ruth 4.

In Leviticus 25, we find that God says in verse 23, in the middle of, let's read the [00:16:06] whole verse, Leviticus 25 verse 23, the land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine. That's the point where it starts. The whole land belonged to the Lord. And this is true in connection with Israel, but it is also true in connection with, as we have seen in the first meeting on Ruth 1, in connection with the heavenly land. It belongs to the Lord.

But he gives it into possession.

Or as we have read in Ruth 4, he gives allotments, he gives portions.

That's what we have in Leviticus 25 verse 24, and in all the land of your possession, he shall grant redemption for the land. Now what does that mean? And that's explained in verse 25, if thy brother grow poor and sell of his possession, then shall his redeemer, his nearest relation, come and redeem that which his brother sold.

[00:17:04] So far.

Now just to go into this a little bit to understand what we have read in Ruth 4, here we find this thought that the land belonged to the Lord, first of all. And we know under Joshua the land was divided for the tribes, and every family received a portion in the land. And they recognized that it belonged to the Lord, so the Lord gave them the enjoyment of it.

And we read in the story of Naboth, in the time of King Ahab, that Naboth was not willing to give this portion to Ahab, because it was the portion his fathers received from the Lord.

So Naboth, he recognized it was a portion that belonged to the Lord, and he held that in honor.

But now the problem we find here in verse 25, when an Israelite became poor and he had no money, then he could sell the land, but not really the land, because the land belonged [00:18:04] to the Lord. So what he really sold was the value of the crops, that is what you find in verse 16, thou shalt diminish the price of it, or according to the fewness of the years thou shalt diminish it, or, you see that is in connection with the rite, that it would come back to the original owner after 50 years, or after 49 years, there was the year of Jubilee, you see?

And then it came back to the original possessor. So you see, it belonged to the Lord, the Lord gave it into possession to his people, and when somebody would become poor, and he had no money for his nourishment, for his food and so on, and his clothes, then he could sell the land, but that meant only he sold the value of so many crops. [00:19:01] Let's say it was 20 years before the year of the Jubilee, then he sold 20 crops, you see what it means?

And so, what we get now here in the book of Ruth, Naomi came back from Moab, and she had still this allotment that belonged to her husband, Elimelech.

She had no people to work on that land, so she had no income of it, not at all.

We have seen that Ruth has worked, and for this period they had enough income, but now, what was going to happen now, after the harvest? You see, she needed money, so she would sell this portion to the Redeemer, and now we have seen in Leviticus 25, the Redeemer would be the nearest relation, so that might be a brother of Elimelech, and if not a brother, like this nearer kinsman probably, then it would be the son of a brother, or whatever.

[00:20:01] And probably Boaz was then the son of another brother of Elimelech, who died already before. So he would then buy this land, or in other words, the crops, which would still be on the fields before the year of the Jubilee. Now what happened with this first Redeemer, he was not willing to buy this land. You know why?

Because he had counted, Nehomai is my aunt, and she is going to die anyway. Ruth, she is a widow, she will not have children, so what is going to happen, this portion will be mine anyway, so why shall I buy it?

That's probably the reason why he did not turn up, why he left them aside, like the Levite and the priest did in Luke 15, they did not care about this man, and so he didn't care about his aunt and her daughter-in-law.

Now the second thing we have read in Deuteronomy 25 was then the thought of the marriage, that [00:21:09] the brother would marry the widow.

So in this case, Boaz could not marry Nehomai, because she would not have children anymore. And the thought was that the fields would stay in the family. So when Nehomai would not have a baby or a son, then it would have no value.

But Nehomai is linked with Ruth, and Ruth was still a young woman, so Ruth could have a son.

And then Elimelech and his son, Matlon, would continue, as it were, in this line of succession, and the fields would stay in their family. I hope you got it.

And then the thought is, which we find here in Deuteronomy 25, that the Redeemer would marry also this young widow.

[00:22:04] Now we have seen already that the Redeemer has to be a kinsman, a close relative.

And when we apply this in connection with the people of Israel, we see how the Lord Jesus came to his people.

Galatians 4 says that he was born under the law from a woman, and we know that Mary was a Jewess.

So we find here how the Lord Jesus became literally their kinsman. And so it is also, in connection with all mankind, the Lord Jesus, he was too, he became our kinsman. He partook of blood and flesh, so he became our kinsman.

But then we find that the Redeemer, he bought back the land. Now we find in the Scriptures that the Lord Jesus, the Redeemer, who bought the whole world.

