

## Sermon Notes

Series on Ruth  
Ruth 2:14-23 (primarily 20-23)  
“Blessings: Part 2”

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Lesson #5, 09/28/08  
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Introduction: Last Sunday’s message stopped about midway through the study of “God’s Blessings,” examining Ruth 2:14-20. Therefore, these notes resume the study at Ruth 2:20 to the end of the chapter. First, a quick review....

### **#1 THE BLESSINGS OF SATISFACTION, Ruth 2:14-19**

**Verse 14**: Up to this point there has been a developing interest between Ruth and Boaz. Ruth had been *gleaning* in the *fields* of Boaz when Boaz surprised her by inviting her to lunch, a lunch which could be considered as Ruth and Boaz' first date! The “diners” at this lunch (called *mealtime* in this verse) included Ruth, Boaz, his business manager, Boaz' employees, and the other *gleaners* who had gathered around that table. This scene reminds me of the Upper Room when Jesus was gathered with His disciples for that last supper. Read Matthew 26:20-23—*he who dipped his hand with me in the bowl is the one who will betray me* (v.23); Mark 14:7-21—*And He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who **dips** with Me in the bowl* (v.20); & cf. also Luke 22:7-34. While Jesus and His disciples were gathered in that Upper Room, Jesus extended intimacy to Judas and Judas had the audacity not only to take Jesus up on it in front of the other disciples but also used that display of intimacy to betray Jesus. The outcome at Jesus’ last supper did not produce further intimacy as it did with Ruth and Boaz in the Book of Ruth. For believers, the time at the Table of the Lord on the first Sunday of each month, the communion table, is a time of marvelous one-on-one intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ as well as with the body of Christ! When believers gather the first of each month for that remembrance service, Jesus invites us to sit at His table with the rest of the redeemed, the body of Christ, you and me. I’ve pointed out often in this series on the Book of Ruth that Boaz is a type of Christ; therefore, notice that Boaz offers Ruth bread, *roasted grain*, even as Scripture refers to our Lord as the Bread of Life (read John 6:33-52). Constable affirms God’s blessings on Ruth with these words; “The fact that Boaz permitted Ruth to eat with his household servants was another blessing from the Lord.” [Constable, Thomas, “Notes on Ruth,” Published by Sonic Light, p.15.] Boaz invited her to sit with him at his dinner table *and she ate and was satisfied and had some left*. Today we want to focus on Ruth's coming *kinsman redeemer*, Boaz and his likeness to our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

**Verses 15-16**: We observed that Boaz was very interested in developing a relationship with Ruth, so he initiated a well organized plan as to how he could get Ruth's attention. It involved blessing her with an abundance of *grain* as she *gleaned*. Boaz had given instructions to *his servants* to purposefully and deliberately let extra *grain* fall out of the already picked *bundles* (Hebrew is זֵבַתִּים, *zebatim*, meaning “handfuls” perhaps *bundles* not yet tied up); the Mosaic Law did not require that of him but *grace/favor* is always extravagant. After that lunch with Boaz and his workers, Ruth returned to *the field* and *gleaned* some more so that she was abundantly blessed by Boaz. She took home an abundance to share with her mother-in-law, Naomi.

**Verse 17**: She carried home between 20 and 30 pounds of barley, sufficient to make many meals. That is grace’s blessings! Constable cites from Robert Hubbard that “she had collected about three-fifths of a bushel of barley, ‘the equivalent of at least half a month’s wages in one day. They had the blessing of sufficient food, because Ruth took the *grain* with her and measured it out, then beat it and made flour out of it, and with the flour she made bread, and they ate the bread, and there was enough to satisfy both she and Naomi when they sat down for their

evening meal. Ruth and Naomi had the blessings of sufficient food and provisions and were totally satisfied. Consider the words to a favorite hymn of mine, “Satisfied:” (1<sup>st</sup> Stanza) “All my life long, I had panted, for a drink from some clear spring; that I hoped would quench the burning of the thirst I felt within. (2<sup>nd</sup> Stanza) Feeding on the husks around me, till my strength was almost gone; longed my soul for something better, only still to hunger on. (3<sup>rd</sup> Stanza): Well of water ever springing, Bread of Life so rich and free; untold wealth that never faileth, my **Redeemer** is to me! Chorus: Hallelujah! I have found Him, whom my soul so long has craved. Jesus satisfies my longings—thru His blood I now am saved.” I trust that you too have found complete satisfaction in the Lord Jesus Christ! As to satisfaction, compare what Paul has written in Colossians 2:9 concerning what believers have in Jesus Christ—*For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form* and David, the Psalmist, reassures us in Psalm 34:10: *The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing.*

