

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
Commentary by Michael Sigler
August 28, 2011

Redemption

Ruth 4:1-10

Key verse: “The day you acquire the field from the hand of Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead man, to maintain the dead man’s name on his inheritance” (Ruth4:1-10).

Redemption is an important concept in the Book of Ruth. The Hebrew word for *redeem*, in its various forms, is used 23 times in Ruth. Ruth 4:1-10 involves the role of the “kinsman-redeemer.” The kinsman-redeemer was responsible to protect the needy members of one’s extended family.

In these verses, Boaz discusses the redemption of some land formerly owned by Naomi’s husband, Elimelech. Boaz offers another kinsman the opportunity to buy back this land in order to keep the land in the family. At first, the kinsman is willing to buy the land (v. 4). But when Boaz tells him that buying the land would also make him responsible for Ruth, the kinsman says that he cannot buy the land. So, Boaz fulfills the role of kinsman-redeemer, buying back the land and gaining the right to make Ruth his wife (vv. 9-10).

The Book of Ruth ends with Boaz and Ruth restoring blessing and hope to Naomi’s life (4:11-16). Boaz and Ruth become descendants of King David (4:18-22) and, ultimately, of Jesus our Lord (Matthew 1:1-17). The Book of Ruth, then, points to our great Redeemer, Jesus, who is eventually born through the line of this godly couple, Boaz and Ruth.

Jesus is our kinsman-redeemer. Through his death on the cross, He has redeemed us *from* both the penalty and the power of sin. And Jesus has redeemed us *to* a new life of blessing in His kingdom: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:23).

Thank God for redemption!

In an article for *Preaching Today*, Rubel Shelly shared the following thought:

“Microsoft has formally launched a revision of its Windows operating system for PCs. It’s called Windows Me. One feature of Windows Me that caused a stir is its new ‘system restore’ feature. How does it work? Suppose you suffer a system crash on your computer this Thursday. You’re not a computer expert, and you don’t know how to recover the last two weeks of financial information you entered

Wednesday, or your daughter's history report she started writing Monday, or your favorite game. All you have to do is select 'system restore' and specify the date to which you want your machine reset. Voila! Problem solved. All the things you somehow messed up are put back in their configuration as of that earlier day.

"Wouldn't you like to market that feature for human lives? Do you think you could supply it fast enough to keep up with the demand? Bob would 'system restore' to the day he began the affair. Sue would go back to the day before she tampered with payroll data. Ivan would choose the day before the big fight that caused his son to run away from home.

"Maybe you can remember the day when things crashed for you—and you would give anything you own to restore things to the way they were. God won't erase all the consequences of our actions, but he promises things far better: to forgive us, to work for the highest good even through what is bad, and one day to make all things new.

"What Windows Me calls 'system restore' God call calls redemption."
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