



PT Butler

Bible Study Notebooks

Study of the book of Ruth

Prepared by Paul T. Butler, Th.D.

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RUTH 1:1-22

Moab was the grandson of Lot by incest with his eldest daughter (Gen. 19:30-38). Lot's father was Haran, Abraham's brother, so Lot was Abraham's nephew. The Moabites and Israelites were "kin-folk." The nation or people descended from Moab settled at Ar, just east of the southern part of the Dead Sea and quite close to the site of the destroyed cities of the plain (Sodom and Gomorrah, etc.). Moses was commanded by the Lord not to vex the Moabites when Israel passed through their vicinity on the way to the Promised Land. However, when Israel had almost reached their destination and were encamped in the plains of Moab (Num. Chs. 22-24) Balak, king of Moab, sensing that he could not save himself from Israel by force of arms, hired Balaam to come and curse Israel. Balaam desired with all his heart to get that money by "cursing" Israel; but after being rebuked for his sin by the voice of the donkey he was riding, he was permitted by God to proceed on condition that he would speak only what God gave him to speak. As a result, he prophetically gave blessing to Israel four times as he had to do, but he evidently said to Balak, the Moabites and the Midianites, "Though you cannot conquer Israel by force of arms, you can seduce them" so the Moabite girls entered the camp of Israel (Num. 31:16) and seduced the men (Num. 25:1-9). As a result, God sent a plague that killed 24,000 men. It was on Mount Pisgah in the land of Moab, that Moses died. The "god" of the Moabites was called Chemosh and was worshiped by human sacrifice and sexual immorality.

There seems to have been considerable travel between Moab and Judah, for in the days of the Judges, Elimelech of Bethlehem took his family to Moab to sojourn during a famine; there his two sons married and died, and Ruth the Moabitess returned with Naomi, married Boaz, and became an ancestress of David. Apparently God did not condemn Elimelech for migrating to Moab during the famine. Remember that Jacob took his whole family (clan) to Egypt to escape the famine in the land of the Canaanites centuries before this! David, when fleeing from king Saul, took his father and mother to the king of Moab for protection (1 Sam. 22:3-4). The Moabites had repeated wars with Israel and some of the Israelites adopted the idolatry of the Moabites---even to the matter of child-sacrifice (Psa. 106:34-39; Jer. 7:30-34; 19:1-6, etc.). Amos 2:1-3 pronounces the death sentence upon the land of Moab; Isaiah condemns her pride and idolatry (Isa. 16:6); Ezekiel and Jeremiah pronounce God's judgment upon Moab (Ezek. 25:8-11; Jer. 48:1ff; Zephaniah 2:8-11). God also pronounced judgment upon Israel for adopting the idolatries of Moab and "shedding the blood of innocents"! WHAT MUST GOD THINK OF SOME AMERICANS TODAY WHO BLATANTLY APPROVE OF AND LOBBY FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF OVER ONE MILLION INNOCENTS PER YEAR IN "CHRISTIAN AMERICA" BY ABORTION????? AND NOW THEY ARE "HARVESTING" PARTS OF BABIES!!!!

Naomi pled with her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah (not Oprah), to "return to the house of their" mothers" (Ruth 1:8). Since these two daughters-in-law had lost their husbands in death they would need the maternal protection the home their husband's mothers could give. By referring to the "mother's house" instead of

the father's house, Naomi may be indicating the girls were without fathers. If so, they had suffered tragic losses in the early deaths not only of their husbands, but also of their fathers. Furthermore, Naomi's husband had died and there would be three widowed women facing the male-dominated society of the Israelites with two of them being Moabitesses in a foreign land. Naomi seems to indicate that she held no hope for the two Moabitesses acquiring husbands in the land of Israel. This demonstrates Naomi's deep love for her daughters-in-law! **BUT THE LOVE OF THE DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW FOR THEIR MOTHER-IN-LAW WAS JUST AS DEEP!** They "lifted up their voices and wept" at Naomi's pleading with them to let her go on to the land of Judah alone! (Ruth 1:14). Yes! The love of "in-laws" can be just as deep as the love for blood-relations. **IT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW CLOSE TO THE LORD THE IN-LAWS ARE!**

Ruth's insistence on leaving her own homeland and mother's house and going with Naomi to the land of Judah was so strong because it was linked to Ruth's yearning to worship Naomi's God (Ruth 1:16) and his laws. She had become, at least in her heart and soul, a convert to the Israelite faith! Ruth knew that if she stayed in Moab she would have little, if no, association with those who worshiped the True God of Israel and she would soon lose her faith in him. **THAT IS THE WAY HUMAN NATURE AND THE WORLD IS!** Those who have once been believers and dissociate themselves from all other believers, are bound to lose their faith by merely letting it lapse (Heb. 2:1-4; 10:19-25). Christians cannot survive the onslaughts of the devil and the flesh and the world unless they are actively, constantly, associating, sharing, and participating in the worship and work of the Lord through the activities of a congregation of believers!

The whole town of Bethlehem was excited at Naomi's return. They were not as surprised to see Naomi was still alive and had come back again as to see her returning in so mournful a condition. She was a solitary widow, without either husband or sons! Naomi's lament was, "Call me not Naomi (which means, gracious), but Mara (which means, "one who has experienced bitterness"). She lamented that she had gone away from Judah "full" and Jehovah had made her come back again "empty." She was talking about having gone away with a husband and sons and returning a widow without sons—all that makes a mother's heart rich. She felt Jehovah had testified against her by word and deed (see Ex. 20:16; 1 Sam. 1:6). The citizens of Bethlehem undoubtedly felt the same way as Naomi at least for they were very sympathetic with her viewpoint. It was the viewpoint of all Israelites that a woman widowed and without sons to care for her was probably under the curse of God, or at least the human being most to be pitied on the face of the earth! In that society there was hardly any way such a husband-less, son-less, woman could support herself. She was left to either beg, steal or become a prostitute! There was no Social Security or senior citizen's homes or public welfare in those days. The Israelites were supposed to give enough alms to take care of the widows, but few ever practiced it!

The Hebrew word marar is translated bitter. It could be translated simply grieved, sorrowed, saddened. Actually, Naomi did not say she was bitter---she said the Lord had dealt very bitterly with her. What Naomi meant depends on her faith!

She was evidently not embittered enough to turn her back on her own Israelite people and stay in the land of Moab! She was not the kind of woman who became spiteful, resentful or vengeful. She was still tender enough in her soul to care enough about her daughters-in-law to urge them to desert her and stay in their own homeland. The Hebrew word translated afflicted is *onah* (literally, “eyed”) and could be translated “testified against me.” She is telling Ruth and Orpah that she thinks the Lord, by making her a widow without sons has testified that she has done some terrible sin! She does not think the name Naomi (blessed of God) fits her circumstances. **BUT BECAUSE OF NAOMI’S AND RUTH’S FAITH, NAOMI’S AFFLICTION SHALL BE TURNED INTO BLESSEDNESS** (see Ruth 4:15). It is a great lesson, along with the life of Job, that those who believe and trust the Lord will eventually have their afflictions turned to JOY (Jn. 14:1-31; 15:1-27; 16:1-33).

RUTH 2:1-23

There are two Hebrew words for “glean” are olal (to pick up), and lokat (to collect). They seem to be interchangeable (e.g. olal is used in Lev. 19:9-10; 23:22; Deut. 24:21; Jer. 6:9---and lokat is used in Judg. 8:2; Ruth 2:2-3; Isa. 17:6; 24:13; Jer. 49:9; Micah 7:1). To glean in English means to gather or pick-up what is left after a reaper has harvested his field or vineyard. Ruth was not stealing from the fields of Boaz! The law of Moses made provision for Israel’s disadvantaged poor and widowed to glean the fields or vineyards for their sustenance. The Lord made no provision for the lazy and indolent. Land owners were instructed leave some grain in the corners of their fields. They were to be gracious, kind and compassionate and leave some of their grain standing for the poor. The land owners were not to gather the gleanings of the harvest. Fallen fruits of the orchards and the grapes in the vineyards were to be left as were. These were for the disadvantaged poor and the sojourner among them. Ruth took her place among these disadvantaged poor people. Jesus said, The poor you have with you always... THERE WILL ALWAYS BE ENOUGH POOR IN THE WORLD FOR GOD-FEARING PEOPLE TO HELP! (See Deut. 15:7-11). Those who have enough must take care of those who do not (either by government taxation or by free-will giving). The Lord has promised believers that if they sow bountifully (i.e., give liberally) he will provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that they may always have enough of everything, and may provide in abundance for every good work...and enriched in every way for great generosity (2 Cor. 9:6-13).