Do you remember the story in Matthew 13, the parable of the treasure in the field? The Lord, he bought the whole field. And that is, as we find in the parable, or in the explanation of it, the whole world. [00:23:05] He is the Redeemer. He bought it with the price of his blood. But the Redeemer, we find also, he will take possession of it, and we find, in connection with the Redeemer, two thoughts. The Lord is the Redeemer who buys through the value of his blood, and he will take it by power.

And that is what we get here in chapter 4. Just to continue this thought, in Revelation 4 and 5, in Revelation 4 you see the Lord Jesus is the Creator, but through the fall, he lost everything, so to speak. And then the Lord Jesus became the Redeemer, and that is Revelation 5. And he got all back for God and for himself.

Colossians 1, he is the Creator, but at the same time he is the one who died, and he got all back for the glory of God and for himself. Now this is wonderful to see, Boaz is a picture of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus is the great [00:24:01] Redeemer.

It is really, it touches our hearts, and it is really a thought that gives us so much delight.

When we think of this merchant, in Matthew 13 also, who had this precious pearl, he sold everything.

It is another aspect of the Lord, what he did. We find even in 2 Peter that the false teachers, who were not born again, they are bought, so that means, and we have other passages which show us that the whole universe belongs now to the Lord Jesus, by right, at the price of his blood. And here we find in Titus that he is going also to establish his rights by power.

Now we do not see that everything is subjected to the Lord Jesus, though by faith we know that he has all rights.

And then the moment will come that he will establish his rights, righteously. Now the Redeemer had also, and we will see that also in connection with Israel, he will [00:25:05] buy the nation back, not only the whole universe did he buy, the Lord Jesus, not only the land, but also the nation, so Israel will be bought back. But the same applies to us. The Lord Jesus buys, has bought us, and that is what we find in Ephesians 5, for example. And that is because of the special value we have for him.

Then there is a third point we find now, that this man, the Redeemer, marries the widow. And that is what we have now here in this chapter. And there is a fourth aspect, and that is that he is the avenger. He will take wrath, and that is a point I would like to keep for the next time, because we see that especially in connection with Israel. Now here, Boaz went up to the gate to establish this matter.

You could find many passages, that is worthwhile, by the way, to take the concordance and to [00:26:02] check some passages where we find some information about the gate, and then you will find that this part is confirmed, that in the gate matters were established, even in the days of Abraham when he bought the field to bury his Sarah, his wife, this matter was settled in the gate.

And probably you will find other places, I am thinking of the woman of worth in Proverbs 31, her husband is known in the gate.

So this is the same sort you have here. We have seen the last time that Ruth is this woman of worth of Proverbs 31, or the woman of, as it says here, the woman of worth, and we have seen that it is the

same word, the same expression as we find in relation with Boaz, a mighty man of wealth. Both belong together, and her husband is known in the gate.

[00:27:02] And now Boaz is going to establish this matter, and then we find that he who had the right of redemption, and that was the first relative, as I mentioned, he came by, and then the writer of this story, he didn't want to mention his name, because he had said, thou such a one. Of course, Boaz did not say that, he would probably have said Carl or Peter or whatever, but the writer of the story didn't want to mention his name, and probably it is also important in connection with the next verses to understand what it means for us that no name is mentioned.

In verse 2 he takes ten men to be witnesses, in verse 3 he tells the story.

Now this is a point I'd like to go into a little bit, because I feel for the, to understand the real meaning of this book, it is very important. Verse 3, and he said to him that had the right of redemption, Nehomai, who has come back [00:28:04] out of the country of Moab, sells the allotment that was our brother Elimelech. I have spoken about that, but now I want to say something about the fact that he came back out of the country of Moab.

We have seen in Ruth 1 already that Moab in the scriptures stands for at least two things, and I just wanted to mention them again to you that you might understand the importance of the fact that he came back from Moab. In Isaiah 16 verse 6 we read, we have heard of the arrogance of Moab, he is very proud of his pride and his arrogance and his wrath, his pratings are vain, that's one aspect. And then in Jeremiah 48 we read that Moab never changed from vessel to vessel.

You know the people of Israel, they were in difficult situation, they were in slavery [00:29:01] in Egypt, they were in bondage under the power of Babel, and many wars, many afflictions, many tribulations, but of Moab we read in Jeremiah 48 verse 11, Moab has been at ease from his youth and has settled on his lease, he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither has he gone into captivity, therefore his taste has remained in him and his scent is not changed. So in other words we find here two points, and these might be very important lessons for you, at least for me they are. In Isaiah 16 we have read about the arrogance and the pride of Moab. Now don't think that that is nothing for us, because our hearts are proud, we are arrogant, and the lesson we have to learn here that we have to come back from Moab, we have to leave this arrogance there and this pride, we have to come back in humiliation, in confession as we have seen in Nehemiah, acknowledging our wrongs, acknowledging even the fact that [00:30:07] we have been so proud, that is what we have to do.