## **#2 THE BLESSINGS OF SONG/PRAISE, Ruth 2:20**

**Verse 20:** May I remind us that up to this point, Ruth still didn't have a clue as to Boaz' relationship to Naomi, but now Naomi began to disclose his identity with her response which is the form of praise; this was actually a word of revelation, God disclosing the relationship that Boaz had to them. Naomi began to make positive statements, blessing Boaz! When Naomi heard that it was in Boaz' *fields* that Ruth had been working, she broke out in a song of rejoicing; an anthem of praise! The question arises as to what happened to the negative Naomi (from Ruth 1:20-21) when the only word on her lips at that point was *Mara*, meaning bitter? Here Naomi moved from bitter to *blessed*. *Blessed* was a new word on her lips! Her word was different; her attitude different; and her world was now different! Here she was lost in praise to God! She worshipped Him! *Blessed* Him! Sure, her words of *blessing* were specifically addressed to Boaz but I believe Naomi had finally realized that God was working behind the scenes to *bless* the lives of these two ladies. God's people always have something to sing about. Notice that Naomi identified Boaz' *kindness* as that very unique special love (the Hebrew is **חֶסֶד**, *hesed*, God's loyal love); Boaz was God's agent to prove His love/*kindness*. Naomi had thought of herself as *the dead* in light of all the tragedies that had befallen her back in Moab. But Naomi's brain had finally kicked into high gear, sufficient to realize that Boaz was her relative. Naomi then enlightened Ruth as to what had been going on with her explanation about Boaz, *one of our closest relatives* as verse 20 records. Those words, *one of our closest relatives*, open up the fabulous truth that the Book of Ruth is all about, the *kinsman* redeemer, the **גוֹ'עַל**, *go'el*, the subject of the rest of our lesson today.

**Extended comments on the kinsman redeemer; the **גוֹ'עַל**, *go'el*.** This word, *relative/s* or *kinsman* (KJV) is used thirteen times in the Book of Ruth. God had given an interesting law to the Jews that required a man to marry the childless widow of his deceased brother, called the law of the levirate marriage; here in the Book of Ruth we see the law of *kinsman* redeemer at work. Naomi had alluded to this ancient Hebrew custom of Levirate marriage in Ruth 1:11-13. By the way, levirate comes from the Latin word, *levir*, which is Latin for “a husband's brother.” In the Book of Ruth we find combined the law of Levirate marriage Deuteronomy 25:5-10 and the one governing redemption in Leviticus 25:47-49. There is no law in American culture to compare to this, so this custom seems rather strange to us. This custom actually existed before the Mosaic Law was given; read Genesis 38:8 but as pointed out, became part of the Mosaic Law—Deuteronomy 25:5-10. The first born son of that union would bear his brother's name and inherit

