

#20: Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, and Hannah

Monte F. Shelley, 6 June 2010

Quotes

- History repeats itself because no one listened the first time.
- Samson killed 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, and everyday millions of relationships are destroyed with the same weapon.

1. Fiery Serpents = Guinea Worms? (Num 21:6-7)

“The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.
⁷ ... The people came to Moses, and said, ... pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.”



Some believe “fiery” meant poisonous. Others believe it refers to the burning sensation caused by guinea worms. About one year after drinking stagnant water contaminated with Guinea worm larvae, “the worm attempts to leave the body by creating a blister ... usually on a person’s ... leg or foot. Within 72 hours the blister ruptures, exposing one end of the emergent worm. This blister causes a very painful burning sensation as the worm emerges.” This “has led to the disease being called ‘the fiery serpent.’” “Infected persons often immerse the affected limb in water to relieve the burning sensation. Once the ... open sore is submerged in water, the adult female releases hundreds of thousands of Guinea worm larvae, contaminating the water supply. ... Once a Guinea worm begins emerging, a person must wrap the live worm around ... a stick to extract it from the body. This long, painful process can take up to a month.” Worms grow up to 3 feet long and be as thick as a spaghetti noodle. A person can host up to 60 of them.

(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guinea_Worm_Disease)

If extracted properly, it is normally not fatal. But if one tries to pull it out too fast it can break and be fatal. To be saved the people had to look at the brass serpent wrapped around the staff and do the same with a stick to extract the worm. (Josh Heward)

2. Book of Judges (Deliver, Deliverer)

The abridgment was made about 700–600 BC. It reflects the teachings in Deuteronomy and spans 200–400 years (JWOT 170; Judg 18:30).

- The people “did evil in the sight of the LORD.”
- The LORD sold or delivered them into the hands of enemies.
- They “cried unto the LORD.”
- The LORD “raised up a deliverer.” (6 major and 6 minor ones) Last lesson: Deborah, Gideon, Samson. Types of Christ (no majesty so worshiped). Samson (barren mom, angel appeared to her and said “thou shalt conceive, and bear a son ... and he shall begin to deliver Israel” 13:5); Also Gideon was “least in his father’s house” that was “poor in Manasse”
- The LORD delivered enemies into their hands.
- The people were free and had peace in the land.

Josephus: “The Israelites, and Barak himself, were so affrighted ... that they were resolved to march off, had not Deborah ... commanded them to fight ... for they should conquer them, and God would be their assistance.” (Ant 5.5.1-4)

A moral from life of Samson: “Although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God,

and follows after the dictates of his own will and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him.” (D&C 3:4)

3. Gideon asked for a sign

¹² The angel of the LORD ... said unto [Gideon], The LORD is with thee. ... ¹³ Gideon said ... If the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of. ... ¹⁴ And the LORD ... said, ... thou shalt save Israel from ... the Midianites ... I will be with thee. ... ¹⁷ And he said ... If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. (Judg 6:12-17)

Moses said “they will not believe me ... they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.” (Ex 4:1) The Lord gave him signs.

Korihor said unto Alma: If thou wilt show me a sign, that I may be convinced that there is a God, yea, ... that he hath power, and then will I be convinced of the truth of thy words. (Al 30:43)

In the time of Joseph Smith, many saints were deceived by false spirits and “ministering angels ... of Satan appearing as an angel of light” (TPJS 214/220). The apostle John said, “believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jn 4:1). Joseph taught the saints how to “try the spirits” and the role of the priesthood in so doing. (TPJS 203-215 or 208-221)

Gideon asked, How will I know you are a true messenger?

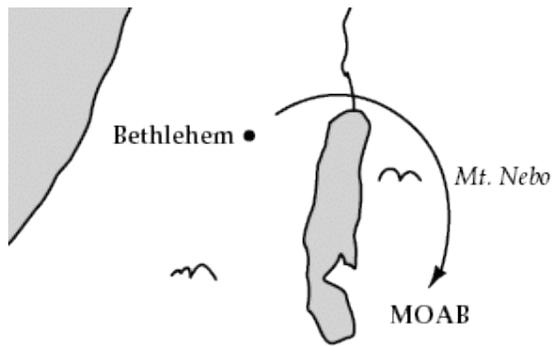
“When Gideon asked for a ‘sign’ he seemed only to want a sign that the messenger was a bona fide emissary of the *Lord* (v. 17). On this point, note that messengers may sometimes be from the wrong source and discernment is important. (See, e.g., D&C 129; see another consideration of the problem in 2 Cor 11:13-15; I Cor 12:10; and I John 4:1-2.) (Signs *may be* given, based upon man’s faith and the will of God. D&C 63:10.) When Gideon made a meal of meat, cakes and broth, and the angel turned it into a miraculous burnt offering, this ‘sign’ quite overwhelmed Gideon. But the *Lord* kindly gave him comfort and peace, and Gideon gratefully named the monument he built there ‘*Lord of Peace*.’” (Rasmussen, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1:150.) (OT-I)

4. Jephthah (Judg 11-12) [Shibolet]

Jephthah ... was a mighty man of valour, and he was the son of an harlot: and Gilead. ... ² And Gilead’s wife bare him sons; and his wife’s sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said ... Thou shalt not inherit in our father’s house; for thou *art* the son of a strange woman. ... ⁵ When the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah ... ⁶ And they said ... Be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon. ⁷ And Jephthah said ... Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father’s house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress? ... If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, [**HEB** I shall be your head.] ¹⁰ And the elders of Gilead said ... The LORD be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words. (11:1-10)

Type of Christ like other deliverers. Christ delivers us when we come unto Him and covenant to follow Him as our head.

