

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. *Hebrews 12:12-13*

THE PURCHASE OF A BRIDE

Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day. *Ruth 4:10*

The preaching of the gospel is the declaration of CHRIST's purchase (i.e. redemption) of a bride for HIMSELF. As such, the preaching of it is an announcement of good tidings or "good news". It is the manifestation and proclamation of the immutable love of the LORD for HIS people which HE has demonstrated in the earth by the giving of HIMSELF in their behalf. CHRIST said that HE is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."* (Luke 4:18-19) HE speaks of the absolute deliverance of a people. (see Mat. 1:21)

Sadly, the gospel has been reduced to nothing but a mere proposition or offer by the rank and file preachers of our day. They tell us that CHRIST died to purchase salvation for all men without exception, yet in reality procured the salvation of none. They tell us that a man can make the work of CHRIST effectual for themselves by an action of their own. This is to deny the actual purchase which CHRIST made of HIS bride which HE loved from before the foundation of the world.

This type of message juxtaposes the cause of salvation and makes it dependent on an action of the redeemed rather than the finished work of the REDEEMER. If CHRIST has purchased the salvation of HIS elect; then their salvation is procured apart from anything they could ever do or fail to do. They are certain to be the recipients of that which HE has bought with HIS own blood. *"But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* (Heb 9:11-12)

This is not a difficult concept to grasp but it is one which eludes those that must somehow weave the free will of men into all things and spend more time trying to persuade men to believe than they do in the declaration of what CHRIST has done completely for those who are given faith by HIM. If you go to the grocery store and purchase a sack full of groceries, they are yours without dispute. There are no other conditions which must be met in order to take those groceries home nor is the ride home in any wise dependent on what is in the sack. The purchaser and the payment of the purchase price has settled the issue once and for all.

This is exactly what we see in the declaration of Boaz as he announces for all to hear that he had purchased Ruth to be his wife. There are many truths concerning the LORD's

redemption of HIS bride and the proclamation of it in the earth which are illustrated for us in Boaz's actions.

He made this declaration so that there might be no disputing the matter in time to come. The LORD has sent men into the earth to preach the *"acceptable year of the LORD"*, to tell sinners far and wide that this redemption which HE has accomplished is complete. *"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb 9:13-14)* What a sweet sound in the ears is such a message for those who know themselves to be lost and without hope apart from HIS mercy.

He would declare his love for and identity with a woman with a heathen ancestry and a lineage of wickedness. Ruth was a Moabite. Moab was the progenitor of her family and he was the product of the incestuous union of Lot with his own daughter. (see Gen.19:31-38) The LORD JESUS CHRIST came into the world to save sinners. HE has declared HIS love for them and HIS intention to save them wherever they are found. In order that HE might fully identify HIMSELF with these corruptible men, HE became sin for them even though HE was HIMSELF incorruptible. HIS own lineage can be traced through Pharez, the incestuous bastard child of Tamar and Judah, Rahab the harlot, Ruth the Moabite, and the adulterers Bathsheba and David, just to name a few. *"He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."* (Isa 53:12) The religious men of HIS day rejected HIM saying, *"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."* (Luke 15:2) Yet it is for sinners that HE came.

He declared his love for a woman who had been married to another. Ruth was the wife of Mahlon to whom she had willingly given her heart in the land of her nativity, and who had died leaving her abandoned unto destruction. In like fashion though the bride of CHRIST was betrothed to HIM before the world's foundation was laid, she was enamored of her carnal love of sin as she embraced it in the Garden being made subject to the law of sin and death. The love of CHRIST for HIS bride transcended her impurity and HE has not only purchased her with HIS own blood but has cleansed and sanctified her with the same that HE might present her as a chaste bride before HIS FATHER's face. *"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* (Eph 5:27)

He declared his intention to raise up seed unto Mahlon. *"that the name of the dead be not cut off"* (Ruth 4:10) Were it not for the fact that HIS mercy is bestowed upon the human race, by redeeming a remnant out of this benighted world, then humanity would cease to exist because of sin and death. It is in this sense that the scripture speaks of HIS dying for the sins of the whole world. Because of HIS purpose, CHRIST arose triumphant over death on the third day and became the FIRSTFRUITS of them that sleep. Who but CHRIST could resurrect HIMSELF? For HE, alone, hath immortality. Those wretched sinners who are the objects of HIS grace, shall live forever in HIS presence because HE has given them eternal life. *"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."* (1Cor 15:47-52)

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