his brother's property according to Deuteronomy 25:5-10 (cf. also Leviticus 25:23-28). If no brother was available, a more distant *relative* might be asked to fulfill this duty, as Boaz will perform which we will see completed in Ruth 3. But the widow would let him know that he was acceptable to be the *kinsman redeemer* the **גֹּאֵל**, go'el. This law of *kinsman redeemer* actually applied to three different areas of life: (1) the land, Leviticus 25:23-25, the right of a person to buy back the property of another person who was sold into slavery because of poverty; (2) individuals, Leviticus 25:47-48; and (3) widows, Deuteronomy 25:5-10 and the Book of Ruth is the application of Leviticus 25. Here in verse 20 and following we find both the law of *kinsman redeemer* (Leviticus 25:25) and another law, this one relating to marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10), sort of combined. Boaz is not, strictly speaking, the Levirate. He is not the brother of Ruth's deceased husband. We've already learned that the only brother of Ruth's deceased husband was also deceased and therefore unable to fulfill his duties. But under this Law of Redemption, where a *close relative* was able to perform the rights of the redeemer, Boaz is qualified. These customs seem strange to us, but, if these customs seem strange to us, who are at least somewhat familiar with the Bible, how different they must have seemed to Ruth the Moabitess? Naomi was acquainted with these customs and culture, however, where they might have been taken for granted. Many Bible scholars assume that Elimelech's and Boaz' fathers were brothers, hence the requirement for Boaz to perform this duty of kinsman redeemer for Naomi—*the man is our relative, he is one of our closest relatives*. Barber adds that the *kinsman redeemer* the **גֹּאֵל**, go'el, “was a member of the family, sometimes a father, but more often a brother to whom fell the duty of ‘redeeming’ property (Lev. 25:23-28) or persons Lev. 25:47-55), or of executing ‘blood vengeance’—the redressing of a wrong done a member of the family (Num. 35:12, 19, 21, 24, 27; Deut. 19:6, 12; Josh. 20:3, 5, 9). As a relative of Elimelech's, Boaz was one of their redeemers.” [Barber, Cyril, J., A Story of God's Grace, Ruth, Moody Press, p.90.] This next quoted article I modified from The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Theological Wordbook of the OT, Tyndale Bible Dictionary, and Vine's OT Lexicon and found on the [www.preceptaustin.org](http://www.preceptaustin.org) website. ‘**Goel** is the active participle of the Hebrew verb **ga'al** which has the primary meaning of” restored to an original state” and to do the part of a kinsman and thus to redeem his kin from difficulty or danger by the payment of a price. **Goel**, the participial form of the Qal stem of the verb has practically become a noun in its own right though it may properly be considered as merely a form of the verb. Thus although technically **Goel** is a verb it is generally translated as one of 3 nouns (redeemer, kinsman or avenger) in most English Bibles, the specific noun depending on the context. **Don't be confused** if you are looking up the Strong's numbers because Strong did not assign a separate number to the root verb **ga'al** (Strong's # 1350) or the active participle form **goel** (Strong's # 1350), although for reasons unclear to me, he did assign a separate number (Strong's # 1353) for the passive participle form, **geullah**. A **Goel** therefore was one who effected restoration to an original, sometimes ideal, state. Goel means “redeemer” an English word derived from a Latin root meaning “to buy back,” thus meaning the liberation of any possession, object, or person, usually by payment of a ransom. In Greek the root word means “to loose” and so to free. The term is used of freeing from chains, slavery, or prison. The reader should be aware that in the OT, there are 3 separate Hebrew words used for redeem or redemption (of which only two are defined here) (1) **Ga'al**: This is the root verb form which has active participle, **Go'el**, (which is translated kinsman, redeemer or avenger) and a passive participle, **Geullah**, this latter used in Ruth 4:6 and 4:7 One difference between this root and **padah** (below) is that there is usually an emphasis in **Ga'al** on the redemption being the