[The Messiah] had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (NIV Isa 53:2-3)



5. Book of Ruth

Ruth (the Writings) comes after Judges (the Prophets) in Christian scriptures because it starts with “in the days when the judges ruled” (1:1)

Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons to Moab because of famine.

Famine → covenant curse

Their two sons married Moabite women and had [no] children.

Moabites: “According to Hebrew tradition, the Moabites were descendants of the incestuous union between Lot and one of his daughters (Gen 19:37). They worshiped a limited number of gods, including their chief deity, Chemosh.” (JWOT 184) They were traditional enemies of the Israelites. The Israelites were in bondage to the Moabites for 18 years before the Lord raised up a deliverer.

Who died in Moab? _____ [father and both sons]

Naomi planned to return to Bethlehem because [famine was over].

Naomi told her daughter-in-laws to return to mother’s house.

Naomi’s daughter-in-laws planned to go with her.

6. Levirate marriage

Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother’s house. ... Are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? ... ¹⁵ Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? (1:8–13)

Tamar (Gen 38)

If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband’s brother ... take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband’s brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. (Deut. 25:5–6)

“The first son born in this union was considered the ‘legal’ son of the dead man, in terms of inheritance. This practice was called ‘levirate marriage’ (from the Latin, *levir*, ‘husband’s brother’). In antiquity, without life insurance, social security, and other modern types of social and economic safety nets, a widow without living children was vulnerable to hardship, poverty, and even starvation, because as a woman she could not own property; Numbers 27:1–11 and 36:6–9 provides an exception if there was no male heir. ... To assist women in such circumstances, levirate marriages provided economic stability and social respectability through marriage and children. Additionally, the practice provided a means by which a ‘son’ of the deceased could inherit the dead man’s property, insuring that family land (a powerful symbol and significant economic matter) remained in the family to provide aged

parents with economic security. So important was this levirate responsibility that when the brother of the deceased did not fulfill his responsibility, the widow could accuse him in front of the ‘elders’ by ... taking of the man’s sandal, spitting in his face, and testifying against him—actions that certainly humiliated him in a community where honor and shame were important social constructs (Deut. 25:7–10). ... The Levirate principle underlies the accounts of Tamar (Gen 38) and Ruth (Ruth 3–4). (JWOT 189)

And if the man like not to take his brother’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband’s brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband’s brother. Then the elders of his city shall ... speak unto him: and if he ... say, I like not to take her; Then shall his brother’s wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall ... say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother’s house. And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed. (Deut. 25:7-10)

“The Sadducees used this law in trying to trap Jesus when they asked whose wife such a woman would be in the Resurrection (see Matthew 22:23–33). (OT-I 20:22)

7. Covenant of Loyalty

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.¹⁷ Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. (Ruth 1:16–17)

Naomi (Pleasant), Ruth (friend or companion)

This covenant of loyalty (pledge of allegiance) is similar to LORD’s covenant to “take you ... for a people, and I will be to you a God” (Ex 6:7; Jer 24:7) (JWOT 185)

There are a few women greatly revered in Jewish thought. Ruth is one of them. A woman convert to Judaism is given or “takes upon herself” a “new name,” usually that of Ruth or another of the righteous women of the Bible. (Convert men are usually named ‘Ben Avraham—Son of Abraham.’) ‘The sages regarded Ruth as the prototype of the righteous convert. They taught that Elimelech and his sons were punished for going to Moab during the famine in Judah. They should have remained to share the hardships of their own people, and to help them with their own wealth. Ruth on the other hand left her home not to seek an easier life, but to devote herself to the God of Israel, and to share the fortunes of Naomi and her people, whatever they were destined to be.’ (EJ Jr.)” (Rona #20)

8. Ruth: poor, widow, and a stranger (foreigner)

Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn [grain] after him in whose sight I shall find grace. (2:2)

Ruth ... said to Naomi, “Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor.” (NIV Ruth 2:1–2)

“According to the law of Moses, some grain stalks were to be left standing at the edges of the fields ... and what was dropped was left in the field, for later gleaning. This provided a valuable source of food for the poor.” (JWOT 187)

