

God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

*“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”*



THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MANKIND

PART TWELVE

I happen to love the Book of Ruth, especially as a book of prophecy. Revelation 5 only makes sense in light of the Book of Ruth. We know the story. Naomi was a Jewish woman who returned to her home in Bethlehem after sojourning many years in Moab. While in Moab her sons married Moabite women and then both died along with her husband. Naomi would have therefore been destituted, except that her Moabite daughter-in-law Ruth had refused to leave her side. Ruth left her own people and gods and joined herself to Naomi, Naomi’s people, and Naomi’s God.



Ruth is a rich book, full of prophetic types. We see here the story of a righteous woman who loves her mother-in-law and provides for her by going out every day and gleaning in the fields for food. We see here a love story, in which a wealthy landowner admires a selfless, hard-working Moabite woman and falls in love with her. However, there is far more to Ruth than just a good story about how David’s great grandfather met his great grandmother. It is a picture of Israel, the Church, and Jesus Christ the Kinsman Redeemer who rescues them both.

Naomi, the Jewish woman, represents Israel, and Ruth represents the Church, the bride of Christ. We see that Ruth meets Boaz through Naomi, and it is Naomi who explains to Ruth what to do to seek Boaz as her husband and redeemer. Naomi never meets Boaz herself until she is introduced to Boaz through Ruth. Boaz is the near kinsman who is able and pleased to redeem Naomi’s lost land and marry Ruth. We see here the laws of Levirate Marriage and Redemption both fulfilled.

You might think, “Well, Jim. That is all very interesting. How does Ruth apply to the question of predestination versus free will?” There are a couple of interesting things that I see.

When we understand that Boaz presents a picture of Christ, we can glean some valuable principles. First, Boaz sees Ruth and falls in love with her, and he speaks to his workers to make sure she is protected and

provided for. However, he waits for Ruth to come to him. In the famous threshing room scene, Ruth does as Naomi has instructed her, and she lies down at the feet of Boaz, pulling his skirt over her. This is not a sexual proposition. In the ancient Middle East, the hem of the robe represented authority. When Ruth pulls the hem of Boaz's skirt over he, she is asking him to cover her with his authority. It is a proposal of marriage. Boaz understands this of course, and he is delighted. While Boaz treated Ruth with favor, and while he desired her, he waited for her to make the first move. As soon as Ruth makes her move, Boaz takes care of everything else.

We see another interesting thing in Ruth. A Moabitess, who was cursed under the Law became the great grandmother of King David, and therefore the ancestor of Jesus Christ. A woman who was condemned by the Law and was brought by grace into the literal family of God. This is fantastic, and it truly represents the position all of us face as Gentiles and sinners. We are all condemned by the Law, but we are forgiven and brought into God's family by His grace.

Did God intend to put that picture in the Bible? Did He predestine Ruth to that place of honor, or did Ruth behave honorably and lovingly toward her Jewish mother-in-law of her own accord? This is the very paradox we see throughout the entire Bible, and I suggest that the answer is both. God had a purpose for Ruth, and Ruth served Naomi, served Boaz, and served God faithfully of her own accord.

Boaz did not force Ruth to do his will. He waited for Ruth. We are not automatons. Jesus never chased after anybody and forced them to follow Him. He let them go if they chose to leave. We find the same message from Moses to revelation. He urges us to seek and knock on His door. He also stands at our door and knocks, but we have to let Him in:

“But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.”

- Deuteronomy 4:29

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:”

- Matthew 7:7

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

- Revelation 3:20

We are encouraged to seek God. Nobody can make us do this. It is something we have to decide to do. The First Commandment is to love God with all our hearts. We are perfectly capable of breaking all the other commandments. God does not force us to keep the First anymore than He forces us to keep any of them. Seeking and loving God – that is on us!

“Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.”

- Psalms 119:2

“29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. 30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. 31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.”

- Matthew 12:29-31