privilege or duty of a near relative. (2) **Padah**: redeem, ransom, buy and so to cause the freedom or release of a person from bondage or ownership, often implying a delivering or rescue of a person in distress. **Padah** is not used in Ruth. Vine adds that **padah** "is used of the payments required for the redemption of the firstborn (Ex13:13, 15; Lv27:26, 27; Nu3:46 49; 18:15-17) or for the release of persons from slavery (Ex21:8; Lv 25:47-49). It is also used figuratively with the meaning of delivering, whether in the cases of individuals (Ps 34:22) or of the deliverance granted to Israel as a nation (Dt 9:26; 2Sa7:23; 1Chr17:21; Isa 29:22). It is especially associated with the deliverance from Egypt (Dt 7:8; 13:5; 24:18; Mic 6:4). In one instance it is used of redemption from sin: "redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (Ps 130:8).' In order to further explain this גוֹ'עַל, **go'el** concept, allow me to provide this lengthy quote, taken from an article by Robert L. Hubbard, "The Goel In Ancient Israel; Theological Reflections on an Israelite Institution," Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary. I've extracted parts of his very technical paper with minor revisions. 'The term *go'el* derives from the realm of Israelite family law. It describes a close relative, a "kinsman-redeemer," who takes upon himself the duties of *ge'ullâ*—"redemption" or "recovery"—on behalf of a needy family member. Actually, at any given time, a pool of *go'alîm* stood available for duty because many close relatives could perform the tasks. According to Numbers 35, the *go'el* was to avenge the death of a relative—the so-called "redeemer of blood" (*go'el haddam*; cf. vv. 16-21). He did so by tracking down and putting the killer to death, provided, of course, that the gates of a city of refuge did not get in his way. Also, as head of his clan, the *go'el* would receive any monetary restitution due a deceased relative for a wrong committed against him (Num 5:8). Finally, the *go'el* also assisted his relatives in obtaining justice in a lawsuit. As for its purpose, the institution served one main goal—to keep tribal solidarity intact by recovering its losses, whether of people or property. Leviticus 25 falls near the end of the so-called "Holiness Code" (Lev 17-26). Literarily, it consists of Yahweh's commission of Moses at Mt. Sinai to instruct Israel (vv 1-2). **In the book of Ruth**, we enter...the fertile fields, fragrant threshing floor, and buzzing city gate of Bethlehem. Suddenly, the stern, divine voice which lectured at Sinai gives way to a narrative about Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. Immediately, two things are striking. **First**, in Ruth one sees, not abstract legislation, but actual legal principles—the application of legal background to a live situation. One may wonder whether Israel ever observed Jubilee, but Ruth leaves no doubt that Israel observed *ge'ullâ*. **Second**, one observes that God hardly seems present at all in the story. He directly intervenes in only two places—He gives Judah food (1:6) and Ruth conception (4:13). Were Yahweh not occasionally invoked by characters, one might presume Him to be totally absent from the story. Closer inspection, however, reveals that God is very much present. Though hidden behind the scenes, His is the firm hand quietly guiding events. To begin, we consider the emergence and role of the *go'el* in Ruth. Chapter 1 confronts us with the book's main problem, the lack of an heir. Pointedly, v 5 stresses that only Naomi survived her family's sojourn in Moab. Her bitter outcry (vv 11-13) drops a painful hint: what this story needs is a husband to produce a child (cf. also vv 20- 21). The word *go'el* first appears, however, in 2:20 where Naomi applies it to Boaz. Though ambiguous, the reference at least introduces the prospect of his future action on behalf of the two widows. Further, it occurs in a significant context, Naomi's praise of Boaz for his *hesed*. In 3:9, it is Ruth herself who petitions the action implicit in 2:20 when she proposes marriage to Boaz as *go'el*. The point is that Ruth sought to marry Boaz in order to give Naomi the heir she needed. In response, Boaz introduced a surprise—the existence of another *go'el* with a prior right to the duty (3:12)—then promised to