“Harvesting was difficult work and demanded long hours. Young men moved through the fields grasping handfuls of the grain and cutting through the stalks with sickles. These small bunches of grain were then bound into bundles called sheaves. As the men worked rapidly, a number of stalks fell to the ground. If the men were careful and took the time, these too could be gathered up. However, any stalks that dropped were allowed to remain where they fell. Poor people, following the reapers, were permitted to ‘glean,’ or gather, the random stalks—possibly all that stood between them and starvation. In addition, the edges of the field, where the sickle was not as easily wielded, were left unharvested. The poor were welcome to that portion, as well. The destitute of Bethlehem now included Ruth and Naomi, and Ruth offered to go into the fields and glean.” (*Great People of the Bible and How They Lived*, 129.) (OT-I)

After Boaz invited her to glean in his field, Ruth said “Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge [notice] of me, seeing I am a stranger [foreigner]?” (2:10)

NIV “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?”

Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: ¹⁶ And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not. ¹⁷ So she gleaned in the field until even, ... and it was about an ephah of barley. (Ruth 2:15–16)

Ephah = about 0.6 bushels or 4.8 gallons

“Poverty-stricken though she was, Naomi did not rush to her husband’s wealthy kinsmen, introduce herself, and expect to be taken in. There were other ways to provide for themselves. She and Ruth arrived in the fall while the harvest was being gathered. Gleaning, according to the Mosaic law, was the privilege of the poor. (See Deut 24:17-22.)

Landowners were forbidden to harvest the corners or to pick up what fell to the ground. But gleaning was hard work, not suited for an older woman. Ruth left Naomi and went to the fields by herself.

“The people of Bethlehem noticed her. When she came to her rich kinsman’s field, he expressed an interest in her, saying: ‘It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.’ (Ruth 2:11)

“Then secretly he ordered his servants to let more barley fall, that Ruth might have more to glean. His charity was offered in a way that would not injure the pride of the two widows, who had chosen to remain independent. Expecting no thanks, he hoped Ruth would never know he was helping her. But Naomi wasn’t fooled; when Ruth returned with more than her usual gleanings, she asked, ‘Where hast thou gleaned today?’ Ruth explained her encounter with Boaz, and Naomi expressed her thanks, saying, ‘Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead.’” (Jerrie W. Hurd, *Our Sisters in the Bible*, 58)

9. Ancient Welfare Program

It is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine. But it must needs be done in mine own way. (D&C 104:15–18)

When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. ... Thou shalt leave them for the **poor** and **stranger**: I am the LORD your God. (Lev 19:9–13; 23:22)

²¹ ¶ Thou shalt neither vex a **stranger**, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. **Golden rule**

²² ¶ Ye shall not afflict any **widow**, or **fatherless child**. ²³ If thou afflict them ...; ²⁴ I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

²⁵ ¶ If thou lend money to *any of my people that is poor* by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer. (Ex 22:21–26)

³³ ¶ And if a **stranger** sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. ³⁴ *But* the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. (Lev 19:33–34)

³⁵ If thy brother be waxen **poor**, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: *yea, though he be a stranger*, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. ³⁶ Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. ... ³⁹ And if thy brother ... be waxen **poor**, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: ⁴⁰ *But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner*, (Lev 25:35–40)

The LORD ... doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment ¹⁹ Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deut 10:17–19)

¹⁷ Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the **stranger**, *nor* of the **fatherless**; nor take a **widow’s** raiment to pledge: ...

¹⁹ When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the **stranger**, for the **fatherless**, and for the **widow**: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. (Deut 24:17–21)

10. Kinsman-Redeemer

[Naomi] said unto [Ruth], Where hast thou gleaned to day? ...

[Ruth] said, The man’s name ... *is* Boaz. ²⁰ ... And Naomi said ... The man *is* near of kin unto us, one of our ^b next kinsmen [NIV kinsman-redeemers]. (2:19–20)

Boaz (HEB In him is strength, swiftness, quickness.)

“The **kinsman-redeemer** was a near blood-relative and always male. This near-kinsman ... had a duty to protect his weaker relatives. He had to redeem [their] property ... when they had to sell land or goods and even their persons when they had sold themselves into slavery. ... The kinsman-redeemer was also duty bound to come to the defense or aid of a relative in either a legal or an actual struggle. ... The duty of the kinsman also extended to the levirate, the begetting and raising of children with the wife of a deceased brother so as to carry on his name. ... The near-relative might also act as an avenger ... of blood being guiltless when executing the killer of a relative, provided the killer had not lawfully sought refuge in one of the six designated cities. Finally, it was the duty of the kinsman to take the side of his relative in a court action.” (DBI 501)