It was not working too hard for a young girl to glean in the grain fields! My grandmother worked in the corn and wheat fields when she was a grandmother and did household chores as well! My mother worked in the fields when she was a grammar-school student! IT NEVER WARPED THEIR SOULS OR THEIR BODIES! They lived to ripe-old-age. They outlived their husbands (who also worked hard in the fields and at their homes). It is not un-Christian, nor anti-scriptural, to insist that people work hard (see 1 Thess. 4:8-12; 2 Thess. 3:6-15, Proverbs, etc.). The Lord commanded in the law of Moses, Six days shalt thou labor, and on the seventh day shalt thou rest for the Sabbath is holy unto the Lord. The Lord commanded Adam and Eve to subdue the earth and have dominion over it and to till the garden of Eden and keep it (Gen. 1:28; 2:15). Jesus worked, Paul worked, Peter worked, John worked. All of Jesus’s parables imply and portray that both servants and masters work (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 4:1-6). Clearly, if youngsters today had more chores to do after they get home from school (when they aren’t doing school homework) they would watch much less godless television and have much less time to conceive mean and destructive things to do.

Boaz was a godly man. When he came to meet his workers, he greeted them with a prayer that the Lord would be with them. They replied by praying that God would bless their master. This speaks volumes about the goodness,

righteousness and godliness of Boaz. Furthermore, when Boaz heard what Ruth had done for her mother-in-law, and that Ruth herself was a widow (Ruth 2:11), he believed he should be God's instrument to recompense Ruth for her goodness toward Naomi (2:12). It is almost always true that industry, hard work, humility, care and love (which was manifested in Ruth's treatment of Naomi) will be rewarded, sooner or later, (even in this life) by Almighty God through one of his angels. Boaz was God's angel to minister to Ruth---and Boaz did it of his own free will because he, too, was a godly person.

Yes! Children and in-laws should be personal care-takers of their parents, even in modern society. THERE ARE, OF COURSE, MANY GOVERNMENT AND CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE CAPABLE AND WILLING TO BE CARE-TAKERS OF THE AGED AND INFIRM. HOWEVER, THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE LOVING CARE THAT CAN BE GIVEN BY A RELATIVE--IF THAT RELATIVE IS A GODLY PERSON! It is my opinion that those who have the means, the time and the energy to care for relatives (who desperately need personal, on-hands, care) and do not do so have disowned the faith and are worse than unbelievers (1 Tim. 5:8).

Feminine purity is sacrosanct with God! No! Boaz was not being a sissy or a macho-male for favoring and protecting the feminine purity of Ruth! The Bible, both O.T. and N.T., makes the virtue, sanctity, and purity of womanhood one of its premium doctrines! The Bible holds all males responsible for promoting and protecting feminine integrity (1 Cor. 7:1-49; 11:1-22; Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:7). Peter does not call females the weaker sex because he is a male chauvinist. GOD CREATED WOMEN WITH THE NEED TO HAVE MEN PROTECT THEM! God also created men with the need to protect women! One has only to acknowledge the truth of what happens when women are allowed to deny this physical weakness of theirs and attempt to become fire-fighters, policemen, soldiers, and construction workers, etc., to understand what Peter means! If you think like some modern women's movements that women do not need protection by males, just incarcerate women in men's prisons! It is sheer stupidity, ignorance or arrogance when women declare they are physically equal to men, or that women can take care of themselves.

The law of God concerning the necessity of the nearest kinsman (i.e., relative) may be found in Leviticus 25:25-55. It is lengthy and detailed. IF AN ISRAELITE BECAME POOR AND SOLD PART OF HIS PROPERTY, HIS NEXT OF KIN WAS TO REDEEM (purchase) WHAT THE ISRAELITE HAD TO SELL TO SUSTAIN HIS LIFE. IT WAS A FAMILY MATTER! Families were to take care of one another! God's ideal society is not one of "dog eat dog." God's ideal society, on earth, is all wrapped up in family. That is not only fair, it is the most practical way to sustain society in a godly fashion. There are two major failures responsible today for our disintegrating society---(a) we are allowing our children to be taught a theory of evolution that theorizes they are nothing more than amoral, irresponsible, animals and in a struggle for survival. Is it any wonder so many act like animals (see 2 Pet. 2:1-22)?; (b) and the home, the family unit, is being destroyed by fornication, adultery, divorce or abandonment and parents are not nurturing and admonishing

their children in the word and will of the Lord! SO, KINSMEN ARE NOT TAKING CARE OF KINSMEN. They are either shunting kinsmen off to the government to care for, or are totally ignoring and neglecting them. And this is being done in all races and nations!

Yes! Boaz was kind and godly toward his workers (2:4, 9, 14) and he expected them to be godly toward him and his kinfolk. And they were reciprocated with his godliness! There is no reason this kind of attitude and action from modern employers and employees cannot be present in today's workplace! In rare occasions it has. While Henry Ford was not what we would call an evangelical Christian he is famous for treating his workers in the early days of his innovative assembly line factories fairly, compassionately and wisely. In return he built a manufacturing empire that has endured for over a century! It certainly IS possible to have a capitalistic society and refrain from exploitation! That is exactly the kind of society outlined in the law of Moses! All that needs to be done is to do what the law of Moses says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy being, and thy neighbor as thyself." If employers and employees would merely follow what we call The Golden Rule in the words of Jesus, i.e. "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12), such a society would be produced.

RUTH 3:1-18

Naomi was not meddling. She was doing her duty! Since her husband was dead it was Naomi's duty to try to find Ruth a husband. Naomi was aged and it was nearly pointless for her to try to find herself and husband. Ruth was still a young woman able to bear children and needed a husband. Even the New Testament advises young widows to remarry (1 Tim. 5:14). **IT IS STILL A GOOD AND GODLY PRACTICE TODAY FOR YOUNGER WIDOWS AND WIDOWED-MALES TO REMARRY.** Single-parent homes are one of the major curses upon society today! It is not good for children to be reared in a one-parent home---no matter how godly the one-parent may be. In a one-parent home where there are young children the single-parent has to be both bread-winner and home-maker! God never intended it to be thus! So Naomi would have God's approval of being a match-maker---she certainly was a caring mother-in-law! Ruth could not have done better in selecting a husband than Naomi did. Clearly, the wisdom that comes with age should be given attention to by young people today when choosing a mate. **YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH CHRISTIAN PARENTS, WOULD DO THEMSELVES A FAVOR BY SEEKING GUIDANCE FROM THEIR PARENTS IN CHOOSING A SPOUSE!**

Dressing-up for special occasions is not wrong. Over-dressing to call attention to oneself is immodest! On the other hand, under-dressing to get attention or because one does not care about one's appearance, is also immodest! It was not inappropriate for Naomi to suggest that Ruth dress-up to meet Boaz. Women (single women especially) should make themselves attractive to men. They certainly should not dress down like slobs! God intended that male and female should marry and procreate (Gen. 1:28). God made Eve from Adam's rib and presented her to Adam (Gen. 2:20-23) after Adam had found that there was not found a helper fit for him as Adam named and checked out all the animals God had created. Someone has speculated that when Adam first saw Eve he said, Wow--this is it! The Hebrew text indicates Adam said, "This female is it!" Now, at last, I have someone who is bone of my bones and flesh from my flesh. This female shall be called Woman because this female has been taken out of man. **ADAM WAS ATTRACTED TO EVE! GOD INTENDED IT TO BE SO!** And while we're on this subject of dressing up we want to express one of our opinions about fad-dressing especially among youngsters! The godless, unbelieving world of garment designing and manufacturing sustains itself by appealing to the vanity and pride and herd-mentality of young people. Today's "punk" clothing and "gang" clothing is just as immodest as the "zoot-suits" of the 1940s and the mini-skirts of the 1960s. Lauren Winner, author of Real Sex, writes that the commercial market-place promotes a "culture of immodesty" that Christians must counteract. She says lower-price stores that most shoppers rely upon promote sexually enticing garb, even for young girls. Finally, she states, "Our clothes tell stories about ourselves." **WHY DO SO MANY CHRISTIANS TODAY WANT TO BE SO CASUAL (AND SOMETIMES IMMODEST) IN THEIR DRESS WHEN THEY MEET TOGETHER AS A CONGREGATION TO WORSHIP THE LORD AND STUDY HIS WORD?** If we can take a lesson from the

word of God at all (especially the O.T.) it would be that of dressing-up to serve the Lord! The priests of the OT were ordered to dress in all their finery in order to perform their duties before the Lord. Christians are a priesthood of believers. Shouldn't Christians dress in the BEST they have to serve in his presence? How one dresses has a great deal to do with how one behaves! For that very reason the military organizations require clean, correct, and dress-up uniforms unless circumstances dictate otherwise! Many businesses do the same!

