

The Romance of Redemption

Christ and the Church in the Book of Ruth

1. The name Ruth appears at least 12 times in the Bible.

- **First Reference.** *The marriage of Ruth to Chilion [pining] Ruth 1:4 And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.*
- **Second Reference.** *The faithfulness of Ruth to Naomi. Ruth 1:16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:*
- **Third Reference.** *The journey of Ruth to Bethlehem. Ruth 1:22 So Naomi returned and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.*
- **Fourth Reference.** *The willingness of Ruth to labor for herself and for another. Ruth 2:2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.*
- **Fifth Reference.** *The first words Ruth heard from Boaz. Ruth 2:8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:*
- **Sixth Reference.** *The report of Ruth to Naomi. Ruth 2:21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.*
- **Seventh Reference.** *A word of exhortation given to Ruth. Ruth 2:22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.*
- **Eighth Reference.** *The boldness of Ruth towards Boaz. Ruth 3:9 And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.*
- **Ninth Reference.** *The cleverness of Boaz on behalf of Ruth. Ruth 4:5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, 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.*

- **Tenth Reference.** *The marriage of Ruth to Boaz. Ruth 4:10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, 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.*
- **Eleventh Reference.** *The birth of a son to Boaz and Ruth. Ruth 4:13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.*
- **Twelfth Reference.** *Ruth in the genealogy of Jesus. Matthew 1:5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;*

2. The name Ruth means, “friend.” Initially Ruth was a friend of the world as a Moabitess until she became the friend of a godly young man from Israel and then she became the Friend of God. In like manner those who make up the church were once a friend of this world until they met the Master.

- *Eph 2:1-2 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

3. In the providence of God it seemed Ruth was left helpless and hopeless in a hostile world as the church sometimes feel to be left helpless and hopeless in a hostile world (Ruth 1:4-5). Her only hope was in the Lord.

- *Psalm 142:4-5 I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. 5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.*

4. In her darkness hour God was still looking after Ruth and guiding her. “*Behind a frowning providence smiles the face of God.*” The Lord Jesus will never leave the church especially in her darkest hour.

- *Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
- *Acts 23:11 One desperate night the Lord stood by Paul and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.*

5. Ruth heard from her mother-in-law Naomi how that the Lord had visited His people the Jews in giving them bread in Bethlehem. The church should listen for and believe in the word of the Lord. The Lord will visit His people (Ruth 1:6).
 - *Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
6. The heart of Ruth was encouraged by the word of the Lord as the heart of the church should be encouraged in the word of the Same.
 - *Psalm 119:103 How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*
 - *Psalm 118:9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.*
7. Ruth was willing to go and be geographically where she thought the Lord was; the church should be willing to move in the direction they believe the Lord would have it to go to meet with Him (Ruth 1:7).
8. Ruth was discouraged from going to Israel but could not be dissuaded. The church is sometimes encouraged to go in a different direction than it should. The church should be steadfast, tenacious, and resolute like Christ who set His face like a flint towards Jerusalem and Calvary (Ruth 1:16-18).
9. Once Ruth embraced the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, once Ruth embraced the rules and regulations of Judaism, once Ruth accepted the hope of the Messiah she was loyal to the end. The church should be loyal to Christ.
10. When she was geographically in the will of the Lord and in the Land of Promise Ruth was willing to work (Ruth 2:2). The Church should be willing to labor knowing the time will come when that will not be possible. Jesus said, "*the night cometh when no man can work*" (John 9:4).
11. Ruth did not fully comprehend that all that would "hap" to her (Ruth 2:3) was rooted in the sovereignty of God. All that happens to the church is rooted in the One who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11).
12. In the providence of God, Ruth was in the service of the One who would find her first, see her, love her, provide and redeem her (Ruth 2:4ff). The church is seen and loved, provided for and redeemed by Christ (Rev. 1:4).
13. All the words of Ruth were reported to Boaz (Ruth 2:7). All the words of the Church are reported to the Lord and of them the church will be held accountable to be condemned or praised (Matt. 12:36).

14. The character of Ruth emerges to be one of great humility in both words and deeds (Ruth 2:7). The conversation or manner of life of the believer is to be characterized by humility. The words of the church are to be seasoned with grace.

- *Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*
- *Colossians 4:6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*

15. When he first meets Ruth the words of Boaz are designed to show his concern for her safety (Ruth 2:8). When Christ first comes to speak to the soul of the church it is about her safety, “Repent!” (Matt. 5:17).

16. Boaz plainly tells Ruth he has already to undertake on her behalf great provisions (Ruth 2:9). Christ has told the church He has already undertaken great provisions on her behalf (John 14:1ff).