“The biblical idea of ‘redeemer’ (Hebrew *go’el*) is deeply rooted in family obligations and responsibilities. An older male family member was responsible to purchase or deliver—to ‘redeem’—family members and property from legal obligations or drastic circumstances through some type of payment. For example, ... redemption from debt slavery. ... Additionally, a redeemer was responsible to act as a family guardian by purchasing family land that would otherwise become lost. ... Naomi identifies Boaz as ‘one of our next kinsman’ (Ruth 2:20, Hebrew *go’alenu hu*), literally, ‘he is a redeemer of us.’ After a nearer kinsman forfeited his right, Boaz fulfilled this role by purchasing the land of Elimelech. He also assumed responsibility to ‘raise up the name of the dead’ through a levirate marriage (Ruth 4:3–5). ... Not surprisingly, ... Jehovah is portrayed as the Redeemer par excellence because he delivered his people from bondage: ‘I the LORD am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob’ (Isa 49:26 ...). Understanding that Jehovah is Jesus, the significance of Christ’s sacrificial ‘payment’ to buy us from death and sin becomes more clear and dear.” (JWOT 187)

“The word ... [kinsman is] from Hebrew *go’el* and this is its proper translation. It is rendered merely ‘kinsman’ in the King James English translation. The function of a *go’el* was to make it possible for a widow who had lost home and property to return to her former status and security and to have seed to perpetuate her family. It is easy to see why the later prophets borrowed this word from the social laws of Israel and used it to describe the functions of Him who would become the Divine Redeemer: Think of what He does to restore us to proper status with God, and to give us future security and eternal ‘seed.’” (Rasmussen, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1:157.)

Redeem from bondage: ⁴⁷ ¶ And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger’s family: ⁴⁸ After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: ⁴⁹ Either his uncle, or his uncle’s son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself. (Lev 25:47–49)

The Hebrew word *go’el* appears 117 times in OT: 22 Lev, 21 Ruth, 11 Ps, 25 Isa. Only 0.4 are expected in Ruth.

BDB *g’l* 1350 **redeem, act as kinsman** 1a raise up children by widow, (b) redeem from bondage, (c) redeem a field, (d) claim as kinsman, (e) avenger of blood, (2) *redeem* by payment, (3) *redeem* with God as subject (a) individuals from death, (b) Israel from bondage, (c) from exile

gō’āl, ghō’āl = redeemer [Verb- Qal Participle Masc Sing]

gō’ēl, ggō’ēl, ghō’ēl = kinsman [Verb- Qal Participle Masc Sing]

11. The “Wing” Proposal

[Ruth] went down unto the [threshing] floor, and did ... all that her mother in law bade her. ⁷ And when Boaz ... went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down. ... At midnight ... the man was afraid, ... [for] a woman lay at his feet. ⁹ And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt [HEB *kanaph* = wing] over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman. [HEB *go’el*, kinsman-redeemer] (3:6–9)

NIV “Who are you?” he asked. “I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer.”

HEB *go’el* = redeem, act as kinsman (BDB)

“Her request of him—‘spread ... kinsman’—was essentially an encouragement for Boaz to marry her. The Hebrew phrase, *parasta kenapeka ‘al*, ‘spread the edge of your robe over,’ used elsewhere connotes marriage and sexual activity (Ezek 16:18).” (JWOT 187)

“The idiom means ‘protect me,’ or, in other words, ‘be my protector or husband.’ ... [Boaz] took no offence at the manner in which she had approached him and proposed to become his wife. On the contrary, he regarded it as a proof of feminine virtue and modesty, that she had not gone after young men, but offered herself as a wife to an old man like him.” (OT-I 263)

In the previous chapter, Boaz said to Ruth in the field: “The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings [HEB *kanaph*] thou art come to trust.” (2:12)

NIV May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”

“The Hebrew noun *kanap* means ‘wing’ and, by extension, the edge or hem of a robe. Ruth thus turns the phrase, suggesting that Boaz’s plea that Jehovah spread his protective ‘wing’ over Ruth (2:12) will be fulfilled when Boaz spreads his ‘wing/skirt’ over her by marrying her.” (JWOT 187)

BDB קנף *kānāph* ; h3671 1. *Wing* (of birds, insects, cherubim, seraphim; of wind, dawn, God as protector); 2. *Extremity* (*skirt, corner of garment; end, corner of earth*)

Symbolism of crucifixion: “The arms are reached [and up] as in surrender. ... The arms stretched out suggest another symbolism: that of wings. On more than one occasion the Lord referred to the blessings of his ‘wings.’ [see below] ... The ark of the covenant was protected and covered with the wings of the cherubim (Ex 25:20), again suggesting the *outstretched arms* of the atoning Lord.” (S&S 235–236)

- I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. (Ex 19:4)
- God ... in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge (Ps 57:1)
- I will gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if they will not harden their hearts (D&C 10:65)
- Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings (Mal 4:2)
- Make tassels on the four corners [HEB *kanaph*=wings] of the cloak you wear. (NIV Deut 22:12; Num 15:38)
- A woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.” Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” he said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed from that moment. (NIV Matt 9:20–22) [Note: It was against Jewish tradition for the unclean to touch any person.]

12. The kinsman-redeemer redeems (Ruth 4)

The Hebrew word (go'el) for redeem/redeemer occurs 13 times in this chapter as redeem or kinsman.