No! Boaz was not inebriated! Boaz was satisfied! The Hebrew words for drunken are shikkoor and hillool and are sometimes translated "merry". But the word used for merry in the text before us (Ruth 3:7) is tov and is sometimes translated good or well. Boaz was satisfied! Just like most of us after a hard-days work and a full meal in the evening, we become drowsy and lie down to take a nap, so Boaz was full of food and drink and was ready for sleep. His heart (mind) was at ease because his crops had been harvested and threshed, he had just partaken of a satisfying meal, and life was good. God expects us, as much as circumstances will allow, to enjoy life here on earth. But God does not want us to make the enjoyment of physical life and its surroundings as the end of our existence! Making this life, regardless of how rich and sumptuous it may be is not the final goal, or aim, of living (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, Matt. 6:33; Luke 16:19-31, Rom. 14:17, etc.).

Uncovering Boaz's feet and lying down next to him was the customary way to remind a man of his duty as a near kinsman and of indicating the desire to be married (engagement, betrothal, etc.). According to the laws of Israel, a man's brother was to marry his widow (Deut. 25:5-10) and raise up children in the name of his brother whenever a deceased brother had no heirs. It is called the "Levirate Law. Such was the case with Mahlon. Ruth was widowed, and there were no children to carry on the name of either Elimelech or Mahlon. Ruth reminded Boaz that he was a near kinsman, one who had the right and duty to redeem a deceased kinsman's land and marry his widow. There was nothing evil or necessarily sensual in what Ruth did.

Ruth was a virtuous woman (3:11) and Boaz was a believer who loved the law of God and kept it. Boaz would not break the law of God and have sexual intercourse with Ruth because they were not yet married. In fact, Boaz was careful to obey the law of God that there was a kinsman nearer than he was to Ruth. Nothing in the text suggests impropriety on the part of either Ruth or Boaz. Nothing transpired between Ruth and Boaz during the night while she was at the threshing floor. Had Boaz been a man of lustful nature, he would have immediately entered into an improper, unlawful connubial relationship with Ruth; but since he was a man of honor, he reminded her of the presence of another whose right superseded his own. So he asked Ruth to wait until this man could be approached.

Boaz was glad Ruth had not gone after young men because it indicated the virtue of this lovely Moabitess. It also indicated that she was well aware of the law of Jehovah and desired above all to keep it. She could have disregarded the Levirate law and married someone else and thus not preserved her dead husband's

heritage! It also indicated to Boaz that Ruth was an obedient daughter-in-law. She cared what happened to her mother-in-law and she cared what others would think and say about her. RUTH DID HER DUTY AND FOUND THAT GOD KNOWS BEST! She became an honored servant in the great Messianic scheme of God's redemption for the whole world by becoming an ancestress of Jesus Christ Matt. 1:5-6)! Ruth was not perfect! She probably had feelings to overcome to push herself on to Boaz . She may even have thought that she ought to be free to marry someone younger and of her own choice. If she did have such thoughts she put them aside to do what the revealed will of God said.

Boaz was a faithful, obedient and loving servant of Jehovah. He loved the law of God above his feelings or personal preferences. Boaz also loved human beings and wanted, above his personal preferences, to extend compassion and love to those in need, even to a Moabitess, even when he could have legally done otherwise. Willard Winters, op.cit. writes, "The Levirate marriage was a customary right which had received the sanction of God. It was given certain limitations through the Mosaic law. This was to be the marriage of a widow to her brother-in-law. We meet such marriages as early as Genesis 38:8. If an Israelite was married and died without children, it was the duty of his brother to marry the widow, that is to say, his sister-in-law. He was to do this to establish his brother's name in Israel. This was done by begetting a son through his sister-in-law. The son took the name of the deceased brother thus the brother's name did not become extinct in Israel. The son was the legal heir of the landed property of the deceased man (Deut. 25:5ff.). The two institutions are not connected in the Mosaic law; nevertheless it was a very natural thing to place the Levirate duty in connection with the right of redemption. This had become the traditional custom. The Law merely imposed the obligation of marrying the childless widow upon the brother. It even allowed him to renounce the obligation if he would take upon himself the disgrace connected with such a refusal (Deut. 25:7-10). According to Ruth 4;5, it had become a traditional custom to require the Levirate marriage of the one who bought the property of the deceased relative. Thus the landed possession was permanently retained in the family, but also the family itself was not suffered to die out." He could have lawfully refused to marry Ruth but he loved the law of God more than his own feelings or circumstances and was extremely compassionate toward those who desperately needed help. It is refreshing to know that a man of such character and virtue also became an ancestor of Jesus Christ!

Boaz was exemplary in his wisdom and mercy! Boaz advised Ruth to remain all night at his threshing floor bed and then in the morning advised all his workers and the rest of his family, "Let it not be known that the woman (Ruth) came to the threshing floor" (3:14). First, Boaz didn't want to send her out into the darkness of night where there might be bodily danger to her. She would be at the mercy of such men as those who milled about Lot's house in Sodom (Gen. 19) and the men of Gibeah who sexually raped and murdered concubine of the Levite in the days of the Judges (Judg. 19-21). Second, Boaz was careful to protect Ruth's reputation by squelching any rumor-mongering by those over whom he had authority. Third, while he was willing to keep her safe from harm during the middle of the night, he advised her to leave his threshing-floor early in the morning before

the sun was risen. In this way, any who saw her leave would not be able to discern who she was and would not point a finger of scandal in her direction. **WOULD THAT WE HAD GOD-FEARING MEN OF SUCH CALIBER THROUGHOUT SOCIETY TODAY!**

Naomi had a strong faith in God's providence and an incisive knowledge of human nature so she told Ruth to sit down and wait! Naomi advised Ruth to wait meaning she was not to look further for a husband. Naomi was confident concerning the outcome! She was sure Boaz would be the one eventually to marry Ruth. Naomi had early instructed Ruth not to glean in anybody else's field, and she felt sure of Boaz's good intentions. God had blessed Naomi and Ruth as they made their way from Moab to Bethlehem. By the providence of God Ruth had been led to glean in a field which belonged to a near kinsman. Naomi had guided Ruth to remind Boaz of his Levirate duty. Now the time had come for the two women to wait upon the Lord to work, through his law, in Boaz's heart to do the righteous and good thing toward his kinswoman. Naomi knew Boaz was a man of faith and ability. Everything he had done pointed to his intentions and abilities to consummate the Levirate law with Ruth. She taught Ruth in this way how God would lead in the matter. It was more needful for Ruth to put her confidence in the Lord and in Boaz than for her to take any other actions on her part. Naomi believed Boaz to be a man of deep faith, and she had faith in God's providence for the outcome of Ruth's marriage with Boaz. **AND DON'T WE ALL NEED TO LEARN TO WAIT UPON THE LORD!**

RUTH 4:1-18

Actually, Boaz was not offering Elimelech's nearest of kin a deal. Elimelech was Naomi's husband but he was deceased. Naomi was wanting to sell a portion of her husband's land and there was a kinsman nearer to her than Boaz. Boaz was being honest and faithful to the law of Moses! Boaz might have tried secretly or underhandedly to purchase Naomi's land--he might have gotten away with it. BUT THAT IS NOT THE KIND OF MAN BOAZ WAS! So Boaz went out of his way to find this nearer kinsman and inform him of the opportunity to add to his land by redeeming (for a price) what he could rightfully redeem. Boaz did not wait for any statute of limitations (had there been any)--he didn't try any secret deals or underhanded schemes to beat the nearer-kinsman out of his opportunity. Boaz didn't even keep silent about the opportunity for someone to prosper--he was willing to help a neighbor prosper! The nearer-kinsman seemed to think it was a good opportunity for him to add to his land-holdings and was willing to redeem the land. FEW BUSINESS PEOPLE TODAY WOULD BE SO OPEN-HANDED AND WILLING TO HELP A COMPETITOR PROSPER! Let's hope Christian business people would! Businesses have to make a profit or they couldn't stay in business. There's nothing wrong with making a profit or a living by operating a business. BUT THE LYING, THIEVERY, AND CUT-THROAT METHODS OF MODERN BUSINESS ARE NOT APPROVED OF IN THE BIBLE! One has only to read the Old Testament to know God wants honesty, integrity, and compassion in business dealings.

The law of God stipulated that all matters, business and otherwise, should be decided on the testimony of two or three witnesses (Deut. 17:6). A man might be condemned to death at the testimony of 2 or 3 witnesses. More serious matters were taken to the priests and the Levites for decision (Deut. 17:9). While God foresaw the day when the people of Israel would demand a king and made regulations concerning his coronation (Deut. 17:14-20), it appears that in the time of Boaz and Ruth important legal decisions were sanctioned by a number of judges, elders, and witnesses who sat in the gate. Boaz wanted to make sure the nearer-kinsman would have no reason to accuse him of unfairness, underhandedness or misrepresentations! BOAZ INSISTED ON TEN WITNESSES TO THE MATTER! The New Testament insists on this kind of integrity between members of God's "new Israel"--the church (see Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 4:1-6; 1 Thess. 4:10-12; 1 Tim. 5:19, etc.).