17. The men in the world were prevented from touching Ruth in an inappropriate way (Ruth 2:9). No one and nothing can touch the church apart from the will of the Lord (Rev. 3:10).

18. The heart of Ruth towards Boaz was one of complete submission reflected in an attitude of gratitude and worship (Ruth 2:10). Knowing how easy it is to forget the goodness and grace shown the Lord has commanded the church to remember His death until He comes (1 Cor. 11:24-25).

19. Ruth obeyed Boaz in every particular instruction he gave. The church must strive to obey the Lord in every particular instruction He gives.

- *Luke 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*

20. Boaz provided for every need Ruth had. He anticipated her needs and made provision for them. Christ has provided for every need of His bride. He has anticipated all that will make her happy.

- *Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

21. Ruth was astonished that Boaz would notice her (Ruth 2:10). The church should be astonished that Christ would notice her for by birth and by choice she was once a stranger to him.

- *Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

22. There were many maidens that worked for Boaz but his special love and affection was set upon Ruth (Ruth 2:5; 2:8ff). There is a special love that Christ has for the church.

- *John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*
- *Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*

23. In the normal activity of living out her life Ruth gain a godly reputation (Ruth 2:11). In the normal activity of living out the Christian life the church will gain a reputation.

- *Romans 1:7-8 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*

24. Boaz a type of Christ was submissive to the Father and understood that all of creation is also under His “wings” (Ruth 2:12). The church rejoices in this truth.

- *Psalms 36:7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.*

25. Humility of mind characterized Ruth (2:13). The church is to cultivate a mindset of lowness.

- *Philippians 2:1-3 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

26. Not only did Ruth have the resources of grace at her disposal but she used them and enjoyed them (Ruth 2:17). The church must not just be surrounded with the gifts of God’s grace but must use the provisions of God to advance His kingdom.

- *Luke 12:48 ...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

27. When Ruth returned home Naomi was curious as to how she did in the field that day (Ruth 2:18-19). The church must remember that others are watching her.

- *1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

28. The spiritual prosperity of one part of the church can spill over to others. There is a principle of blessing by association (Ruth 2:20). Christ would have His people to look after others and be a source of blessing to them.

- *Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

29. Material prosperity flows from gospel obedience. Christ taught the church this truth in the Sermon on the Mount.

- *Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

30. Boaz as a type of Christ was a near kinsman to Naomi. In like manner Christ was made flesh in order to be a kinsmen for His bride the church.

- *John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

31. As Ruth remembered in every detail the words of Boaz (Ruth 2:21) so the church should remember the words of the Lord.

- *John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

32. Naomi reinforced the wise counsel of Boaz (Ruth 2:22). The church should always reaffirm and reinforce the instructions of Christ to one another. In principle it is not wrong to exhort others to do what they were going to do already or exhort them not to do something they had no intention of doing. Ruth was not going to move contrary to the wishes of Boaz yet Naomi says to her, "*It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with his girls, because in someone else's field you might be harmed*" (NIV). Ruth needed no convincing on that point. She had heard the same words from Boaz himself (Ruth 2:8,9). Words of exhortation may be irritating and they may even be worded badly but the concept of exhortation is biblical.

- *Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

33. Ruth worked hard in the fields of Boaz for herself and for another while being obedient to the wishes of her master. In all matters she was satisfied with divine providence. The church is reminded to give thanks, to be content with the providence of God and to labor to help others.

- *1 Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

- *Matthew 5:42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*
- *Eph 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

34. As Boaz knew the Ruth so Naomi knew Boaz (Ruth 3:2). The church should give herself to finding out where the Lord is and what He is doing.

35. Having the best interest of Ruth in her heart Naomi gave some wise counsel in accordance with social customs (Ruth 3:4). The church is wise to seek counsel of others and to listen to that counsel (study Acts 15).

- *Proverbs 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.*

36. As Ruth obeyed Boaz so she obeyed the counsel of Naomi (Ruth 3:6). Those who comprise the church are commanded to be in submission to one another.

- *1 Peter 5:5-6 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.*

37. By making herself available to Boaz (Ruth 3:9) Ruth pleased him. In like manner the Lord is pleased when the church pursues Him with passion and devotion. Isaiah made himself available to the Lord and was blessed.

- *Isa 6:8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.*
- *Song of Sol 5:8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.*

38. The heart of Ruth was pure. She was not consumed by inordinate lusts for she was a virtuous woman (Ruth 3:10, 11). The Lord would have His bride to be virtuous.

- *1 Thess 4:3-5 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God.*

39. Ruth was told to fear not because Boaz would be faithful to her (Ruth 3:11). The Lord does not want His bride to worry.