THEN went Boaz up to the gate, ... and ... the kinsman ... sat down.² And ... ten men of the elders ... sat down.³ And [Boaz] said unto the kinsman, Naomi ... selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: ... If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, ... for ... I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.⁵ Then said Boaz, ... Thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess ... to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

⁶ ¶ And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself. ...⁷ This was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming ... for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this *was* a testimony in Israel.⁸ Therefore the kinsman said ... Buy *it* for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

NIV (... for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.)

"The public life of an Israelite village was concentrated at its main gate. It was here that matters of law were brought for adjudication before the elders of the community. They also were the official witnesses for transactions such as the one in which Boaz agreed to marry Ruth if her kinsman would give up all rights to her dead husband's property. A man renouncing property rights removed a sandal and presented it to the new property holder, a gesture that everyone understood and considered binding if witnessed by the elders." (*Great People of the Bible and How They Lived*, 133.)

⁹ ¶ Boaz said unto the elders Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's. ...¹⁰ Moreover Ruth the Moabitess ... have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. (4:1–10)

"Key parts of the story of Ruth are concerned with redemption, or buying back. ... Boaz, who is called a 'redeemer' ... is a type and shadow of Jesus Christ, the Great Redeemer." Boaz gives Ruth "food and drink, comforts her, protects her, 'redeems' her from her status of being without husband or family." Boaz spreads his wing (KJV=skirt) over Ruth, ... and marries Ruth, and 'purchases' Ruth to 'be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance'." "Jesus has ... 'bought [us] with a price' (1 Cor 6:20)—which price was his suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on Golgotha" (S&S 83–84, 96–97)

Boaz is mentioned only 5 times in conference talks since 1970.

13. Ruth bare a son, Obed (Genealogy) (Ruth 4:13–22)

"Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: ... and she bare a son. ...¹⁶ And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. ¹⁷ And the women ... called his name Obed [HEB *servant*]. ...

These are the generations of Pharez" (Judah and Tamar's son): Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon (Rahab?), Boaz (Ruth), Obed, Jesse, and David. (4:18–22)

Christ had ancestors who were not good or great examples. Abraham's dad was an idol worshiper and offered him as a sacrifice. Judah slept with Tamar who was dressed as a harlot. The harlot Rahab become a

convert and may have been an ancestor. Ruth had parents who were idolaters. David committed adultery. Solomon worshiped idols in his later years.

How the book of Ruth helped a convert stop being depressed because she did not come from a good LDS home. (Kay Hago, "From One of the Best Families," *New Era*, June 1991, 20)

"Would I always feel like a 'second-class citizen' in the Church because my parents weren't LDS? ... Lessons [on families] depressed me. They were supposed to inspire us to superlative parenthood by telling us how great our kids would be if we were faithful. If that were true, though, I didn't have a chance. My family had more than its share of divorce, alcoholism, infidelity, and a number of other unimpressive vices. I was a convert and sometimes felt eons behind the lucky souls who had LDS parents. ... 'Read the book of Ruth,' I was told by an older friend in a blessing at the beginning of the school year. 'It has a special message for you.'

"I immediately began poring through that book. I came to know and love Ruth, who turned away from the idols of her people to worship the God of Israel, the God of her husband. I admired her faith, for she didn't leave her new religion even when her husband died. Instead, she traveled with her mother-in-law Naomi to her homeland, leaving friends, family, and everything familiar behind. 'Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God' (Ruth 1:16), said Ruth to Naomi. ... Ruth, with Naomi's help, adapted well to the ways of the new land and eventually married a good man and bore a son. It was a wonderful, inspiring account. But what was the meaning for me?

"Finally, through the Spirit, it came to me. The key was at the very end of the book, where it mentions Ruth's part in the lineage of David, hence the lineage of Christ. Ruth, the Moabitess, the convert from a foreign land, showed such great faith that she became an integral part of the most blessed bloodline of all. This great woman, who came from generations of idol worshipers, would be a forebear of the Savior of the world.

"That was how the Lord told me that if I were faithful, no blessing would be withheld from me because I wasn't born to LDS parents. It would be naive and narrow-minded for people to hold that against me, or for me to hold it against myself. As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I did indeed come from one of the best families, and my brothers and sisters and I have the potential to share an equal inheritance, as long as we remain faithful. I'll always be grateful for that insight." (Kay Hago, "From One of the Best Families," *New Era*, June 1991, 20)

Every parent is a good example of what to do or what not to do. If we had member or non-member parents like this woman, we can resent them or be depressed that we did not have good or great LDS parents. OR like Ruth, we can be grateful that the Lord brought someone into our lives to take us away and teach us the ways of the Lord that our descendants may call us blessed as do Ruth's.