arrange her redemption one way or the other (3:13). The important scene at the city gate reports how Boaz legally obtained the redemption right for himself (4:1-12). Finally, 4:14 provides the last mention as her *go'el*. Now several important things emerge in this survey. **First**, like Leviticus 25, it is a tragic human crisis which eventually summons the *go'el* to action. The family line of Elimelech lacks an heir to continue itself. Hence, it teeters perilously on the brink of annihilation. As is well known, Israel regarded such an event as a great tragedy, one to be avoided at all costs. When a family died out physically, it ceased to exist metaphysically. That robbed Israel of one of her most prized possessions, her tribal solidarity. A secondary crisis, however, is the possibility that Naomi faces old age without anyone to care for her. That potential tragedy is implicit in her angry outcries (1:11-13, 20-21), and explicit in the joyous exclamation of her neighbors (4:14-15). They rejoice that the newborn will “revive [her] spirits and sustain [her] in old age.” In short, as in Leviticus 25, here the *go'el* delivers an unfortunate Israelite, not from loss of land or lengthy servitude, but from annihilation. **Second**, the book sets this redemption in a theological framework different from that of Leviticus 25. In the latter, *ge'ullâ* formed a part of the practice of the Jubilee year. In Ruth, it forms part of what I call “the life of *hesed*,” the ideal lifestyle which the book reveres. This is evident in 2:20 where Naomi first identifies Boaz as a *go'el*. In the preceding line, she praises Yahweh for the fact that Boaz had “not abandoned his kindness (*hesed*) toward the living and the dead.” The juxtaposition of *hesed* and *go'el* here implies that, should Boaz later carry out *go'el* duties, such actions would constitute acts of *hesed*. Though *hesed* nowhere else occurs with reference to Boaz, two other evidences imply that the book views his performance as fulfilling that ideal. In 3:18, Naomi again lauds Boaz, this time for his conscientious follow-through. He promised Ruth redemption (3:13), and he will not relax until she has it. In addition, the closing genealogy lists Boaz seventh in the list, a position of honor second only to that of the tenth place. In sum, according to the book, by serving as *go'el*, Boaz performs an act of *hesed* worthy of honor. Finally, let us summarize the theological insights concerning the *go'el* gleaned from Ruth. As with Leviticus 25, *ge'ullâ* responds to desperate human need—a bitter widow facing old age alone and, worse, a permanent breach in tribal solidarity. Significantly, however, the book understands the basis of that redemption to be a cosmic one, the universal idea of *hesed*. The implication is that, in the book of Ruth, the Israelite institution implements that larger ideal. Specifically, the human *go'el* is the means whereby Yahweh, the Great Kinsman, achieves his purposes. On stage, Ruth and Boaz faithfully live the lifestyle of *hesed*. Backstage, however behind them, moves the Great *go'el*, pained by famine, death, and old age, gently acting to alleviate them. His broad, powerful wings protect those, like Boaz and Ruth, who please him.’ (End of quote!) Therefore, Boaz, Ruth's *kinsman* redeemer, is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, our *Kinsman Redeemer*. Dr. McGee adds these words, “...that’s the reason the word redemption is used in the New Testament rather than atonement. Atonement covered up sins, that’s all. But redemption, friend, means to pay a price so that the one who is redeemed may go scot-free.” McGee, J. Vernon, McGee, J. Vernon, Thru The Bible, Vol. 2, Joshua-Psalms, p.104.] **The Book of Ruth reveals God's love for mankind** as expressed in the person of Boaz. As I’ve mentioned, we will discover that there was another *kinsman* who was actually a *closer relative* than Boaz who could have performed this duty of *kinsman* redeemer for Naomi, but chose not to do so (Ruth 3:12-13). That man turned it down because he didn’t love Ruth but Boaz loved Ruth! Don’t miss this truth; **the book of Ruth reveals the love side of redemption** and Boaz illustrates/pictures Christ's love for us. Application: Spiritually speaking as applied to us, God didn’t have to love us (John

3:16; Romans 8:37; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:4; 5:2, 25; 2 Thessalonians 2:16; 1 John 4:10-11, etc.) or redeem us but He did! (Read Psalm 111:9; 130:7; Matthew 20:38; Galatians 3:13 & 1 Peter 1:18). Our redemption and salvation is God's love story for us. Give God praise for His loving kindness (the Hebrew is **חסד**, *hesed*) God's loyal love and favor extended to us in spite of our sin. Our study of chapters 3 and 4 will also focus on Jesus Christ, our Kinsman Redeemer.

### **#3 THE BLESSINGS OF SERVICE, Ruth 2:21-23**

**Verse 21:** It's evident that Naomi, once empty and without hope, had begun to see how God might provide for her again—to bless her. Notice that the author of the Book of Ruth still called the heroine of the story, *Ruth, the Moabitess*. Ruth had such a great time working and was rewarded so abundantly, that she couldn't wait to go back to the fields and *glean* some more, just as Boaz must have suggested to her. Dr. Constable adds, "The beauty of Ruth's character shines forth in verse 21. She did not view her relationship with Boaz as a way out of her own responsibility to provide for herself and her aged mother-in-law. Instead she rejoiced that she could continue to discharge her duty in safety." [Constable, Thomas, "Notes on Ruth," Published by Sonic Light, p.16.] That introductory word, *furthermore*, might give indication of Ruth's excitement at this juncture! Don't you get the distinct feeling that Boaz just couldn't wait to see Ruth again? He said, 'come back to **my** field; I think there's more *harvesting* to do!' The words, *stay close*, mean "to cling, or to cleave." Did Boaz imply with the use of *all my harvest* that he wanted Ruth to remain just in his field and not just until the completion of the *barley harvest*, but perhaps until his other grains were *harvested*? The Feast of Unleavened Bread in late March or early April inaugurated the *barley harvest*. The Feast of Firstfruits seven weeks later in late May or early June terminated the wheat *harvest*, implying that Ruth might have been out in the *fields* for 6-7 weeks. Boaz had eyes for Ruth and had plenty of time to look! God's grace was abundant and love was blooming! As Paul Harvey says, "now, for the rest of the story" which will come as we finish the book. The phrase, *until they have finished all my harvest*, sounds so much like John 4:35 and Galatians 6:9, and God's desire to use believers as His instruments to bring the gospel to the lost.

