



Leviticus 25:25 Ruth 1-4

Our Kinsman Redeemer

The "nearest kinsman" or "kinsman redeemer" is a *Goel*. The word means to redeem, receive or buy back.

Provision was made in the Law of Moses for the poor person who was forced to sell part of his property or himself into slavery. His nearest of kin could step in and "buy back" what his relative was forced to sell (Leviticus 25:48f). The kinsman redeemer was a rich benefactor, or person who frees the debtor by paying the ransom price. "If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold" (Leviticus 25:25; cf. Ruth 4:4, 6).

The nearest of kin had the responsibility of redeeming his kinsman's lost opportunities. If a person was forced into slavery, his redeemer purchased his freedom. When debt threatened to overwhelm him, the kinsman stepped in to redeem his homestead and let the family live. If a family member died without an heir the kinsman gave his name by marrying the widow and rearing a son to hand down his name (Deuteronomy 25:5; Genesis 38:8; Ruth 3-4). When death came at the hands of another man the redeemer acted as the avenger of blood and pursued the killer (Numbers 35:12-34; Deuteronomy 19:1-3).

Goel was used of things consecrated to God (Leviticus 27:13-31), of God as redeeming man (Exodus 6:6; Isaiah 43:1; 44:22; 48:20; 49:7), and those redeemed by God (Isaiah 35:9; 51:10; Job 19:25). The right of redemption and the office belonged to the nearest kinsman, or "near of kin, near relative" (Leviticus 25:25; Ruth 3:12; 4:1, 6, 8, etc.). Yahweh is the great Kinsman of His people. When their liberty was lost in Egypt, He rescued them from bondage. "I am the LORD . . . I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments" (Exodus 6:6).

The ancient patriarch Job complained that no one came to redeem him! His faith is seen reaching out and proclaiming that Yahweh will provide His *Goel*! "As for me, I know that my redeemer (kinsman) lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth" (Job 19:25). Job's hope looked to the coming Messiah. He affirmed his faith that his redeemer will come to the earth.

One of the most beautiful passages where the word *Goel* is found is in the life of Naomi in the book of Ruth. The book of Ruth is a story about Naomi's *Goel*. Naomi was the poorest person in Israel, but her kinsman was the richest man in Israel. Because of the death of her husband and two sons, she and her daughter-in-laws lost all income and their homestead. Naomi was living in a foreign land and sensed the loss of her homeland and relatives. She became bitter. The secret of all her daughter-in-law Ruth had was in union with Boaz. The nearer kinsman had the first right to the property and Boaz came next after him. If Ruth's closer relative would not redeem or purchase it, Boaz was prepared to do so. The man who was nearest of kin agreed to redeem the piece of land until he found out there was a young widow involved. He graciously

agreed to redeem the piece of land until he found out there was a young widow involved. He graciously backed out! That left Boaz as the rightful nearest of kin who had the privilege of redeeming her land and her with it. The Moabitess and the Jew became one. Boaz was nearest of kin to her deceased husband (Ruth 2:1). He was able to redeem by paying the price of redemption (2:1), and he was willing to redeem the land (4:4). That is what makes this epic so beautiful.

Four things were required in order for a kinsman to redeem:

- He must be near of kin. (Leviticus 25:48; 25:25 Ruth 3:12 13)
- He must be able to redeem (Ruth 4:4 6). He must be free of any calamity or need of redemption himself.
- He must be willing to redeem (Ruth 4:6ff)
- Redemption was completed when the price was completely paid (Leviticus 25:27; Ruth 4:7-11).

Jesus Christ is my *Goel*.

- ***Jesus is my nearest kinsman through the incarnation.*** "For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). He was like us in every way except that He never experienced sin. "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17). In order to identify Himself with us He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:7). "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet without sin*" (Hebrews 4:15). "Jesus you are my kinsman redeemer. You had the right to redeem me." Thank God, He has the right to redeem all that I have lost.
- ***Jesus has the power to redeem me.*** "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). He assumed our debt and paid it with His life. Cf. Hebrews 1:2 3).
- ***Jesus is willing to redeem me.*** Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" (Titus 2:14; cf. 1 John 1:7; 2:2; Hebrews 10:12; 4:16; 2:17). Jesus said, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Jesus is referring to His voluntary, sacrificial, vicarious, and obedient payment to effect the release of slaves or captives from bondage. "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father" (John 10:17-18).

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commandment I received from My Father" (John 10:17-18).

- ***Jesus has paid the price in full and I have received my redemption.***

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). The invitation is still open. Jesus is the sinner's nearest kinsman. It is our responsibility to lie at the feet of our *Goel*, and say, "Cover me with your blood and grace" (cf. Ruth 3:9). "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). "I have believed," is in the perfect tense in the Greek text. Paul is saying, "I have believed and my faith is a firmly settled conviction." God is keeping guard over him. "Persuaded" is also in perfect tense, therefore Paul had come to a settled persuasion regarding the matter and was fixed in an permanent position. You could not move him. There are some things of which I am absolutely sure.

Our redemption is precious. Our salvation has been purchased at a great and personal cost because the Lord Jesus gave Himself for our sins in order to deliver us from them. Our forgiveness is based on the ransom price of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us" (Ephesians 1:7). The redemption work of Jesus Christ delivers believers from the slavery to sin. The means of redemption is the substitutionary death of Christ as a sacrifice for our sin. It is "through His blood" which is the ransom payment (cf. Eph. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:18-19). Only the death of Christ completely satisfied God's justice (Rom. 3:24-25).

Go back to ancient Israel in the time of the Judges. Can't you see Naomi holding her grandson in her arms? Her neighbors said, "A son has been born to Naomi!" They named him Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of King David (4:17), of the lineage of the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5). God had redeemed her.

The words of Naomi's friends are a fitting reminder of God's grace in our lives. "Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer (or closest relative) today, and may his name become famous in Israel" (Ruth 4:14).

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

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