Instead of being depressed that his dad was an idolater who tried to kill him, Abraham focused on being "a greater follower of righteousness" (Abr 1:2)

14. Hannah (1 Sam 1:1–6)

Elkanah [a Levite] ... had two wives; ... Hannah, and ... Peninnah; and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. ³ And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship ... [at the tabernacle] in Shiloh. ... He loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. ⁶ And her adversary [Peninnah] also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. ... Therefore she wept, and did not eat. (1:1–6)

Rachel said “Give me children or else I die.” Hannah prayed to have her “affliction” removed. **Do barren women have similar feelings today?**

Like Hagar, this 2nd wife assumed pregnancy= blessing AND barrenness=curse. Both adversaries mocked the barren. **How many have judgmental neighbors or relatives like these 2nd wives that “make [one] fret” and weep?** Such adversaries increase the burdens of others and break their baptismal covenant to “bear one another's burdens, that they may be light; ... and ... mourn with those that mourn; ... and comfort those that stand in need of comfort.” (Mosiah 18:8–9)

“In Israel, being childless was a major tragedy. The Jewish rabbis said that seven people were excommunicated from God and the list began, ‘A Jew who has no wife, or a Jew who has a wife and who has no child.’ ... If a woman remained childless after ten years of marriage, it was considered grounds for divorce, since having a family was one of the important reasons for marriage. Barrenness was thought to be a major sign of God’s disfavor and a result of divine judgment.” (<http://donna-connections.blogspot.com>; 12/14/2009)

“Motherhood was also held in high esteem by the ancient Israelites. ‘Give me children, or else I die’ were Rachel’s words to Jacob (Gen. 30:1); Samuel’s mother, Hannah, begged the Lord to remove her ‘affliction’ and give her a child (see 1 Sam. 1:11).” (Leland H. Gentry, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, 12/81)

Grounds for divorce = infidelity, barrenness, incompatibility, gross frivolity of character and irreligion.
(<http://www.biu.ac.il/JH/Parasha/eng/toledot/shi.html>)

15. Nazirite Vow

Hannah ... was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. ¹¹ And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD ... if thou wilt ... give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. ¹² ... As she continued praying ... she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. ... Hannah ... said ... *I am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. ... ¹⁷ Then Eli ... said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him. (1 Sam 1)

Usual to pray aloud

Hugh B. Brown: “If I make errors in [judging people,] I want them to be on the side of mercy.”

Nazarite. *A consecrated man.* A man under a vow to abstain from wine, from any cutting of the hair, and any contact with the dead (Judg. 13:5; 16:17; 1 Sam. 1:11; Amos 2:11, 12; for full regulations see Num. 6). The vow might be lifelong, or for a short, definite period. (BD Nazarite)

“It appears that a person who took this vow became in essence a lay priest—one who sought holiness without actually being a member of the priesthood.” Samson and Samuel were Nazarites

for life. Paul and his companions made a temporary Nazarite vow. (JWOT 128)

“Naz’arite more properly *Naz’irite (one separated)*, one of either sex who was bound by a vow of a peculiar kind to be set apart from others for the service of God. The obligation was either for life or for a defined time. There is no notice in the Pentateuch of Nazarites for life; but the regulations for the vow of a Nazarite of days are given. Numbers 6:1-21; The Nazarite, during the term of his consecration, was bound to abstain from wine grapes, with every production of the vine and from every kind of intoxicating drink. He was forbidden to cut the hair of his head, or to approach any dead body, even that of his nearest relation. When the period of his vow was fulfilled he was brought to the door of the tabernacle, and was required to offer a he lamb for a burnt offering, a ewe lamb for a sin offering, and a ram for a peace offering, with the usual accompaniments of peace offerings, Leviticus 7:12, 13; and of the offering made at the consecration of priests. Exodus 29:2; Numbers 6:15; He brought also a meat offering and a drink offering, which appear to have been presented by themselves as a distinct act of service. ver. 17; He was to cut off the hair of ‘the head of his separation’ (that is, the hair which had grown during the period of his consecration) at the door of the tabernacle, and to put it into the fire under the sacrifice on the altar. Of the Nazarites for life three are mentioned in the Scriptures—**Samson, Samuel and St. John the Baptist.** The only one of these actually called a Nazarite is Samson. We do not know whether the vow for life was ever voluntarily taken by the individual. In all the cases mentioned in the sacred history, it was made by the parents before the birth of the Nazarite himself...” (*Dictionary of the Bible*, William Smith, “Nazarite,” emphasis added)

Interestingly, all three Nazarites, Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist were born to barren, faithful women who were willing to give their sons to the Lord if he would make them fruitful. Angels announced the births of Samson and John; the priest Eli promised Hannah that she would bear Samuel in answer to her humble prayers (1 Sam. 1).