And there is no real restoration when this point is not reached, you will get no restoration when there is no confession of this pride, when there is not the desire at least to leave this pride and to judge it and to leave it in Moab.

The other side is ease, how can this struck us as well, that we want to have our ease, we do not want to get involved, we do not want to have exercises, to use this word, or like we have seen in this priest and Levite who left this Samaritan man at the roadside, we do not want to get involved in whatever it may be, for the benefit of others. It's our ease, our comfort, you know, this king of Moab, he was a very fat man, you can [00:31:02] read it in Judges 3, that shows very clear that he had his ease.

He was not emptied from vessel to vessel, you know what God wants? He wants fruit, we will see that at the end of Ruse 4. He wants good wine, and how does he get this good wine? By pouring out

the wine from vessel to vessel, this is necessary for the ripening process.

So in other words, when the Lord would allow tribulation in our lives and not give us ease, it is to create this good wine, that's the point. The Lord wants something of this good wine in our lives. We have heard yesterday night of joy, in different places in the New Testament, joy. Now this is the way God gets this joy, by pouring us from vessel to vessel, and then this wine will ripen, will be better quality for the enjoyment of God's heart.

[00:32:02] And when we reject God's dealings and discipline, when we do not want them, then this good wine will not be produced in us, this joy will not occur, simply.

So you see, this verse is very important, that she came back, and then the point comes that God can take our matters in his hands, as long as we do not want to judge ourselves, as long as we do not want to confess our pride, our arrogance, our ease, then the Lord cannot do anything with us, he has to leave us where we are. But now Naomi had come back, and Ruth had come back with her, and Boaz can take the matters in his hands.

And then we read in the verses which follow, and I just wanted to add one thought in connection with what we had in Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 25, Jeremiah 32 makes it clear that it had [00:33:04] become custom that the Redeemer bought the land right away. You know, when the widow was so poor she could sell the land or the crops to another man, but they liked to keep it in the family. And what was even better, to sell it to the Redeemer himself right away. You see, what could happen, they could sell it to somebody else, and then the Redeemer might come to buy it back, that it would stay in the family. And now what had become custom, and that we can conclude from Jeremiah 32 very clearly, that the Redeemer bought the field right away for the allotment. And that is what we find here in verse 4.

The Lord would take care of widows at the same time, we thought a little bit of widows yesterday night, and we find here how the Lord would provide for them.

And it is really touching for us to see in the Old Testament Scriptures also the many [00:34:03] verses which speak about God's care for widows.

But we do not find this care and this love, we do not find with the first Redeemer.

That's an important point to get in mind. We will see that in the next verses.

So Boaz tells the whole story, and then the man is willing, as we have expressed also in prayer, he was willing, but he was not able.

Boaz only was able, and it was a matter of love, that is what we will find now in verse 5. Boaz said, On the day thou buyest the field of the hand of Nehomai, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

Now, then the Redeemer says, I cannot redeem it, why?

[00:35:03] He says, lest I mar my own inheritance.

Now we can think of this law, when this first Redeemer would speak of the law, we would think of this conflict I mentioned before. The law said the Moabitess could not come into the congregation of the Lord. On the other hand, the law said that the land had to be redeemed, that the widow had to be married.

How can this be brought together?

Only God's grace can bring it together, that's the point. The law cannot bring this together. So only God's grace.

And now to help a little bit to understand what this means for us, we might turn to two passages in the New Testament.

I thought first of Romans 8.

In Romans 7 we find the situation that the soul is placed under the law and he wants [00:36:06] to please God, but he cannot.

And in Romans 7, in the beginning, we find the position, Romans 7 in the beginning gives a picture of our position, that we have died.

And somebody who has died, the law cannot say anything to him.

When there is a transgressor or he has committed adultery or murder, whatever, the moment this man dies, the law cannot say anything.

So in Romans 7 we find that we are dead, that is to say, before God, Christ died, we died. And so the law cannot say anything. The law is righteous and good and holy, as we find in Romans 7. The law is not wrong, we were wrong, but we died.

And so it's terminated, the matter is finished, it's delphic.