Naomi was past the age of raising up children. The whole purpose of the Levirate marriage was to raise up children in the name of a deceased brother who had died without heirs. Naomi herself said she was too old to bear children (Ruth 1:12). So Boaz warned the nearer-kinsman he would have to take Ruth as a wife if he redeemed Naomi's parcel of land. But the nearest of kin to Naomi was selfish--he was looking out for numero uno! He may have been prejudiced against marrying a foreign woman from Moab (although Ruth was now a sojourner or proselyte to the

Hebrew faith). More than likely he was fearful that later generations of his family would not be able to make a distinction between children born to him in the name of Mahlon and those born in his own household. He wanted no later generations fighting over who was supposed to get what! He was afraid that after he died his family would be troubled over inheritances and it would have to be taken to the authorities for decisions--there would be hard feelings, maybe even feuds, etc. HE JUST DIDN'T WANT THE BOTHER! We know what terrible envy, jealousy, fighting, litigation and life-time grudges result from much modern American inheritances--even relatively small legacies! A classic illustration of the ill-will, hatred, and life-time grudges from inheritance confrontations is that of the J. Paul Getty family! You can read about it in *The Great Getty*, by Robert Lenzner, Signet Books, 1987.

From the statement "Now this was the custom in former times in Israel".... it is clear that the custom was not being ordinarily practiced in the time of Boaz and Ruth. The actual law is in Deut. 25:5-10. In Deuteronomy if a man refused to fulfill his obligation of the Levirate law, his brother's wife was to go up to him in the presence of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot, and spit in his face and say, So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house. This man who rejected his obligation was then to be called, "The house of him that has his shoe loosed" (Deut. 25:10). The custom of taking the defector's shoe off and handing it to another was a symbol of the transfer of a possession or right of ownership. This custom also existed among the American Indians and the ancient Germans. It arose from the fact that fixed property was possessed by treading upon it. TODAY WE HAVE DEEDS AND WRITS DULY SIGNED AND WITNESSED AND FILED IN THE OFFICES OF GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES--WHICH SEEMS TO ME TO BE A BETTER CUSTOM! We certainly would not want to spit in the face of someone who is not willing to fulfill his/her obligations, although God will do even worse than that to those who are dishonest, selfish, cowardly, uncaring, and unwilling to do what God's law says. In the Christian era, those who claim God as their Father must go beyond what the law of Moses dictates in business and family relationships.

Rachel was the beloved wife of Jacob. She bore two sons to him--Joseph and Benjamin. Leah bore 6 sons to Jacob. Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were given equal status in the house of Israel with the other sons, thus Rachel was the mother of three of the founders of the 12 tribes of Israel. The prayer of the people for Ruth was for her to be like these respected mothers of Israel. INDEED, BECAUSE SHE WAS THE ANCESTRESS OF JESUS CHRIST, SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF THE ONE WHO WAS THE FULFILLMENT OF ALL THAT THE 12 TRIBES STOOD FOR (see Gal. 3:16-18 & 6:15-16). All that God was foreshadowing about the redemption of mankind in the nation of Israel and the law was fulfilled in ONE PERSON, JESUS CHRIST! Whatever and whoever is not IN CHRIST is not redeemed nor shall ever be!

The people prayed that the house of Boaz and Ruth be like that of their ancestor, Perez (Ruth 4:12). Perez was the son of Judah. Perez was sired by Judah with his daughter-in-law, Tamar, whom he thought to be a prostitute (Gen. 38:29). All the families of Judah were descended through Perez. Judah became

the leading tribe of Israel. David, God's Anointed was of the tribe of Judah. When Jacob blessed his sons and prayed for them he predicted the preeminence which would belong to Judah (Gen. 49:1-12). Since Judah was the leading tribe and his families were counted through the descendants of Perez, the people of Bethlehem, a city in Judah, could think of no greater blessing than for Boaz and his family to be like the family of Perez (see Micah 5:2; Matt. 1:2-6; 2:6; Jn. 7:42; Gen. 35:19; 48:7; Isa. 11:1; Lk. 2:4; Jer. 30:21; Zech. 9:9; Psa. 102:25; Prov. 8:22-23). **YOU SEE GOD KNEW THOUSANDS OF YEARS BEFOREHAND THE LINEAGE OF FAITHFULNESS TO HIS WORD THAT WOULD BRING HIS ANOINTED SAVIOR TO THE WORLD!** History is in the faithful and sovereign hands of Almighty God--the unfaithfulness of nearest kinsmen cannot thwart the Divine Scheme of Redemption!

First, the last part of the book of Ruth clearly indicates it was written after David had been born and before Solomon was born. Samuel probably wrote the book. Samuel did not live to see David on the throne. Samuel's death is recorded in 1 Sam. 25:1. Therefore, we place the date of writing of the book of Ruth as somewhere near 1015 B.C. This would have been after David came to national prominence by killing Goliath (1 Sam. 17). The book of Ruth must have been written during the time between David's prominence and after his anointing by Samuel (1 Sam. 16) and before he became king (2 Sam. 2). Second, the genealogy closes with David and is proof that the book was intended to give a family picture from the life of the pious ancestors of this great and godly king of Israel. For us the history which points to David acquires supreme significance from the fact that all members of the genealogy of David whose names occur here (Perez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse) are also found, name for name, in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (see Matt. 1:3-6). Thus we may understand the Holy Spirit's purpose for leading Samuel to write the history of Ruth and Boaz was to document the sovereignty of Almighty God in directing history to its climactic point when Jesus Christ was born of descendants of Judah in the village of Bethlehem! **GOD USES EVEN THE LOWLY AND DESPISED (A MOABITNESS GIRL) TO CARRY OUT HIS GLORIOUS AND MAJESTIC SCHEME OF REDEMPTION.** And God continues to use the lowly and despised to populate and propagate his kingdom on earth--the church of Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:2; Eph. 2:2-3; Col. 3:5-7; Titus 3:3-7).

The following pages are classroom notes that Paul T Butler prepared to be used while he taught this book at a college level. He would create overhead transparencies with this material. All the students would copy these elements into their notebooks while Paul lectured.

RUTH 1

1.
 - A. MOAB WAS THE GRANDSON OF LOT BY INCEST WITH HIS ELDEST DAUGHTER (GEN. 19:30-38)
 - B. LOT'S FATHER WAS HARAN (ABRAHAM'S BROTHER) ERGO, LOT WAS ABRAHAM'S NEPHEW
 - C. SO THE MOABITES WERE "KINFOLK" TO GOD'S "CHOSEN PEOPLE"---THE ISRAELITES
 - D. THE MOABITES SETTLED AT AR, EAST OF THE SO. PART OF THE DEAD SEA—CLOSE TO FORMER SODOM & GOMORRAH
 - E. WHEN THE ISRAELITES WERE TREKKING TOWARD CANAAN-LAND, THE MOABITE KING HIRED BAALAM TO CURSE ISRAEL—BUT HE DIDN'T
 - F. BALAAM "COUNSELED" ISRAEL'S ENEMIES TO SEDUCE THEM INTO IDOLATRY & WICKEDNESS (NUM. 31:16)
 - G. SOME WERE SEDUCED & GOD SENT A PLAGUE THAT KILLED 24,000 MEN OF ISRAEL
 - H. THE "GOD" OF THE MOABITES WAS "CHEMOSH" WORSHIPED BY HUMAN SACRIFICE & SEXUAL PERVERSITY—MOSES DIED ON MT. PISGAH IN MOAB

2.
 - A. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE "COMMERCE" BETWEEN ISRAEL & MOAB—ELIMELECH OF BETHLEHEM TOOK HIS FAMILY TO MOAB BECAUSE OF A FAMINE IN ISRAEL
 - B. DAVID, FLEEING FROM SAUL, TOOK HIS PARENTS TO THE KING OF MOAB FOR PROTECTION (1 SAM. 22:3-4)
 - C. MOAB & ISRAEL HAD NUMEROUS WARS WITH ONE ANOTHER—SOME ISRAELITES ADOPTED CHILD-SACRIFICE FROM MOAB (PSA. 106:34; JER. 7:30-34; 19:1-6)
 - D. AMOS, ISAIAH, EZEKIEL, JEREMIAH & ZEPHANIAH, ALL PREDICT THE JUDGMENT OF GOD UPON MOAB
 - E. THEY ALSO PREDICT GOD'S JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL FOR ADOPTING THE IDOLATRIES & INFANTICIDE OF MOAB
 - F. WHAT MUST GOD THINK OF THE CONTINUING SLAUGHTER OF MILLIONS OF INNOCENT BABIES BY ABORTION IN AMERICA!
 - G. ONLY CHRIST'S REGENERATION WILL STOP IT!