James E. Talmage did not agree that Samuel and John the Baptist were Nazarites **for life.** (*Jesus the Christ*, note 1, 83)

16. Hannah bare a son, Samuel

Hannah [*grace, favored*] ... bare a son, and called his name Samuel [*name of God*], *saying*, Because I have asked him of the LORD. ... ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, ... unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: ...and brought the child to Eli. (1:20–25)

“After Samuel was old enough to be weaned, probably about age three, Hannah ... dedicated him to the Lord by giving him to the care of Eli to serve in the tabernacle. Every year when she came to the Tabernacle to worship, she brought her son Samuel a new robe. She eventually became the mother of three sons and two daughters (1 Sam 2:19, 21).” Other barren women who had their prayers answered: Sarah (Isaac), Rebekah (Jacob), Rachel (Joseph), and the wife of Minoah (Samson), Elizabeth (John the Baptist). “Hannah, in her poetic song of thanksgiving (1 Sam 2:1–10), expressed her joy to the Lord that he had answered her prayer for a son. ... The song of Hannah ... provided the model for Mary when she sang her song of thanksgiving, called the Magnificat, ... Luke 1:46–55. Both women were celebrating in song their miraculous pregnancies.” (JWOT 193)

17. Jehovah is our deliver and redeemer (Isa 49:25–26)

Thus saith the LORD, Even the captives ... shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. ²⁶ ... and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

yēhvāh the LORD am
mōshī' /ēkh thy Saviour [deliverer h3467]
vè'ghō'āl/ēkh and thy Redeemer,

יְהוָה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ yēhōshua' or יְשׁוּעַ yēvōshua' Alt: יְהוֹשֻׁעַ yēhōshua' ; h3091

From yhvh {h3068} and ysh' {h3467}

Mean *Jehovah-saved; Jehoshua* (i.e. Joshua), the Jewish leader

KJV Jehoshua, Joshua.

Note: This was the Hebrew name of Jesus.

יָשַׁע ysh' ; h3467 [21 times in Judges (10% of 221 OT refs); 5.4 expected; Rating=6.2; "deliver from" or save]

Mean properly to be open, wide or free, i.e. (by implication) to be safe; causatively to free or succor

KJV X at all, avenging, defend, deliver(-er), help, preserve, rescue, be safe, bring (having) salvation, save(-iour), get victory

נָתַן nthn ; h5414 [69 times in Judges "deliver/give into hand"]

Mean to give, used with great latitude of application (put, make)

KJV add, apply, appoint, ascribe, assign, X avenge, X be ([healed]), bestow, bring (forth, hither), cast, cause, charge, come, commit, consider, count, + cry, deliver (up), direct, distribute, do, X doubtless, X without fail, fasten, frame, X get, give (forth, over, up), grant, hang (up), X have, X indeed, lay (unto charge, up), (give) leave, lend, let (out), + lie, lift up, make, + O that, occupy, offer, ordain, pay, perform, place, pour, print, X pull, put (forth), recompense, render, requite, restore, send (out), set (forth), shew, shoot forth (up), + sing, + slander, strike, [sub-] mit, suffer, X surely, X take, thrust, trade, turn, utter, + weep, X willingly, + withdraw, + would (to) God, yield

18. Major themes related to Christ's roles

A purpose of the scriptures is to help us understand the roles of the Savior so we can have faith in him become like him.

Exodus: Jehovah is the deliverer who allowed Moses to help him deliver the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. Jehovah invites Israel to enter into a covenant with him that they might be blessed. Jehovah guides and provides for them in the wilderness.

Leviticus focuses on the role of a priest (type of Christ) and atonement. Here are 49 of 81 OT references to atone(ment).

Judges: Jehovah repeatedly delivers the Israelites from bondage by raising up deliverers to help him and act as a type.

[deliver from or save occurs 21 times in Judges (10% of 221 OT refs) Rating=6.2 more found than the 5.4 expected]

Ruth: Jehovah is our go'el or kinsman-redeemer who has the duty like Boaz to redeem us from bondage and to protect and preserve us if we will come unto him.

The Hebrew word go'el appears 117 times in OT: 22 Lev, 21 Ruth, 11 Ps, 25 Isa. Only 0.4 are expected in Ruth.

Read Encyclopedia Judaica Quote at End

Genesis: Jehovah is the creator of heaven and earth. Adam and Eve had children and were given the responsibility to take care of the earth. They experienced the heartaches and joys of parenthood that they might understand God's love and role as our Father. Abraham (father of a multitude) was promised that the priesthood and celestial marriage would be offered to his posterity.

God has given us the opportunity to be children and parents that we also might understand his love and role as our Father in Heaven and Christ's role as the Son of God, the bridegroom, and the father of those who are born again. Some couples like Abraham and Sarah or Elikinah and Hannah are unable to have children and may never have children of their own. However, some unmarried or childless couples learn to love and take young ones under their wing through callings and other service opportunities as shown in the movie Follow Me Boys. Many good childless couples have adopted and given good homes to children. These people who serve or adopt children become kinsman-redeemers, and like the Savior, they take these children under their wings.