[00:37:05] But then Romans 8 says us, and that's the positive aspect, verse 3, for what the law could not do, and that it was weak through the flesh. You see this redeemer here, he says, I cannot buy it, and that is the law, as a way of salvation, the law could save you, could give you life, theoretically, but not really, as we find here. It was only a hypothesis, and how do you pronounce that?

Hypothetical. Yeah, it was hypothetical, and it was a way God had presented in the Scriptures.

But now grace comes in.

Grace says, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and forcing condemned [00:38:04] sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And also in other passages, in Galatians, you can find this, saw that the law could not redeem.

And we find here very clearly because of the weakness of the flesh, not because the law was not good, but we were not good, but we have died before God, and so the law is not longer necessary to

apply the law to us.

And that is also important for our spiritual growth, for our spiritual development, progress, that we realise this, that we have nothing more to do with the law as a system which regulates our relationship with God.

The law in itself is good, nothing wrong with it, but it does not longer regulate our relationship. [00:39:01] When it does, we lose all the benefits of Christ, we come again under a curse, as Galatians make it very clear.

But God has placed us in liberty, that we would walk in liberty and walk through the Spirit.

So this is really now an important point for our own lives to come to that point, that we would recognise this, that this first Redeemer, he is not able to redeem. As long as we have expectations of the flesh, Romans 7, as long as we expect to do something good for God and we are disappointed, as long as we do that, we are occupied with the first Redeemer.

But as soon as we give up and as we recognise that what the law could not do because of the weakness of the flesh, God did in sending his Son, then our eyes are turned to the Lord. That's the big change. Romans 7, our eyes are turned towards ourselves. [00:40:01] In Romans 8, our eyes are turned to the Lord and to the Word of the Spirit. So this is an important matter and also for a believer to realise that he cannot please God by his own efforts.

So it's important to see, I repeat, that the law in itself was good. And as freed from this system, God has placed us under the authority of Boaz.

We are not now free to do our own will, not at all. We are placed under the law of Christ, Galatians 6. And also in James we find that this law is the kingly law, the law of liberty. It is a rule.

We are now under his authority and this liberty in which we have been placed now has been [00:41:02] given to us that we might please the Lord.

So then he can really function as the great Boaz and he will be happy to share with us all his treasures as we will find later on because Ruth will be at his side and then share with Boaz all the blessings.

But we have to come to that point that we recognise that he is the Redeemer. In chapter 3 you could read he is a Redeemer.

Thou hast the right of redemption in verse 12 and some translations say a Redeemer. That would indicate that Ruth was not yet come to that point in chapter 3.

Of course she appreciated Boaz but she recognised that there was still another Redeemer and in her mind the matter had not been settled yet and now we find in chapter 4 that this matter has been settled definitely by Boaz. And that is often also in our case, in our spiritual history the case that we have to [00:42:06] bring the matters into the hands of the Lord. The Lord will deal with this. And that is what we find here in chapter 4. It is a very important matter to come to that conclusion that the first Redeemer he cannot do that and we cannot have any expectation from him, we should not.

And it is very clear also that his first Redeemer he had no love for Ruth, Boaz had real love for Ruth.

And so the Lord Jesus really loved us and he wanted to redeem us out of love.

And so grace solved the problem as we have seen this conflict in Ruth 3.

And Elmore found a solution. And here also in chapter 4 love and grace find the right solution.

Now just a word in connection with the inheritance because here in verse 5 and 6 it speaks about the inheritance and later on we will find also the expression about the heir.

[00:43:08] We have seen already the importance of the land and the inheritance would speak of a portion in the land. We can read it in Numbers and Deuteronomy especially. I would encourage you to read Deuteronomy especially chapter 8, 11 among others who speak of this inheritance of the land.

And in Joshua we find how the land was conquered, how they entered into the land and conquered it and then possessed it and how all this land was divided under Joshua that every family had a portion in the land.

And here we have seen in Judges that because of the failure of the people, enemies came and occupied the land and so on, it was a very sad situation. But here our thoughts are brought back to the value of the inheritance and Boaz recognized the value of the inheritance. [00:44:02] Our Lord Jesus as he is now in the glory, he would help us also to realize the value of the inheritance. When you think of the history of the church, then you find that the inheritance that the church has, has been lost very soon.

The inheritance which speaks of the heavenly blessings we have now in Christ, Ephesians 1 verse 3, of eternal life, it was promised before the foundation of the world already. So these are blessings, real Christian blessings which we can see in the history of the church the enjoyment of these blessings was lost very soon. But here our thoughts are brought back to the inheritance. But it's important to see that the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, heavenly blessings [00:45:03] is on the basis of resurrection life.

