

RUTH CH. 4: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK?

וּבַעַז עָלָה הַשַּׁעַר וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם וְהָיָה הַגֹּאֵל עֹבֵר אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר-בְּעַז וַיֹּאמֶר
סוּרָה שְׁבָה-פֹּה פְּלֹנִי אֶלְמֹנִי וַיִּסַּר וַיֵּשֶׁב:

Meanwhile, Boaz had gone to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer whom Boaz had mentioned passed by. He called, "Come over and sit down here, So-and-so!" And he came over and sat down.

How does this chapter start? How about the last two? For what and whom is this a tikkun? Did Naomi know he would do this? (the man will not rest until this is completed today) The redeemer- will he be the one? Why does the man not have a name?

What is the significance of the passing by of Ploni?

Ruth Rabbah 7, 7

וּבַעַז עָלָה הַשַּׁעַר וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם וְהָיָה הַגֹּאֵל עֹבֵר אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר בְּעַז (רות ד, א), מֶה לְאַחֲרֵי תִרְעָא הוּא קָאִים, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָן, אֶפְלוּ הִיָּה בְּסוּף הָעוֹלָם הֵטִיסוּ הַקְּדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְהִבִּיאוּ לָשֵׁם, כְּדִי שְׁלֵא יְהֵא אוֹתוֹ צְדִיק יוֹשֵׁב וּמְצַטְעֵר מִתּוֹךְ יִשְׁוּבוּ. אָמַר רַבִּי בְּרַכְיָה, כִּךְ דְּרָשׁוּ שְׁנֵי גְדוּלֵי עוֹלָם, רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אָמַר בְּעַז עָשָׂה אֶת שְׁלוֹ, וְרוּת עָשְׂתָה אֶת שְׁלָה, וְנַעֲמִי עָשְׂתָה אֶת שְׁלָה, אָמַר הַקְּדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אִף אֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת שְׁלִי. וַיֹּאמֶר סוּרָה שְׁבָה פֹּה פְּלֹנִי אֶלְמֹנִי, רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אָמַר פְּלוֹנִי אֶלְמֹנִי שְׁמוֹ, רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָן אָמַר אֵלֶם הִיָּה מְדַבְּרֵי תוֹרָה, אָמַר הַרְאֵשׁוּנִים לֹא מִתּוֹ אֶלָּא עַל יְדֵי שְׁנִטְלוּ אוֹתָן, וְאֲנִי הוֹלֵךְ לְטַלְהָ, חַס לִי לְטַלְהָ, לִית אֲנָא מְעַרְבָב זְרַעֵי יְתִי, אִינִי מְעַרְבָב פְּסֻלַת בְּבִנִי, וְלֹא הִיָּה יוֹדַע שְׁכַבְרָה נִתְחַדְּשָׁה הַלְכָה עֲמוּנִי וְלֹא עֲמוּנִית מוֹאֲבִי וְלֹא מוֹאֲבִית.

"Meanwhile, Boaz had gone to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer whom Boaz had mentioned passed by. He called, "Come over and sit down here, So-and-so!" And he came over and sat down (Ruth 4:1)": so was he waiting behind there and then he appeared? Rabbi Samuel the son of Nachman said: "Even if he was at the ends of the earth, the Holy One, blessed be He, would have flown him and brought him there so that a righteous man would not be upset sitting there". Rabbi Berachya: "So expounded the two great men of the world, Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua: Rabbi Eliezer said: "Boaz made his thing and Ruth did her thing, and

Naomi did her thing, and the Holy One, blessed be He said: "So I will do my thing". And he said "Hey, so and so, go there". Rabbi Joshua said: his name was Ploni Almoni ("so and so"). Rabbi Samuel the son of Nachman said that he was ignorant of the words of the Torah. He said: "the first ones did not die but rather because they took her and I am going to go and take her? I certainly am not going to take her. I will not pollute my seed and I am not going to create unfitness for my children". And he did not know that the halakhah had been changed "Ammonite and not Ammonitess; Moabite and not Moabitess".

וַיִּקַּח עֶשְׂרֵה אַנְשִׁים מִזְקֵנֵי הָעִיר וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁבוּ-פֹה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ:

Then [Boaz] took ten elders of the town and said, "Be seated here"; and they sat down.

How does this contrast with the last chapter?

וַיֹּאמֶר לְגֵאֵל חֲלִקֵת הַשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר לְאַחֵינוּ לְאֵלִימֶלֶךְ מִכְּרָה נַעֲמִי הַשְּׂבָה מִשְׂדֵה מוֹאָב:

He said to the redeemer, "Naomi, now returned from the country of Moab, must sell the piece of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech.

*What is the focus here? What does it mean that Elimelech is a brother?
What new information do we get here?*

וְאֲנִי אֶמְרָתִי אֶגְלֶה אֶזְנֶךָ לְאִמִּי קָנָה נָגַד הַיְשָׁבִים וְנָגַד זְקֵנֵי עַמִּי אִם-תִּגְאֹל גְּאֹל וְאִם-לֹא יִגְאֹל הַגִּידָה לִּי וְאָדַע [וְאָדַעָה] כִּי אֵין זֹלָתְךָ לְגֵאֹל וְאֲנִי אֶחָרִיךְ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי אֶגְאֹל:

I thought I should disclose the matter to you and say:
Acquire it in the presence of those seated here and in the

presence of the elders of my people. If you are willing to redeem it, redeem! But if you will not redeem, tell me, that I may know. For there is no one to redeem but you, and I come after you.” “I am willing to redeem it,” he replied.