- *Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

40. Ruth had power with Boaz because of her hard work, humility, virtue and willingness to love (Ruth 3:11). The Lord is pleased to do all that we ask in as far as we meet gospel terms.

- *Matt 7:7-11 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

41. While Ruth rested at the feet of Boaz all through the night he planned how he might be able to help her as a kinsmen redeemer (Ruth 3:12-14). While the bride of Christ rests she can be assured that her Kinsmen Redeemer is working on her behalf day and night.

- *Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*
- *Hebrews 6:19-20 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

42. Boaz was always concerned about the reputation of Ruth (Ruth 3:14). Christ cleanses His church so that she will be without spot or wrinkle.

- *Eph 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

43. Before the day's work began Boaz poured out new mercies upon Ruth (Ruth 3:15). The mercies of Christ towards His bride the church are renewed each day.

- *Psalm 89:1 I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.*

44. Ruth spoke well of the mercies of Boaz to Naomi (Ruth 3:16). The Church should be ready to praise the Lord and testify to what He has done on her behalf.

- *Psalms 107:2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*

45. Ruth was not allowed to go home empty (Ruth 3:17). The church will never go away empty after being in the presence of Christ. The church shall never hunger or thirst.

- *John 6:56-57 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.*

46. Understanding the character of Boaz, Naomi gave counsel to Ruth to rest that day in the work of another (Ruth 3:18). The church is invited to rest in the finished work of Christ.

- *Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*
- *Hebrews 4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

47. Having received the grace of God Boaz was a man of grace reflected in part by the words he spoke (Ruth 4:1). The church is reminded to be gracious like her Lord to others especially in conversation.

- *Colossians 4:6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*

48. In working on behalf of Ruth, Boaz proved to be wise and harmless (Ruth 4:1). Christ is wise and harmless, gentle as a lamb. The church is to reflect these virtues of the Savior.

- *Matt 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*

49. Boaz wanted witness to the dialogue with the nearer kinsmen than he (Ruth 4:2). The Lord has cautioned his church to be careful in certain transactions.

- *Matt 5:37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*

50. With plain language and no deceit Boaz shared the situation as well as his intentions (Ruth 4:3-4). Christ would have His church live and speak with no deceit.

- *1 Peter 2:1-2 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*

51. While Boaz spoke plainly, honestly and openly with his fellow citizen he was able to guide the situation through persuasive speech and a willingness to act (Ruth 4:5-6). Christ would have the church be a moral influence by persuasive words and a willingness to act.

- *Matt 5:13-16 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

52. Boaz made a legal transaction in order to obtain Naomi's land and win the hand of Ruth (Ruth 4:7-10). In like manner Christ made a legal transaction to redeem His bride the Church.

- *Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*
- *Eph 1:13-14 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

53. Boaz was determined that neither the seed of his kinsmen or his own seed be cut off from among the land of the living (Ruth 4:10; 4:13). Christ is determined that there be many descendants in glory.

- *Hebrews 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

54. There were many witnesses to the righteous actions of Boaz (Ruth 4:11). A faithful cloud of witness surrounds the church when she acts righteously.

- *Hebrews 12:1-2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

55. Boaz received a blessing from those who witnessed the legal transaction of grace and mercy (Ruth 4:11-12). The church shall receive a blessing from her Lord when she shows grace and mercy.

- *Matthew 25:34-36 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

56. Boaz showed love and kindness to many men and women but he had a special intimate love for Ruth (Ruth 4:13). There is an intimate relationship that exists between Christ and the church.

- *Romans 8:28-30 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

57. The principle of blessing by association is established again in that Naomi had a much-loved grandson through Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:14-16). Christians are blessed by their association with Christ and then by association with others of like mind and faith. The church of Corinth benefited spiritually and financially because of the labors of Paul in their midst.

- *1 Cor 4:15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.*

58. Ruth became the great grandmother of David (Ruth 4:17). The spiritual legacy of the church has yet to be completely told.

59. The genealogy of Boaz is traced backwards and forwards. The genealogy of Christ is traced in the gospels backwards all the way to Adam but in the Epistles backwards and forwards to eternity. In like manner the church as the Bride of Christ shall enjoy the life of Christ which is eternal.

- *Hebrews 7:3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.*
- *John 17:1-3 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

60. The Lord God of the Old Covenant is the Lord God of the New Covenant. As the Lord gave Ruth the ability to conceive to bear a son (Ruth 4:13) so every good and perfect gift comes down to the church from the Father above. We are born of God according to sovereign grace.

- *James 1:17-18 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*