We have found it already in connection with the barley harvest and then the wheat harvest. You can find it in John 5, the thought that the Lord Jesus introduced resurrection life and on the basis of that you have the blessing. In chapter 6 also and I think also in John 12 where we find the same thought that the Lord brings in eternal life and the enjoyment of eternal life is based on the fact that he is the source of life and that he introduces life, resurrection life.

And that is important for us to understand that we cannot, you have your Bibles, you can read all these things, but the enjoyment of these blessings is on the basis that we are linked with the Redeemer, the one who died and rose again.

That is really the basis upon which we can enjoy our blessings.

[00:46:04] We find in verse 7, now just a few words on the next verse and then we will think about some highlights we get and at the end of the chapter especially in connection with David I'd like to

say a few words. Now in verse 7 we find that this custom was there in connection with this transaction. To confirm this transaction the man drew off his sandal.

We find many times that a sandal in the Scriptures is linked with the right of property or possession and you can read in Psalm 60 the sandal would be put on Edom I think.

You find also that Joshua when he was in the land he took off his sandal, he recognized the authority of the Lord Jesus presented in this man who came to him in Joshua 5. You see it in Exodus 3 when Moses was called that he had to put off his sandals, he recognized [00:47:01] the rights of the Lord. In John 1, John the Baptist, he recognized the rights of the Lord, he was speaking about the sandals, he said I'm even not worthy to loosen his sandals. So he recognized the authority of the Lord and the sandal was in connection with, was a symbol of the right of possession.

Then in verse 8 we find that the first Redeemer says to Boaz, now buy for thyself, he recognizes that he is the one who is going to buy.

And then in verse 9 we find that Boaz said to the elders and all the people, so here we find really the public aspect of this matter, ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's and all that was Cilion's and Maglon's of the hand of Nehemiah. The first Redeemer, he would maybe suggest that there is no value, that it is a land [00:48:02] that is almost of no value, but Boaz, he presents the things in their value before God, especially I would say in verse 10. He says moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Maglon 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 from the gate of his place, ye are witnesses this day. So here you find in these two verses, these two ordinances or rules brought together, the right of redemption and the marriage with the widow, they are both brought together and Boaz puts these things in the right light, he values the inheritance of Elimelech and so on, and that's what the Lord does, when we have lost the enjoyment of these blessings of this inheritance, the Lord values still this inheritance and he would bring us back into the enjoyment of this inheritance, that is the thought, he appreciates the inheritance [00:49:07] and he will help us to bring us back there that we would also appreciate the inheritance. And second point is that there would be established a relationship between him and us, and that's now the point where we should dwell upon a little bit, because that is of the utmost importance, that the Lord would have a living relationship with us.

Of course all Christians, all real believers have a relationship with the Lord Jesus, they have him as their life, but not always there is this relationship of love, mutual love. You find it for example in the book of Psalm of Psalms how this relationship is developed, again there it is first of all in connection with the future remnant, but in like manner the Lord Jesus would like to see us grow in the knowledge of his person and the knowledge [00:50:08] of his grace, and he wants us to be conformed to himself.

Now you can read a passage, we have no time to go into details, but I just want to suggest this passage in Ephesians 5 verse 25 and the verses which follow, where you find how this relationship is very precious to the Lord, the relationship between himself and the assembly, and how the Lord is working constantly to, there it says, through the washing of the water through the Word, to make us conformed to himself, more conformed to him, that is the thought. Why? When we are to be the bride or the wife of the Lamb at his side, we have to be like him, that is the point. It is not enough that we recognise his authority and [00:51:04] that we are at his feet, it is not even enough that we love him, we have now to be brought into this relationship in such a way that we are able to stand at his side. I will