3.
 - A. APPARENTLY THESE 2 DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW OF NAOMI HAD NOT ONLY LOST THEIR HUSBANDS, THEY HAD NO FATHER EITHER—NAOMI ADVISED THEM TO RETURN TO THE "HOUSE OF THEIR MOTHER"
 - B. NAOMI KNEW THEY WOULD NEED THE PROTECTION ONLY "HOME" & "MOTHER" COULD GIVE
 - C. SINCE NAOMI'S HUSBAND HAD DIED, THEY WOULD BE 3

- WIDOWS FACING THE MALE-DOMINATED SOCIETY OF ISRAEL—
2 OF THEM BEING MOABITESSES!—NAOMI SAW NO HOPE OF
THEIR FINDING HUSBANDS IN ISRAEL
- D. TO GO BACK TO ISRAEL ALONE SHOWS NAOMI'S DEEP LOVE FOR HER DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW
 - E. BUT THE LOVE OF RUTH FOR HER MOTHER-IN-LAW WAS JUST AS DEEP ("RUTH" MEANS "DESIRABLE" IN ARAMAIC)
 - F. YES, THE LOVE OF "IN-LAWS" CAN BE AS DEEP AS THE LOVE OF "BLOOD-RELATIONS"
4.
 - A. RUTH'S INSISTENCE ON LEAVING HER OWN HOMELAND TO GO WITH NAOMI WAS SO STRONG BECAUSE IT WAS LINKED TO RUTH'S YEARNING TO WORSHIP NAOMI'S GOD (1:16) & HIS LAWS
 - B. IN HER HEART & SOUL SHE HAD BECOME A CONVERT TO THE ISRAELITE FAITH!
 - C. SHE KNEW SHE COULD NOT FIND THE TRUTH OF GOD IN MOAB & WOULD SOON LOSE HER FAITH
 - D. THOSE WHO HAVE ONCE BEEN BELIEVERS AND DISSOCIATE FROM ALL OTHER BELIEVERS ARE BOUND TO LOSE THEIR FAITH—LET IT "SLIP BY" (HEB. 2:1-4; 10:19-25)
 - E. CHRISTIANS CANNOT SURVIVE THE "DARTS" OF SATAN, THE FLESH & THE WORLD UNLESS THEY ARE ACTIVELY, CONSTANTLY ASSOCIATING, SHARING & PARTICIPATING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD THROUGH SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES OF A CONGREGATION OF BELIEVERS
 5.
 - A. ALL BETHLEHEM WAS EXCITED ABOUT NAOMI'S RETURN
 - B. BUT THEY WERE SADDENED TO SEE HER IN SUCH A MOURNFUL COUNTENANCE & CONDITION
 - C. WITHOUT EITHER HUSBAND OR SONS SHE SAID, "CALL ME NOT NAOMI ("GRACIOUS"), BUT MARA ("BITTER")
 - D. SHE HAD LEFT ISRAEL "FULL" & NOW RETURNS "EMPTY"—SHE FELT AS IF THE "ALMIGHTY" (HEB. SHADDAI) WAS "TESTIFYING AGAINST" HER
 - E. THE PEOPLE OF BETHLEHEM WERE SYMPATHETIC TO NAOMI'S PREDICAMENT—SHE HAD "RELATIVES" THERE
 - F. THE LAW OF MOSES TOLD ALL ISRAELITES TO TAKE CARE OF WIDOWS & ORPHANS (see DEUT. 14:29; JAS. 1:27)
 - G. SOME DID, SOME DIDN'T—CHRISTIANITY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF TODAY'S EDUCATIONAL, PHILANTHROPIC, INDUSTRIAL & MEDICAL ADVANCEMENTS
 6.
 - A. THE HEBREW WORD MARA, TRANSLATED "BITTER" COULD BE TRANSLATED "GRIEVED, SORROWED, SADDENED"
 7. ACTUALLY, NAOMI DID NOT SAY SHE WAS BITTER—SHE SAID THE LORD HAD DEALT VERY BITTERLY WITH HER
 8. WHAT NAOMI MEANT DEPENDS ON HER FAITH!
 9. SHE WASN'T SO "BITTER" SHE STAYED IN MOAB—SHE WAS

TENDERLY CONCERNED ABOUT HER DAUGHTER-IN-LAW TO URGE HER TO LEAVE HER & SHE WOULD RETURN TO ISRAEL ALONE

10. BECAUSE OF NAOMI'S AND RUTH'S FAITH, NAOMI'S AFFLICTION WAS TO BE TURNED INTO BLESSEDNESS (4:15)
11. THIS IS A GREAT LESSON, ALONG WITH THE LIFE OF JOB & DAVID & JEREMIAH & PAUL THAT THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND TRUST THE LORD WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE THEIR AFFLICTION TURNED INTO JOY (JN. 14:1-31; 15:1-27; 16:1-33)

RUTH 2

1. A. TWO HEBREW WORDS FOR "GLEAN" ARE OLAL "PICK UP" & LOKAT "COLLECT"
 - B. ENGLISH "GLEAN" MEANS "PICK UP WHAT IS LEFT" AFTER A REAPER HARVESTS HIS FIELD
 - C. RUTH WAS NOT STEALING—O.T. LAW MADE PROVISION FOR THE POOR & WIDOWED TO GLEAN FIELDS & VINEYARDS FOR THEIR SUSTENANCE
 - D. JESUS DECLARED THERE WILL ALWAYS BE ENOUGH POOR IN THE WORLD FOR GOD-FEARING PEOPLE TO HELP; MOSES WROTE THE SAME (see DEUT. 15:7-11)
 - E. BELIEVERS ARE PROMISED THAT IF THEY GIVE LIBERALLY THE LORD WILL PROVIDE EVERY BLESSING IN ABUNDANCE FOR EVERY GOOD WORK (2 COR. 9:6-13)
 - F. WE KNOW WE CAN TRUST GOD'S PROMISES!!
2. A. THE WORK WAS NOT TOO "HARD" FOR RUTH—ALICE THURMAN WORKED IN THE CORN & WHEAT FIELDS—MY GRANDMOTHER—LOIS THURMAN WORKED A TEAM OF HORSES & CHOPPED WEEDS IN THE CORN WHEN SHE WAS AN ADOLESCENT—MY MOTHER
 - B. THEY OUTLIVED THEIR HUSBANDS & BROTHERS—IT'S NOT UN-CHRISTIAN, NOR ANTI-FEMINIST, TO INSIST THAT WOMEN WORK (1 THESS. 4:8; 2 THESS. 3:6-15)
 - C. BELIEVE ME, IF THEY KEEP A CHRISTIAN HOME, THEY WORK "HARD"!
 - D. ADAM & EVE WERE COMMANDED TO SUBDUE THE EARTH, HAVE DOMINION OVER IT, TILL IT & KEEP IT
 - E. JESUS, PETER, JOHN, PAUL ALL WORKED—AND ALL OF JESUS' PARABLES PORTRAY BOTH SERVANTS & MASTERS WORKING
 - F. IF YOUNGSTERS HAD MORE CHORES TO DO AFTER THEY GET HOME FROM SCHOOL, THEY WOULD HAVE MUCH LESS TIME TO CONCEIVE MEAN & DESTRUCTIVE THINGS TO DO
 - G. ONE GOOD THING THE "NEW DEAL" (1930's) DID WAS THE C.C.C. & P.W.A.

3. A. BOAZ WAS A GODLY MAN—HE KNEW GOD EXPECTED BEHAVIOR IN KEEPING WITH GOD’S GRACIOUSNESS—BEYOND THE LETTER OF THE LAW
 - B. HE PRAYED FOR GOD’S BLESSING ON HIS WORKERS—AND THEY RECIPROCATED!
 - C. THIS SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT THE GOODNESS & RIGHTEOUSNESS OF BOAZ
 - D. BOAZ CONSIDERED IT HIS GODLY RESPONSIBILITY TO GIVE AID TO BOTH NAOMI & RUTH (THE MOABITNESS)
 - E. HE BELIEVED RUTH SHOULD BE COMPENSATED FOR HER UNSELFISH CARING FOR NAOMI
 - F. HE ALSO PLEDGED PERSONAL PROTECTION FOR RUTH
 - G. JESUS HAD A FEW “SKELETONS” IN HIS ANCESTRY—BUT ALSO SOME VENERABLE SAINTS LIKE RUTH & BOAZ

4. A. THERE ARE MANY GOVERNMENT & CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS CAPABLE & WILLING TO BE CARE-TAKERS OF THE POOR & INFIRM
 - B. HOWEVER, THERE’S NOTHING LIKE THE LOVING CARE GIVEN BY A GODLY RELATIVE
 - C. CHILDREN & IN-LAWS SHOULD BE PERSONAL CARE-TAKERS OF PARENTS & OTHER RELATIVES—EVEN IN MODERN SOCIETY
 - D. THE BIBLE DEMANDS & EXPECTS IT TO BE SO
 - E. IT IS CLEAR THAT “THOSE WHO DO NOT CARE FOR THEIR OWN HOUSEHOLD” HAVE DENIED THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, AND ARE “MORE EVIL” THAN AN UNBELIEVER (1 TIM. 5:8)
 - F. THE PHARISEES, WHO PUT ON SUCH GREAT SHOWS OF RELIGIOSITY, MADE UP THEIR OWN RULES ABOUT THEIR POSSESSIONS SO THEY WOULDN’T HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR AGED PARENTS
 - G. JOSEPH, WHOSE BROTHERS SOLD HIM INTO SLAVERY, FORGAVE THEM AND TOOK EXTRAORDINARY & TENDER CARE OF HIS ENTIRE FAMILY IN EGYPT
 - H. RUTH WAS A “FOREIGNER” AND “IN-LAW” TO BOAZ—STILL A PART OF HIS EXTENDED FAMILY!