"In the Roman culture, the adopted son or daughter had four major changes: a change of family, a change of name, a change of home, and a change of responsibilities. ... The Romans recognized that when a baby was born, "you got what you got," whether you liked it or not. This would include the sex of the child, birthmarks, etc. Thus, according to Roman law, a naturally born baby could be disowned from the family. However, people adopting a child knew exactly what they were getting, and no one adopted a child unless that specific child was wanted as a family member, so according to law an adopted child could not be disowned. He or she was permanently added to the family. Many early believers were Roman citizens, and using the word 'adoption' was one of God's ways to let the Church know that He chose the children brought into His family, and they could not be taken from it." (<http://donna-connections.blogspot.com>; 28 Sept 2009)

The scriptures speak of two types of adoption. (1) A person who is of non-Israelite lineage becomes a member of the family of Abraham and the house of Israel by having faith in Jesus Christ, repenting, being baptized by immersion, and receiving the Holy Ghost (2 Ne. 31:17–18; D&C 84:73–74; Abr. 2:6, 11); and (2) All who have received the saving ordinances of the gospel become sons and daughters of Jesus Christ by continued obedience to his commandments (Rom. 8:15–17; Gal. 3:24–29; 4:5–7; Mosiah 5:7–8). (Guide to the Scriptures | Adoption)

Conclusion

Story of Dale Berge and wife: While excavating in Nauvoo in the early 1970's, archaeologist Dale Berge and his wife visited with Elder Stapley [died 1978] and Elder Hinckley. At the time the Berge's had adopted two children and their prayers to have children of their own had been unanswered. After Elders Stapley and Hinckley learned of their situation and had reviewed Sister Berge's patriarchal blessing, they suggested to her that after returning to Utah that she get a blessing from her stake president. When the Berge's went to the stake center to talk with their stake president, they had to wait until the stake president finished a meeting he was having with several other stake presidents. When he learned why they were there, the stake president invited the other stake presidents to join him in giving her a blessing. One key statement in the blessing was, "First my will be done, and then your prayers will be answered." After the blessing the Berge's felt that the Lord wanted them to adopt another child. Two months after the adoption, Sister Berge got pregnant. (Personal phone communication, 5/30/2010)

May we first seek to know and do God's will and with faith wait on the Lord for answers to our prayers.

Quotes

Thomas S. Monson: “In our selection of heroes, let us nominate also heroines. First, that noble example of fidelity—even Ruth. Sensing the grief-stricken heart of her mother-in-law, who suffered the loss of each of her two fine sons, and feeling perhaps the pangs of despair and loneliness which plagued the very soul of Naomi, Ruth uttered what has become that classic statement of loyalty: ‘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.’ Ruth’s actions demonstrated the sincerity of her words. There is place for her name in the Hall of Fame.” (*Ensign*, Nov 1974, 108)

President Hugh B. Brown: If I make errors [in judging people,] I want them to be on the side of mercy” (in Eugene E. Campbell and Richard D. Poll, *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought*, 225).

Elder John A. Widtsoe: “I believe that the busy person ... who has his worries and troubles, can solve his problems better and more quickly in the house of the Lord than anywhere else. If he will [do] the temple work for himself and for his dead, he will confer a mighty blessing upon those who have gone before, and ... a blessing will come to him, for at the most unexpected moments, in or out of the temple will come to him, as a revelation, the solution of the problems that vex his life. That is the gift that comes to those who enter the temple properly” (quoted by David B. Haight, *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 61).

Encyclopedia Judaica: “Proverbs (23:10–11) speaks of God as the *go’el* of (“the next of kin,” duty bound to protect) orphans, and Job similarly believes Him to be the *go’el* of the persecuted (19:25; cf. 19:21–22). In the same spirit the Psalmist calls Him the “father of orphans, defender of widows” (68:6). What better way, then, for the prophet to reassure his people that God has a special reason to redeem them, for He is their *go’el* (Isa. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6, 24; 47:4; 48:17, etc.) and an intimate relationship exists between Him and them (41:89; 43:10, 20; 44:1–2; 45:4; 54:10; 55:3).” (EJ-Redemption)

Neal A. Maxwell: When we would measure loving loyalty in a human relationship, do we not speak of Ruth and Naomi even more than David and Jonathan? And no wonder God with His perfect regard for women is so insistent about our obligations to widows. (“The Women of God,” *Ensign*, May 1978, 10)

Sources:

- OT-I = Old Testament Institute manual
- SOSL = Trumbull, *Studies in Oriental Social Life*.
- S&S = Donald W. Parry and Jay A. Parry, *Symbols & Shadows*
- *Hidden* = James L. Ferrell, *The Hidden Christ*
- TT = Margaret Barker, *Temple Theology*
- EJ = *Encyclopedia Judaica*
- JWOT = Holzapfel, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament*.
- Rona = Daniel Rona, www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm, On-line Lesson Manual Supplement
- DBI = *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*
- BDB = Brown, Driver, Briggs *Hebrew and English Lexicon*
- KD = Keil-Delitzsch *Commentary on the Old Testament*
- Wight = Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*,
- Donald W. Parry, *Temples of the Ancient World*, 134–135
- <http://beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml>
- <http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/>