

My Favorite Thing About RUTH

Ruth 1:16-17

April 24, 2021

The story of Ruth occurred during the time of the Judges. It was a turbulent time in Israel due to the cycle of disobedience-defeat-despair-deliverance. Remember:

- **Judges 21:25** - In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.

My Favorite Thing About **RUTH** is the concept of **"HESED"** = loyalty, goodness, kindness / lovingkindness, devotion, faithfulness, favor, mercy, unchanging love --- going above and beyond what is expected.

Ruth's **HESED** toward Naomi

Boaz's **HESED** toward Ruth and Naomi

God's **HESED** toward us

As we know from the story, there was a famine in the land. Elimelech, Naomi and their 2 sons; Mahlon and Chilion, left Bethlehem and went to Moab, which was an interesting choice considering that Israel and Moab were enemies ---- the family lived in Moab for 10 years.

- Not long after arriving in Moab Elimelech died.
- Mahlon married **Ruth**
- Chilion married **Orpah**
- Both Mahlon and Chilion died and now all three ladies were widows. They were destitute and without hope because widows had no social standing and no way to provide for themselves financially.
- Naomi decided to go back to Bethlehem and encouraged both Ruth and Orpah to stay in Moab and remarry.

Orpah returned home, but Ruth **chose** to stay with Naomi and here we find **HESED**:

- **Ruth 1:16-17** Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.

It would have been so much easier – more convenient – for Ruth to stay home in the land of her birth, among her own people, but she **chose**, instead, to extend **HESED** to her mother-in-law. She **chose** to go beyond what was expected. She chose **loyalty, devotion, faithfulness and unchanging love**.

Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest {late April/early May} and Ruth went to work gleaning in the fields – Boaz's fields – and here we find **HESED**:

- **Ruth 2:8-9** - So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. ⁹ Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled."

Ruth was a Moabite. She was looked upon with suspicion and even hatred. It would have been so much easier – more convenient – for Boaz if she had just moved on to the next field. Out of sight – out of mind – don't get involved – maintain unsullied reputation – Boaz **chose**, instead, to extend **HESED** to Ruth. He **chose** to go beyond the expected. He **chose goodness, kindness, faithfulness, favor and mercy**.

Boaz' **HESED** toward Ruth would go deeper still and he would add **loyalty, devotion and unchanging love**, by becoming her **Go'el** – her **Kinsman Redeemer**.

The **Go'el's** job was to redeem something – usually property – that had been lost/sold.

To be **Go'el** 3 conditions had to be met:

- He had to be **qualified** – a blood relative.
- He had to be **able** – possess the resources necessary to pay the redemption price.
- He had to be **willing** – *the role was completely voluntary.*

When Boaz became **Go'el**, he redeemed both land {**Naomi's**} and people {**Naomi and Ruth**}

He didn't have to do any of it, but he **chose**, once again, to go beyond the expected --- he **chose HESED**.

It's been said, "***the New Testament is in the Old concealed and the Old Testament is in the New revealed***".

The story of Ruth is a human love story, but the **HESED** found there points to something beyond. It points to something eternal - God's **HESED** toward us – His **consistent, ever-faithful, relentless, constantly-pursuing, lavish, extravagant, unrestrained and furious love.**

Where are you? = **HESED**

I have come to deliver you from slavery and I will take you to a good land = **HESED**

I'm going to wander with you = **HESED**

I choose to deliver you again and again and again and again = **HESED**

Of course, the Jesus of the New Testament is the supreme example of HESED and the Kinsman-Redeemer.

He is our Go'el

He had to be **qualified**.

- **John 1:14** - The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- **Hebrews 2:17-18** - For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."
- **Hebrews 4:14-16** Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-- yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- **Revelation 5:2-7** - And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴ I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." ⁶ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.
- **Ellen White {PP 64}**: The angels prostrated themselves at the feet of their Commander and offered to become a sacrifice for man. But an angel's life could not pay the debt; only He who created man had power to redeem him.

He had to be **able**.

- **1 Corinthians 6:20** - you were bought at a price.....
- **Ephesians 1:7** - In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace
- **Hebrews 9:12** - He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.
- **1 Peter 1:18-19** - For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

As our Creator and Brother, Jesus was the only one who was qualified AND had the resources necessary for our redemption.

He had to be *willing*.

- **John 10:11** - I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
- **John 10:17-18** - The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life-- only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."
- **Philippians 2:5-8** - Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!
- **Titus 2:13-14** - while we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.
- **Hebrews 12:2** - Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- **Ellen White {DA 22.4}**: This was a voluntary sacrifice. Jesus might have remained at the Father's side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of the angels. But He chose to give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe, that He might bring light to the benighted, and life to the perishing.

It would have been so much easier – more convenient – for Jesus to just stay home. He **chose**, instead, to extend **HESED** to us. He **chose** to leave heaven. He **chose** to walk the dusty roads of Palestine. He **chose** each painful step to Calvary. He **chose** to go beyond the expected. He **chose** it all.... Just to redeem that which was lost.... You and Me.

- **Romans 5:6-8** - You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

NOW THAT'S HESED - The consistent, ever-faithful, relentless, constantly-pursuing, lavish, extravagant, unrestrained and furious love of God.