give an example, we find in the New Testament at least two ways, but there are more, how the assembly is presented as the wife and as the body, that is in the same chapter of Ephesians 5, you find both types or both images or figures brought together, these types, the type of the wife and the type of the body, you find them already in the Scriptures in Genesis 1 and 2, in Genesis 2 you find how Eve was taken from Adam, in other words, to be the bride of the Lord Jesus, God can only recognise what came from him, you see, God can nothing [00:52:06] recognise from the old man or from the flesh, what God only can recognise is what he worked himself, that is Ephesians 2, verse 10, his workmanship, his workmanship, so God creates as it were this woman, this assembly, it is his body, the body of the Lord, there in this type of Adam, but then there is a second thought, she is brought to Adam, Genesis 2 at the end, and there we find that she is his wife, you see the difference, is both of course the same person but seen in a different way, seen as the body, as Christ's body, we are the expression of what Christ is himself, but then we are brought to him that he might have his delight in us, that is the point, and in order that Christ might have his delight in us, we have to be at his side, therefore Eve was taken from his side, not from his [00:53:02] feet that she would be a slave, nor from his head that she would roll over him, but from his side, and so you see how these types help us to understand what the assembly is, and here we find so, the thought that Boaz, of course he would like to have Ruth by his side, but we have seen how important it is that this formation takes place, and that is one of the things I would like to underline, and of course you can find many other types in the Old Testament of the bride, who would all present some aspect of the bride, who shares the rejection of the Lord, like Zipporah and Moses, and Abigail and David, and so you find different types of the wife of the Lamb in the Scriptures, which help us to understand what the assembly means for the Lord Jesus. Now in verse 10, I would like to say again [00:54:04] that we find here again how Boaz is acting out of love for Ruth. He values, as we have seen, the inheritance, but he values also now the person of Ruth herself. We have seen already the difference between the fact that he bought the land, but that he now also purchased or bought her. We have seen that is the case in Acts 20 even, it says that God purchased the assembly through the blood of his own. So this is an important matter. And then what is added here, that new life is to come in, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. So again, the thought of resurrection is introduced here, that this living relationship and the result, and now we come to the next point, the fruit of this relationship is on [00:55:05] the basis of resurrection, life. And now this is very important. I would give one example in the life of Abraham. We have this evening before us the thought of the heir, and the before us the thought of the heir. Now in Genesis 15 you find that Abraham is speaking about an heir. In Genesis 12 God had given him all the blessings already. He had presented to him all the blessings. Abraham will get the land, and he will be blessed, and his name will be great. But then in chapter 15 we find that Abraham, he had no descendants, he had no children. How would he get an heir? And then God shows him in Genesis 15 how at one hand his descendants would be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand at the seashore. But then God shows also how his seed would be in the furnace, in tribulation in Egypt. [00:56:11] And we find so the two thoughts brought together, the thought of the multitude of descendants and how they would be in tribulation, and then God would deliver them. But when we see that in Genesis 16 we find that Abraham did not really appreciate God's thought. He started to work himself, and he took Hagar, the Egyptian slave, and the bondwoman, and then he and she got a son, Ishmael. Now this is the effort of the flesh. There was not what we have here to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance in the power of resurrection, in the power of life which God gives. And then we find that in chapter 17 Abraham was [00:57:03] circumcised, and then he could not longer get children. God waited so long that he could not longer be the progenitor of a generation. And then God intervened in sovereign grace. Sarah could not, she was barren, so she could not receive seed. Abraham could not produce seed, so what happened? God intervened in sovereign grace, and that is in Hebrews 11 explained. It was at the same time by faith on their part,

but it was God's sovereign act of grace. Now this is what we find, I would suggest here in a sense. How does the heir come about? It is by an act of sovereign grace on God's side. But at the same time there is faith, and that is what we find also in Ruth, special faith. That is what we will see also in verse 13. But before we forget the other verses, in verse 11, the [00:58:06] witnesses, they respond now. They are so glad with this development, and they speak with joy, you could say, in verse 11. They are happy for Boaz, and they are happy for Ruth, and they speak in verse 11, Jehovah make the woman that comes into thy house like Rachel and like Leah, which too did build the house of Israel, and acquire power in Ephrathah. And that's remarkable. This word used here, acquire power, is the same word as we found in connection with Ruth, a woman of worth, and it is again the same word as we found in connection with Boaz, the mighty man of wealth. The Hebrew word chayil that is used here, and that is remarkable. Here again we find the same thought, acquire power in Ephrathah. So we have the man of wealth, the woman of worth, of virtue, and now Boaz can acquire [00:59:04] power in Ephrathah. Ephrathah we speak of fruitfulness. There was barrenness, there was no fruit, and now there is going to be fruit. But now I come back to what I said before, how is this fruit, how does this fruit come about? And that's important, there is only fruit on the basis of resurrection. In the types of the scriptures you find it already in Genesis 1 indicated, the third day God speaks about fruit. The third day speaks of resurrection out of the dead. And that is the basis of fruit. There cannot be fruit in our lives for God which is placed on another basis, which comes from the flesh as in Abram in the beginning, or through our efforts according to the law or whatever, there cannot be real fruit. Only there can be fruit when there is this living relationship, and now we come to this point, verse 13, between the Lord Jesus and us.