**Verse 22:** Naomi knew that Boaz was not only kind and generous but also *one of their closest relatives* (v.20). Naomi liked what was happening and gave Ruth good counsel here expressing her concern for her safety. Naomi emphasized that Ruth stay close to Boaz' *maids*, employees who were working Boaz' *field*.

**Verse 23:** Ruth accepted Naomi's counsel that she stay with Boaz' *maids* lest she end up in the *field* of *another* man who might have done her harm. Ruth was content to *glean* in Boaz' *field* and remain under his God-ordained protection and provision. Ruth was unaware that she would find a husband in his *field* as well as become the ancestor of the Messiah—"O Little Town of Bethlehem". It doesn't take much to see in all the events of this chapter, a picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us: Boaz as a type of Christ who is (1) *hesed*, *kind/kindness* toward us; (2) shows us *favor/grace*; (3) provides for us; (4) protects us etc.

**Conclusion:** The key word in our study today has been "redemption." No you won't find it in the text of today's text in the book of Ruth (although it is used in Ruth 4:6 & 7) but it is what underlies the concept of the *closest relative* or the *kinsman* redeemer found in the book of Ruth. *Redemption* is among one of the most important words in the believer's vocabulary. By definition, *redemption* is the act of God Himself whereby Jesus Christ pays the whole demand of the law for sinful people like us. **The New Testament teaching on this doctrine of redemption** is summed up by **three Greek words**; each of these three words means *redemption* but each has a

unique shade of emphasis or meaning. (1) **Ransom**: The New Testament Greek word, ἀγοράζω, agorazo. The emphasis of this Greek word is on the ransom price to be paid. In chapter 2 of his epistle, Peter writes about the characteristics of the last days, specifically, that people will deny the fact that Jesus Christ died on the cross, in our place, to ransom us. Notice the word, *bought* in 2 Peter 2:1: *But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who **bought** them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.* The word *bought* is that Greek word, ἀγοράζω, agorazo, to pay the ransom. Consider also what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:20: *For you have been **bought** with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.* Paul's logic is simple; Jesus, through His shed blood, paid the price for our *redemption* (Romans 3:23-24 & Ephesians 1:7). It is only logical, therefore, that we glorify God in all we do as our bodies and spirits belong to Him already. Dr. Constable adds, "usually the New Testament emphasis is on redemption leading to freedom from sin (e.g. Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Rev. 5:9; 14:3), but here it is on redemption leading to faithfulness to God. Even our physical bodies are to be faithful to the Lord with whom we are joined." [Constable, Tom, Notes on 1 Corinthians, Sonlight, p.66.] (2) **Removal**: There's a 2<sup>nd</sup> New Testament Greek word that pertains to our *redemption*, ἐξαγοράζω, exagorazo, meaning "to remove." Notice that the root Greek word is similar to the first but is strengthened by the use of the prefix, ἐξ added on to ἀγοράζω. This word was used in ancient Greece to refer to the place where slaves were bought and sold. When a slave was purchased, he/she was ἐξαγοράζω, exagorazo, removed from that slave market. Christ's blood bought us out of/from the slave market of sin. Paul's letter to the Galatians addresses the subject of Christian liberty in Galatians 3:13: *Christ **redeemed** us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"* In the previous verses, Paul has shown that all are under God's *curse*; therefore, how can mankind escape God's wrath as a result of this *curse*? In this verse Paul answers that question by declaring that Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sins, voluntarily taking the Father's wrath that had been directed to us. That word *redeemed* is the Greek word ἐξαγοράζω, exagorazo. Paul is declaring out loud that, by Jesus' death, He has removed us out from under *the curse of the law*. In Galatians 4:4-5 takes his argument a step further and ties that accomplishment to the purpose of the Incarnation, Jesus coming to earth as a man: *4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might **redeem** those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.* For emphasis, let's reverse Paul's order in these verses; to be *adopted* into God's family, we had to be *redeemed*—removed out from under *the curse of the Law*, which keeps people from God. And for that to happen, Jesus had to come to earth and be born a man. (3) **Release**: The last New Testament Greek verb is λυτρω, lutroo, used in 1 Peter 1:18 or the noun form, λυτρον, lutron, used in Matthew 20:28. The emphasis of this word is on releasing us or setting us free so that we will serve the Lord (cf. this word's use in Mark 10:35; Luke 24:21 & Titus 2:14). The early church usually consisted of slaves, freedmen and free men. Consider these words; 'People became slaves in various ways—through war, bankruptcy, sale by themselves, sale by parents or by birth. Slaves could normally look forward to freedom after a certain period of service and often after the payment of a price. Money to buy his freedom could be earned by the slave in his spare time or by doing more than his owner required. Often the price would be provided by someone else. By the payment of a price (λυτρω, lutroo) a person could be set free from his bondage or servitude. A freed man was a person who formerly had been a slave but was now **redeemed**' (emphasis mine.) [Morris,