5. A. SEXUAL PURITY FOR BOTH MALE & FEMALE IS SACROSANCT WITH GOD—IT WAS THAT WAY FROM THE “BEGINNING”
 - B. BOAZ WAS NEITHER A “SISSY” NOR A “MACHO-MALE” FOR PROTECTING THE FEMININE PURITY OF RUTH
 - C. THE WHOLE BIBLE MAKES THE VIRTUE & PROTECTION OF WOMANHOOD ONE OF ITS PREMIUM DOCTRINES!
 - D. GOD HOLDS MALES RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT (1 COR. 7:1-49; 11:1-22; EPH. 5:25; COL. 3:19; 1 PET. 3:7)
 - E. PETER DOES NOT CALL FEMALES THE WEAKER SEX BECAUSE HE IS A MALE-CHAUVINIST
 - F. GOD CREATED WOMEN WITH THE NEED TO HAVE MEN PROTECT THEM—AND MEN WITH THE NEED TO DO SO
 - G. WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE

PHYSICAL WEAKNESS OF WOMEN IS IGNORED & THEY ATTEMPT TO BECOME FIRE-FIGHTERS, POLICEMEN, SOLDIERS & CONSTRUCTION WORKERS!

H. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WOMEN WERE INCARCERATED WITH MEN IN PRISONS????

6. A. IF AN ISRAELITE BECAME POOR AND SOLD PART OF HIS PROPERTY, HIS NEXT OF KIN WAS TO REDEEM IT FOR HIM SO HE MIGHT SUSTAIN HIS LIFE (LEV. 25:25-55)

7. IT WAS A FAMILY MATTER! FAMILIES WERE TO TAKE CARE OF ONE ANOTHER

8. GOD'S IDEAL SOCIETY IS NOT ONE OF "DOG EAT DOG"—BUT IT IS ALL WRAPPED UP IN *FAMILY*

9. THAT IS THE MOST PRACTICAL WAY TO SUSTAIN SOCIAL ORDER—LOOK AT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO AMERICA BECAUSE OF THE DISINTEGRATION OF *FAMILY*

10. PUBLIC EDUCATION & THE "MEDIA" PUMPS CHILDREN FULL OF "EVOLUTION" & ANIMALISTIC VALUES

11. MILLIONS OF "FAMILIES" ARE "LATCH-KEY" SITUATIONS—USUALLY ONE-PARENT

12. AMORAL, TOLERATION OF EVERYTHING, HAS OUR BLESSED LAND "SLOUCHING TOWARD SODOM"!

7. A. BOAZ WAS KIND AND GODLY TOWARD HIS WORKERS
 B. HE PRAYED TO GOD ON THEIR BEHALF, 2:4
 C. HE PROTECTED THEM AGAINST THEMSELVES BY ORDERING THEM NOT TO "MOLEST" THE FOREIGN WOMAN, RUTH, 2:9
 D. HE REMINDED THEM OF THEIR OBLIGATION TO BE KIND & GIVE HER WATER TO DRINK, 2:9
 E. HE ALLOWED THEM THE COMPANY OF THIS LOVELY WOMAN TO "EAT" WITH THEM, 2:14
 F. HE HELPED THEM BE COMPASSIONATE BY TELLING THEM TO "LEAVE" A PART OF THEIR "BUNDLES" FOR HER TO GLEAN, 2:16
 G. HENRY FORD "PROVIDED" FOR HIS AUTO WORKERS BEYOND WHAT ANY OTHER TYCOON DID
 H. BUT HIS WORKERS, INCITED BY RADICAL COMMUNISTS, BEGAN TO DEMAND MORE AND MORE UNTIL THE COMPANY FACED BANKRUPTCY
 I. IT IS POSSIBLE IN A CAPITALISTIC SOCIETY TO CONDUCT BUSINESS WITHOUT EXPLOITATION
 J. *IF* BOTH CAPITAL & LABOR WOULD PRACTICE CHRIST'S RULE, "WHATEVER YOU WISH THAT MEN WOULD DO TO YOU, DO SO TO THEM; FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS" (i.e., THE REVEALED WILL OF GOD), MT. 7:12

RUTH 3

1.
 - A. NAOMI WAS NOT MEDDLING—SHE WAS DOING HER DUTY
 - B. RUTH WAS A WIDOW, BUT YOUNG ENOUGH TO REMARRY & NEEDED A HUSBAND TO PROTECT HER
 - C. EVEN THE N.T. ADVISES YOUNG WIDOWS TO REMARRY (1 TIM. 5:14)—THAT IS GOOD PRACTICE IN ANY GENERATION
 - D. MALE-ABSENT HOMES ARE NOT GOOD—GOD NEVER INTENDED IT TO BE SO
 - E. “THE RECOGNITION OF WOMAN’S NEED FOR MARRIAGE...IS FAMILIAR TO ALL JEWS—AN OLD MAID IS A STAIN ON THE REPUTATION OF HER FAMILY & THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY IN WHICH SHE LIVES—IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND HER A HUSBAND—A SINGLE WOMAN IS CONSIDERED...AS IN SOME SENSE DEFECTIVE” from, *LIVING JEWISH*, M. ASHERI, 1978
 - F. SO NAOMI BECAME A YENTEL, A “MATCH-MAKER”

2.
 - A. “DRESSING UP” FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS IS NOT WRONG
 - B. SEDUCTIVE OVER-DRESSING, OR UNDER-DRESSING ARE BOTH IMMODEST
 - C. LAUREN WINNER, AUTHOR OF REAL SEX WRITES, “THE COMMERCIAL MARKET-PLACE PROMOTES A CULTURE OF IMMODESTY THAT CHRISTIANS MUST COUNTERACT”
 - D. SHE SAYS, “OUR CLOTHES TELL STORIES ABOUT OURSELVES”
 - E. WHY DO A FEW CHRISTIANS TODAY WANT TO BE SO CASUAL IN ATTIRE (SOMETIMES IMMODEST) TO “COME TO CHURCH”?
 - F. THEY ARE EVEN COMING TO WEDDINGS & FUNERALS IN DIRTY JEANS AND T-SHIRTS!
 - G. HOW ONE DRESSES HAS MUCH TO DO WITH HOW ONE BEHAVES—THAT’S WHY THE MILITARY IS STRICT ABOUT DRESS!

3.
 - A. BOAZ WAS NOT INEBRIATED—HE WAS “SATISFIED”
 - B. THE HEBREW WORD IS TOV “GOOD”—MAZZELTOV IS “GOOD FORTUNE OR BLESSING”
 - C. BOAZ WAS FULL OF FOOD, HIS HARVEST WAS IN, AND HE WAS READY FOR A SNOOZE—LIFE WAS GOOD
 - D. HE HAD A GOOD CONSCIENCE ABOUT BEING ABLE TO HELP NAOMI AND RUTH
 - E. GOD EXPECTS US, AS MUCH AS CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOW, TO ENJOY “LIFE UNDER THE SUN” (REMEMBER ECCLESIASTES)
 - F. BUT GOD DOES NOT WANT US TO MAKE ENJOYMENT OF PHYSICAL LIFE & ITS SURROUNDINGS THE PURPOSE OF OUR EXISTENCE
 - G. WE ARE TO LEARN TO BE CONTENT IN WHATEVER STATE WE FIND OURSELVES, PHIL. 4:11-12