[01:00:06] Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife, and he went in unto her, and Jehovah gave her conception, and she bore a son. Of course this is a literal story, but now in this application we might see it this way, that the Lord, he wants to produce fruit in us. He wants to have an heir, as we find in the next verses. In this sense, in a sense the Lord himself is the heir. But I would suggest this, the Lord is going to be seen in us, that's the point. When is there fruit for God? When the Lord somehow is seen in us. You find this thought in Luke's Gospel. In Luke's Gospel you find the Lord Jesus himself, how he was a little baby and grew up then. Now, I think this thought you find, yeah, in Luke too. A little baby was laid in the arms of Simeon. Yesterday we thought of Anna who came at the [01:01:04] same moment there, but Simeon, we find how he received the Lord Jesus in his arms. Now in this sense we may receive the Lord Jesus, it is not exactly the same thought as here, but that he may grow in us, that is the thought. In Galatians, Paul is in travail, he is the one who is like a wife who would bear a son. Paul says in Galatians 4 verse 19 that he is in travail of them, of the Galatians, in order that Christ might be formed in them. Now that is the desire of the Lord's heart, of God's heart, that there may be some living link between the Lord, he is the true Boaz, he is in the glory as we have seen in the first chapter, he is our Redeemer, but he wants to see fruit. And this living relationship between him and us only can produce fruit. As we have seen, not by our own efforts, not [01:02:04] as under the law, but only when there is the real love, when there is the working of grace, then he can produce this. And it is also a second thought, the Lord is going to grow in us, he is to become bigger and bigger. As John said, John the Baptist in John 3, he said, I must diminish, he must grow. You see, that is his desire. Then there is fruit.

You think of John 15, which speaks much about fruit bearing, and then it says, without me you can do nothing. You see, that is the point. Without the Lord there is no fruit. And we are constantly looking at ourselves, if I produce fruit, I will have no fruit. When to the Lord, when we are engaged with him, when we are really filled with love for him, [01:03:01] then there will be fruit. And in this fruit, he will be seen, not me, he will be seen. That is the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. All these different aspects

of the fruit of the Spirit is a representation or a reproduction of Christ. That is the point. So this fruit speaks of our true God, speaks of what he is, but then reproduced in us. That is the thought.

Now, I think this is really the desire of the heart of the Lord, and even when you would only learn this lesson, I think the Lord would be already satisfied. When you would have forgotten all about the whole book of Ruth and you would get this lesson, it would already be a lesson. And to reproduce Christ in a living way in our lives, in our manner of life, in whatever aspect of our lives, that he might be seen. That is his desire. And then there is real fruit. And then in verse 14, the women said to Nehemiah, Blessed be [01:04:06] Jehovah who has not left thee this day without one that has the right of redemption. Now this is very remarkable. Here we find that the young boy, we find later on his name, Obed, is the Redeemer. As the note says, without a Redeemer, it refers to the son born, that is Obed. Because now for Nehemiah, the field stayed in the family. The fact that Boaz married Ruth was not in itself a guarantee that this field stayed in the family. But now this little son was born, and so he is called the Redeemer. So that is wonderful to see how Nehemiah was satisfied, and we will see this in connection with Israel. But I would suggest also, this is an example of how Christ is reproduced in us. He is the true Obed. And I skipped [01:05:05] verse 15, I will come back on verse 15 later on. But Obed means literally slave. Some say worshipper, but the real meaning of the word is slave. Now that is remarkable. How can the Lord Jesus be reproduced in us when we are like Him? We read so very often Philippians 2, verse 5 and 6 and 7. Now that is where you find it. He became a slave. He will be a slave forever and ever. Even when we will be in the glory and be blessed with all His heavenly blessings, He will be the slave who will service. In Luke 12 you find it. He was the slave on earth. In John 13 He did the work of a slave to wash the feet of the disciples. You see, Obed is a slave. Of course, he is the possessor of heaven and earth. But I think [01:06:02] the first characteristic which is produced in us then, which would represent Christ, is the fact that we are willing to submit ourselves, to put aside our own will, because He has no will of His own. How important it is. You see, this is a real test. We could have the desire that Christ might be reproduced in us, but when I am not willing to be a slave, He will not be reproduced in me. So the first point that is brought before us here is Obed, a slave. And what a blessing it was, because he was the father of Jesse, and that means literally Jehovah exists, and there we find the faithfulness of God, and then the father of David. I'll come back on that. But now we skip verse 15, and He shall be to thee a restorer of thy life and a nourisher of thine old age. These are two expressions which [01:07:06] are, to me at least, very precious. We find the restorer is the one who brings back life.