Leon, *New Testament Theology*, p. 319.] Just as the death of the Old Testament Passover lamb liberated the Israelites from physical bondage in Egypt, so the death of Jesus Christ on the cross frees us from the spiritual bondage of sin (Exodus 12:5). When writing about *redemption*, Peter emphasizes our freedom from our prior sinful lifestyle to live for Christ now. Recall that before Jesus chose Matthew to be His disciple, that he was a tax collector. Matthew provides an excellent illustration of the use of this Greek word, λυτρον, lutron in Matthew 20:28. You may recall that the disciples were bantering back and forth about places of honor in the coming kingdom. Matthew then records Jesus' response: *Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.* Jesus set us free! Jesus' appeal is to *servitude* and the example He uses is that He willingly *gave His life* that many might be *ransomed*, or released or set free. Now, out of gratitude for what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us, we have the potential to choose *to serve* the One who released us! Perhaps the most familiar use of this Greek word is found in 1 Peter 1:18-19: **18**...*knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.* Spiritually speaking, the price tag for our being set free was *the precious blood of Christ*. These three New Testament words for *redemption* taken together as we've just studied them, give a composite picture of the impact of this doctrine on our lives. The imagery behind them is that of the slave market, a common and dreadful scene in New Testament times. αγοραζω, agorazo speaks of the ransom price that was paid to purchase the slave. εξαγοραζω, exagorazo speaks of the removal of the slave from the place of the slave market and λυτροω, lutroo speaks of the release of the slave himself. God is so gracious to us as (1) He pays the price for our *redemption*; (2) He removes us from the enslavement of this world's system; and (3) then He sets us free to serve Him. If we *serve* Him, it is because we choose to and never because He forces us to *serve* Him. But what Jesus Christ did for us goes beyond the fact that we cannot pay our debt. If you are a believer, your debt has not been cancelled because you could not pay it! No! Jesus paid the debt for us in full when He died on the cross: He was pierced for us! He shed His blood for us! Jesus had no sin but there at the cross was made sin for us! At the cross Jesus met the Father's demands and the demands of the Law! Amazingly, the price was not too high for the Father's love or the Son's obedience and with an infinite sacrifice of eternal worth, He legally ransomed us from sin's penalty; He positionally removed us from sin's presence; and He experientially released us from sin's power so that we need never ever be enslaved to sin.

**Note:** It is my prayer that these printed notes will encourage Bible students to do further study on this passage. If you find any typos, errors or have any questions, please contact me. Since these notes are also available on our website, [www.gcc-am.org](http://www.gcc-am.org), your assistance in drawing my attention to necessary corrections will be greatly appreciated. I've made every effort to give credit to quotations from other authors. Thank you. Pastor John A. Eastman.