4.
 - A. UNCOVERING FEET, & LYING NEXT TO HIM WAS THE CUSTOMARY WAY OF REMINDING A MAN OF HIS DUTY AS A NEAR KINSMAN (ENGAGEMENT, BETROTHAL)
 - B. THE LEVIRATE MARRIAGE LAW WAS AN ANCIENT CUSTOM SANCTIONED BY PRACTICE & ONAN DISPLEASED THE LORD BY NOT PRACTICING IT (GEN. 38:8ff)
 - C. IT BECAME A PART OF THE LAW OF MOSES (DEUT. 25:5-10) REQUIRED OF ALL ISRAELITE MEN
 - D. IT DOES NOT CONTRADICT THE MOSAIC PROHIBITION OF HAVING SEX WITH ONE'S SISTER-IN-LAW WHEN HER HUSBAND IS ALIVE (LEV. 18:16:20:21)
 - E. THE SADDUCEES USED THIS LEVIRATE MARRIAGE LAW TO TRY TO TRAP JESUS INTO REPUDIATION OF THE LAW OF MOSES
 - F. BUT IT DIDN'T WORK—THE SADDUCEES DIDN'T BELIEVE IN A RESURRECTION & HEAVEN
 - G. JESUS SAID THEY DID NOT KNOW THE SCRIPTURES NOR THE POWER OF GOD (TO MAKE HEAVEN A PLACE WHERE MARRIAGE IS NOT NECESSARY TO ETERNAL ENJOYMENT & FELLOWSHIP)

5.
 - A. RUTH WAS A VERY RESPONSIBLE & VIRTUOUS WOMAN AND BOAZ WAS A BELIEVER WHO LOVED THE LAW OF THE LORD & KEPT IT
 - B. BOAZ WOULD NOT BREAK THE LAW OF THE LORD AND HAVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH RUTH BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT YET MARRIED
 - C. BOAZ WAS CAREFUL TO OBEY THE O.T. LAW AGAINST FORNICATION
 - D. NOTHING SEXUAL TRANSPIRED BETWEEN RUTH & BOAZ DURING THE NIGHT AT THE THRESHING FLOOR
 - E. IN FACT, BOAZ REMINDED RUTH OF THE PRESENCE OF ANOTHER WHOSE OBLIGATION SUPERSEDED HIS TO TAKE HER AS WIFE
 - F. HE ASKED RUTH TO WAIT UNTIL THIS MAN COULD BE APPROACHED

6.
 - A. RUTH'S REFUSAL TO "GO AFTER YOUNG MEN" INDICATED THE VIRTUE OF THIS LOVELY MOABITNESS
 - B. SHE COULD HAVE DISREGARDED THE LEVIRATE LAW AND MARRIED SOMEONE ELSE
 - C. RUTH MAY HAVE FELT SHE SHOULD MARRY ACCORDING TO HER OWN WISHES
 - D. BUT SHE PUT ASIDE HER "FEELINGS" TO DO WHAT THE REVEALED WILL OF JEHOVAH-GOD DECREED
 - E. IT ALSO INDICATED RUTH, THE MOABITNESS, CARED ABOUT HER ISRAELITE MOTHER-IN-LAW—SHE "WAS NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM"
 - F. SHE BECAME AN HONORED SERVANT IN THE GREAT MESSIANIC PROGRAM OF GOD'S REDEMPTION FOR THE

- WORLD
- G. 1000 YRS. LATER, SHE BECAME AN ANCESTRESS OF JESUS CHRIST
 - H. HER SON WAS OBED—HER GRANDSON WAS JESSE—HER GREAT GRANDSON WAS DAVID (WHO DID, BY THE WAY, COMMIT ADULTERY WITH BATHSHEBA & CAUSED URIAH TO BE KILLED IN BATTLE)—HER GREAT-GREAT GRANDSON, SOLOMON, HAD 1000 WIVES & CONCUBINES
- 7.
- A. BOAZ WAS A LOVING & FAITHFUL SERVANT OF JEHOVAH—HE LOVED THE LAW OF GOD ABOVE HIS FEELINGS OR PERSONAL PREFERENCES
 - B. HE ALSO LOVED HUMAN BEINGS AND WANTED, ABOVE HIS PERSONAL FEELINGS, TO EXTEND COMPASSION AND LOVE TO THOSE IN NEED—EVEN A MOABITESS—EVEN WHEN HE COULD HAVE DONE OTHERWISE
 - C. HE COULD HAVE LAWFULLY REFUSED TO MARRY RUTH & TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SUPPORTING HER WIDOWED MOTHER-IN-LAW
 - D. BUT HE LOVED THE LAW OF GOD MORE THAN HIS OWN FEELINGS OR CIRCUMSTANCES AND WAS EXTRAORDINARILY COMPASSIONATE TOWARD THOSE WHO DESPERATELY NEEDED HELP
 - E. IT IS REFRESHING TO KNOW THAT A MAN OF SUCH CHARACTER AND VIRTUE BECAME AN ANCESTOR OF JESUS CHRIST
- 8.
- A. BOAZ WAS EXEMPLARY IN HIS WISDOM & MERCY BY TELLING RUTH TO REMAIN OVERNIGHT AT THE THRESHING FLOOR
 - 9. HE DID NOT WANT TO SEND HER OUT INTO THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT WHERE DANGER LURKED
 - 10. HE CAREFULLY PROTECTED RUTH'S REPUTATION BY ORDERING HIS WORKERS & FAMILY NOT TO TELL THAT SHE HAD SPENT THE NIGHT THERE
 - 11. HE ADVISED HER TO LEAVE HIS THRESHING FLOOR EARLY IN THE MORNING BEFORE SUNRISE SO NO ONE ELSE WOULD SEE AND SPREAD RUMORS THAT WERE NOT TRUE
 - 12. WOULD TO GOD THAT WE HAD GOD-FEARING MEN OF SUCH MORAL INTEGRITY THROUGHOUT SOCIETY TODAY
 - 13. MOST OF OUR SOCIETY HAS SCANDALIZED WOMEN BY PORTRAYING THEM IN T.V. & MOVIES AS GREEDY, GRASPING, EGOTISTICAL ADULTERERS
- 9.
- A. NAOMI HAD A STRONG FAITH IN GOD'S PROVIDENCE & AN INCISIVE KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN NATURE—SHE TOLD RUTH TO SIT DOWN AND WAIT!
 - B. NAOMI WAS CONFIDENT THAT EVENTUALLY RUTH WOULD BECOME THE WIFE OF BOAZ
 - C. SHE HAD EARLIER INSTRUCTED RUTH TO GLEAN ONLY IN

BOAZ'S FIELD BECAUSE SHE FELT SURE OF HIS INTEGRITY & FAITH IN GOD'S LAW

- D. NAOMI HAD GIVEN RUTH GUIDANCE IN THE LEVIRATE LAW OF THE ISRAELITES
- E. THEN IT WAS TIME TO WAIT UPON THE LORD'S PROVIDENCE TO WORK ON THE HEART OF BOAZ THROUGH THE LAW OF THE LORD
- F. SHE TAUGHT RUTH IN THIS WAY HOW GOD WOULD LEAD IN THE MATTER & NO ONE SHOULD "RUN AHEAD OF GOD"
- G. AND DON'T WE ALL NEED TO LEARN TO "WAIT UPON THE LORD" TRUSTING IN HIS PROMISES

RUTH 4

1.
 - A. BOAZ WASN'T OFFERING THE "NEARER KINSMAN" A "DEAL"
 - B. BOAZ WAS COMMITTED TO GETTING THE LAW OF GOD OBEYED!
 - C. BOAZ MIGHT HAVE TRIED SECRETLY TO PURCHASE NAOMI'S LAND & GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT—BUT BOAZ WAS NOT THAT KIND OF MAN!
 - D. BOAZ DIDN'T WAIT FOR A STATUE OF LIMITATIONS (HAD THERE BEEN ANY)—HE DIDN'T TRY ANY SECRET DEALS—HE DIDN'T EVEN KEEP SILENT ABOUT THE MATTER
 - E. HE WAS WILLING TO HELP A KINSMAN PROSPER AND BE FAITHFUL TO THE WORD OF GOD
 - F. FEW BUSINESS PEOPLE TODAY WOULD BE SO OPEN-HANDED & WILLING TO HELP A "COMPETITOR" PROSPER
 - G. LYING, CHEATING, UNDERHANDED BUSINESS PRACTICES ARE PROHIBITED—SPECIFICALLY IN THE O.T. LAW & IN PRINCIPLE IN THE N.T. SCRIPTURES

2.
 - A. GOD'S LAW STIPULATES THAT ALL MATTERS, BUSINESS & JUDICIAL SHOULD BE DECIDED ON THE TESTIMONY OF 2 OR 3 WITNESSES (DEUT. 17:6)
 - B. A MAN MIGHT BE SENTENCED TO DEATH AT THE TESTIMONY OF 2 OR 3 WITNESSES
 - C. SERIOUS MATTERS WERE TO BE TAKEN TO THE PRIESTS ("SUPREME COURT")
 - D. IN RUTH'S TIME LEGAL DECISIONS WERE SANCTIONED BY A NUMBER OF JUDGES, ELDERS & WITNESSES "IN THE GATE"
 - E. BOAS WANTED 10 WITNESSES TO MAKE SURE THE NEARER-KINSMAN WOULD HAVE NO REASON TO ACCUSE OF HIM OF UNFAIRNESS, OR ILLEGALITY
 - F. THE N.T. INSISTS ON SUCH INTEGRITY IN GOD'S "NEW ISRAEL" (MT. 18:15-20; 1 COR. 6:1-8; 1 TIM. 5:19)