So the restorer of life. We have seen there was death, but now life is introduced. That is point one. And secondly, a nourisher of thine old age, or the one who maintains. We can think of Joseph in Egypt, who was there, the one who maintained the whole family. And it is the same word in Hebrew, I think, of nourisher, the one who provided food. Now this is very precious. The Lord, He brings back. He introduces life there where death is, and secondly, He maintains us, He nourishes us. I come back to that part in Ephesians 5. One of the characteristics, about seven points we find there, what the Lord is doing for us is that He is nourishing us. Now when you would keep this thought in mind, and we [01:08:07] have asked the Lord in prayer that our hearts might be touched by the Lord Himself. Now I think when you only would study this thought, that He is the nourisher of us, He is our nourisher, the one who gives food, then you would really marvel. You see in the beginning of the scripture, but I mention only Exodus 16 now, where He is the manna. In John 6, the living bread came down from heaven. Now that is our food, as He was here on earth. But when you go on, I referred already to Joshua 5, you will find that He in heaven is the one who gives food. That is wonderful. He is the one who feeds us. He is the real nourisher. In whatever situation we are, He is the one who feeds us, who gives us nourishment, and that is what you find in Ephesians 5. And so

you could find many, many verses which [01:09:01] speak about the nourishment He gives. It is wonderful. So He introduces life and He gives food. And then to close with the last verses we have read, there we find the genealogy.

The part of the genealogy of the Lord Jesus. Ten names mentioned there, five in connection with Egypt and the desert, the wilderness, and five in connection with the land. It is remarkable. And this is how God secured this lineage to introduce the Messiah later on.

You find in Matthew 1, four women mentioned. It is remarkable that you find here one of them in this book, who is the mother of the Lord Jesus, or the grand-grand-grandmother, you understand. And in Matthew 1 you find Tamar, who is also in this book, in verse 12, Tamar bore to Judah. She came into that lineage by her own sin. She acted as a prostitute.

[01:10:02] That was the case with us. We were sinners, Romans 3. Then in the next we find Rahab. She is not mentioned here in this book, but she was married with Salmon, or Selma. Rahab, how did she come into this genealogy? Because of her faith. You can read it in Joshua 2. That is wonderful. And that is for us also, how can we have a link with the Lord Jesus? Not only because we were saved from our sins, but by faith, Abraham, Romans 4. But then we come to the third person, that is Ruth. How did Ruth come into this genealogy? There was nothing against her, she was a virtuous woman. But there was this point of the law, and this was solved now by Boris. And she is introduced into this genealogy. And later on you find then the history of David and Bathsheba. But these four women speak of God's grace. You see, that is an important point to get in this little book. The work of God's [01:11:02] grace, and how He brings them into this lineage. But I am sorry that it took so long to come to the end of this chapter, but I did not want to stop without mentioning the name of David. Because that is the true key of the chapter. The true key of the whole book. You remember the whole setting? No king? Here is the king. In a time there was no king, God is preparing a people for the king. And that is what you find in Ruth, and those who would be of similar attitude. It is on the base of God's grace, sovereign grace. That is important in the history of David, to remember that God introduced David on the base of sovereign grace. Psalm 78 you can find it. He rejected Saul, and He introduced David. He rejected the priesthood, and the succession of the priesthood, and He introduced them by sovereign grace. That is David. Sovereign grace. But not only that. David means the Beloved. He [01:12:04] speaks of Christ, in a very special way. And so you could say this book, this little book, does not only speak of grace, this little book speaks of true love. And the key to understand this, the end of the book as I said, David the Beloved. Because God is going to introduce the Beloved. Now you can apply that to the history of Israel, to our own history. When do we really, when are we really happy? When God comes to that point, that He can introduce in a real way, His Beloved in our lives. When we are under His influence. It might be that we are in a world where He is rejected, where all is against Him. But when our eyes are fixed on the real David, we can be happy, like Bruce was. So in your meditations you can think about it, but David is the key of the whole book. And so we find here already [01:13:04] a remnant prepared for the true King. Where all was against Him, where all was against God, in backsliding, rebellion even, sin, God introduces His Beloved. And that is what He wants in your life and in my life, that His Beloved might be introduced. And that we might recognize His kingly rights as the true David, but also that we would be in a real way His bride, His wife, matter of affection, formation as we have seen, of fruit. How wonderful this is. With all these different aspects, we have no time to enter into the names of these different persons mentioned here, but they would speak also of different aspects of the fruit, the fruit which God would introduce in our lives. But when we would only produce one fruit of obedience, like in Obed, and willingness to be a slave, then the Lord would [01:14:05] already be magnified in our lives. Amen.