3.
 - A. NAOMI WAS TOO OLD TO BEAR CHILDREN SO BOAZ INFORMED THE "NEAREST" RELATIVE OF ELIMELECH HE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE

- RUTH AS WIFE IF HE REDEEMED NOAMI'S PARCEL OF LAND
- B. HE WOULD ALSO HAVE TO TAKE NAOMI INTO HIS HOUSE
 - C. HE MAY HAVE BEEN PREJUDICED AGAINST A MOABITNESS
 - D. HE WAS FEARFUL THAT LATER GENERATIONS OF HIS FAMILY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN CHILDREN BORN TO HIM BY THE MOABITNESS & THOSE BY HIS ISRAELITE WIFE
 - E. HE ANTICIPATED TROUBLE ABOUT HIS "INHERITANCE"—RESENTMENT, FEUDS, LITIGATIONS?
 - F. IN OUR OWN GENERATION WE'VE WITNESSED THE TERRIBLE ENVY, LITIGATION, LIFE-TIME GRUDGES RESULTING FROM RELATIVELY SMALL LEGACIES—LET ALONE THOSE OF MILLIONAIRES
4.
 - A. "FORMER TIMES" (DEUT. 25:9)—NAOMI WAS TO GO, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ELDERS, PULL THE MAN'S SANDAL FROM HIS FOOT, & SPIT IN HIS FACE, SAYING, "SO SHALL IT BE DONE TO THE MAN WHO DOES NOT BUILD UP HIS BROTHERS HOUSE"
 - B. SUCH A MAN WAS THEN TO BE KNOWN AS, "THE HOUSE OF HIM THAT HAS HIS SHOE LOOSED" (DEUT. 25:10)
 - C. TAKING THE DEFECTOR'S SHOE OFF AND HANDING IT TO ANOTHER SIGNIFIED TRANSFER OF A POSSESSION—THE SHOE SYMBOLIZED LAND WAS POSSESSED BY THOSE WHO TREAD UPON IT—A CUSTOM OF AMERICAN FRONTIERSMEN & AMERICAN INDIANS
 - D. TODAY'S DEEDS AND WRITS WITNESSED & FILED IN GOV. OFFICES IS A MUCH BETTER SYSTEM
 - E. ONE DAY GOD WILL DO WORSE THAN SPITTING IN THE FACE OF THOSE WHO ARE DISHONEST, SELFISH, COWARDLY, UNCARING & UNWILLING TO OBEY HIS LAWS!
 5.
 - A. RACHEL WAS THE BELOVED WIFE OF JACOB (a.k.a. "ISRAEL")
 - B. SHE BORE HIM HIS TWO FAVORITE SONS—JOSEPH & BENJAMIN
 - C. LEAH BORE JACOB 6 SONS (HALF OF "ISRAEL")
 - D. THE PEOPLE PRAYED FOR RUTH TO PRODUCE MANY SONS FOR ISRAEL—AND RIGHTEOUS ONES
 - E. GOD ANSWERED THEIR PRAYER IN A UNIQUE WAY, MAKING RUTH THE ANCESTRESS OF JESUS CHRIST, THE "SEED" (SINGULAR, GAL. 3:16; 6:15-16) WHO WOULD CALL TO HIMSELF GOD'S ULTIMATE "(NEW) ISRAEL"—THE CHURCH
 - F. WHATEVER & WHOEVER IS NOT "IN CHRIST" IS NOT DESTINED FOR ULTIMATE REDEMPTION!
 6.
 - A. PEREZ WAS THE SON OF JUDAH (GEN. 38:29)—ALL THE FAMILIES OF JUDAH DESCENDED THROUGH PEREZ
 - B. DAVID, GOD'S GREATEST HUMAN LEADER OF ISRAEL WAS FROM THE TRIBE OF JUDAH
 - C. THE PEOPLE OF BETHLEHEM COULD THINK OF NO GREATER

- BLESSING THAN FOR BOAZ & HIS FAMILY TO BE LIKE THE FAMILY OF PEREZ (MICAH 5:2; MT. 1:2-6; 2:6; JN. 7:42; GEN. 35:19; 48:7; ISA. 11:1; LK. 2:4; JER. 30:21; ZECH. 9:9; PSA. 102:25; PROV. 8:22-23)
- D. GOD KNEW 1000's OF YEARS BEFOREHAND THE LINEAGE OF FAITHFULNESS TO HIS WORD THAT WOULD BRING HIS ANOINTED SAVIOR TO THE WHOLE WORLD!
 - E. HISTORY IS IN THE FAITHFUL & SOVEREIGN HANDS OF ALMIGHTY GOD—THE UNFAITHFULNESS OF “NEAREST” KINSMEN CANNOT THWART THE DIVINE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION
 - F. NOR CAN FAMILY GENETICS (MOAB)—GOD CAN FROM THE VERY STONES OF THE GROUND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO ABRAHAM WHO WILL DO HIS BIDDING!
7.
 - A. FIRST, THE LAST PART OF RUTH INDICATES IT WAS WRITTEN AFTER DAVID HAD BEEN BORN & BEFORE SOLOMON WAS BORN—SAMUEL PROBABLY WROTE THE BOOK—WE CAN PLACE THE DATE OF RUTH CA. 1015 B.C., SHORTLY AFTER DAVID KILLED GOLIATH
 - B. SECOND, THE GENEALOGY CLOSING WITH DAVID IS EVIDENCE THAT THE BOOK WAS INTENDED TO GIVE A FAMILY PICTURE FROM THE LIFE OF THE PIOUS ANCESTORS OF THE GODLY DAVID
 - C. FOR US, THE HISTORY POINTING TO DAVID ACQUIRES SUPREME SIGNIFICANCE FROM THE FACT THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE GENEALOGY OF DAVID WHOSE NAMES OCCUR HERE (PEREZ TO JESSE) ARE ALSO FOUND, NAME FOR NAME, IN MATTHEW'S GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST (MT. 1:3-6)
 - D. THE LORD'S PURPOSE FOR THE GENEALOGY IN RUTH WAS TO DOCUMENT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN DIRECTING HISTORY TO ITS CLIMACTIC POINT WHEN JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN OF DESCENDANTS OF JUDAH IN THE VILLAGE OF BETHLEHEM
 - E. GOD USES EVEN THE LOWLY AND DESPISED (A MOABITESS GIRL) TO CARRY OUT HIS GLORIOUS, MAJESTIC SCHEME OF REDEMPTION
 - F. AND GOD CONTINUES TO USE THE LOWLY TO POPULATE AND PROPAGATE HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH—THE CHURCH OF CHRIST—see 1 COR. 6:11; 12:2; EPH. 2:2-3; COL. 3:5-7; TITUS 3:3-7
 - G. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS, BY ADOPTION, A MEMBER OF THIS MAGNIFICENT GENEALOGICAL PROGRAM OF REDEEMING THE WORLD—WE ARE ALL SONS OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
 - H. AND WE ARE ALL SERVING, IN A MULTITUDE OF DIFFERENT WAYS, TO MOVE THIS REDEMPTION FORWARD—JUST LIKE NAOMI, RUTH & BOAZ
 - I. THAT MAKES YOU COSMICALLY SPECIAL—AND ISN'T IT THRILLING!

Introduction to Paul T. Butler Th.D

Paul was born in Springfield Missouri and graduated from Conway High School prior to enlistment in the US Navy. He began serious bible study with correspondence courses from San Jose Bible College. He later enrolled in Ozark Bible College and acquired his Bachelor of Theology degree June of 1961. He received a Master of Biblical Literature degree from Ozark in May of 1973. He received a Doctorate of Theology from The Theological University of America in October of 1990.

Paul taught at Ozark Christian College from 1960 to 1997. He also served many years as registrar for the college.

Introduction to the Sound Bible Study project.

The Sound Bible Study project is a cooperative effort of Christian educators and Jordan Media Enterprises LLC to provide the serious examination of the Scriptures for the conscientious student. All the teachers are experienced educators who have spent countless hours in the classroom on both sides of the lectern. The audio recordings and written notes are made available for those who wish to learn God's Word at a collegiate level but have been unable to matriculate. There is no intention to compete with the many faithful Bible schools, but rather to serve along side and strengthen both the student and the teacher for a stronger and more effective Kingdom of God that knows how to properly divide the Word of God.