If we read this for the first time how would we feel now? There is a hint though, his name is ploni almoni so... (U. Simon)

וַיֹּאמֶר בְּעֵז בְּיוֹם־קִנּוּתְךָ הַשָּׂדֶה מִיַּד נְעָמִי וּמֵאֵת רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה
אֲשֶׁת־הַיָּתִי [קִנִּיתָהּ] לְהַקִּים שֵׁם־הַיָּתִי עַל־נַחֲלָתִי:

Boaz continued, “When you acquire the property from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabite, you must also acquire the wife of the deceased, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate.”

Who made this rule? What is the idea of it? If it is also Ruth’s what is he saying about Ruth? It’s a triple redemption, the wife, the dead, and the land. Tzror Hamor, Eshkol Hakofer: Boaz thought the man could take a hint but he wasn’t learned. Ruth Rabbah 7, 7. How are women and land connected?

וַיֹּאמֶר הַגַּיָּל לֹא אוֹכֵל לְגֹאֵל־[לְגֹאֵל־] לִי פֶן־אֲשַׁחֵת אֶת־נַחֲלָתִי
גֹאֵל־לְךָ אֶתְּהָ אֶת־גְּאֻלָּתִי כִּי לֹא־אוֹכֵל לְגֹאֵל:

The redeemer replied, “Then I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own estate. You take over my right of redemption, for I am unable to exercise it.”

What was he worried about?

וְזֹאת לְפָנַיִם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־הַגְּאוּלָּה וְעַל־הַתְּמוּרָה לְקַיֵּם כָּל־דְּבַר שְׁלֹף
אִישׁ נֶעְלוּ וְנָתַן לְרֵעֵהוּ וְזֹאת הַתְּעוּדָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

Now this was formerly done in Israel in cases of redemption or exchange: to validate any transaction, one man would take off his sandal and hand it to the other. Such was the practice in Israel.

What does this shoe smell like? What is this exchange that is going on? What other exchange?

וַיֹּאמֶר הַגַּיֵּל לְבָעֵז קִנְיֵה־לְךָ וַיִּשְׁלֹף נֶעְלוֹ:

So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Acquire for yourself,” he drew off his sandal.

וַיֹּאמֶר בְּעֵז לְזִקְנָיִם וְכָל־הָעָם יְעִידִים אִתְּם הַיּוֹם כִּי קִנִּיתִי אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר
לְאֵלֵימֶלֶךְ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְכִלְיוֹן וּמַחְלוֹן מִיַּד נְעָמִי:

And Boaz said to the elders and to the rest of the people, “You are witnesses today that I am acquiring from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon.

וְגַם אֶת־רוּת הַמּוֹאבִּיָּה אֲשֶׁת מַחְלוֹן קִנִּיתִי לִי לְאִשְׁרָה לְהַקִּים שֵׁם־הַמֵּת
עַל־נַחֲלָתוֹ וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת שֵׁם־הַמֵּת מֵעַם אֲחִיו וּמִשְׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ יְעִידִים אִתְּם
הַיּוֹם:

I am also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased

upon his estate, that the name of the deceased may not disappear from among his kinsmen and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today.”

Now we know. Who is Ruth's husband?

וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל-הָעָם אֲשֶׁר-בְּשַׁעַר וְהַזְקֵנִים עֵדִים יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת-הָאִשָּׁה
הַבָּאָה אֶל-בֵּיתְךָ כְּרַחֵל | וְכִלְאָה אֲשֶׁר בָּנּוּ שְׂתִיָּהֶם אֶת-בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַעֲשֵׂה-חַיִּיל בְּאֶפְרַתָּה וּקְרָא-שֵׁם בְּבַיִת לְחָם:

All the people at the gate and the elders answered, “We are. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the House of Israel! Do chayil (be brave, active) in Ephrathah and perpetuate your name in Bethlehem!

How have the people come full circle? Where else do we have blessings in this book? Why do we need blessings now? Why is it surprising? See this;

עֲשֵׂה-חַיִּיל בְּאֶפְרַתָּה
וּקְרָא-שֵׁם בְּבַיִת לְחָם:

Do chayil (be brave, active) in Ephrathah
and perpetuate your name in Bethlehem!

Which two themes are brought out here?

וַיְהִי בֵּיתְךָ כְּבֵית פְּרָצַי אֲשֶׁר-יָלְדָה תָמָר לַיהוּדָה מִן-הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן
יְהוָה לְךָ מִן-הַנְּעֻרָה הַזֹּאת:

And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah—through the offspring which the LORD will give you by this young woman.”

How is Ruth like

Tamar? How is Boaz like Judah? Did Boaz leave his family?

וַיִּקַּח בְּעֵז אֶת־רוּת וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ וַיֵּיתֵן יְהוָה לָּהּ הַרְיוֹן וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן׃

So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. The LORD let her conceive, and she bore a son.

Who is given conception? Why is it surprising?

Ruth Rabbah 7, 14

אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן לָקִישׁ, עֵקֶר מוֹטְרִין לֹא הָיָה לָּהּ, וְגַלְפֵי לָּהּ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עֵקֶר מוֹטְרִין .

"So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. Hashem let her conceive, and she bore a son (Ruth 4:13)". Rabbi Shimon the son of Lakish said: "there was no womb for her, but the Holy One, blessed be He, carved a womb for her".

וַתֵּאמְרָנָה הַנְּשִׁים אֶל־נַעֲמִי בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִשְׁבִּית לָךְ גֹּאֵל הַיּוֹם וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל׃

And the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not withheld a redeemer from you today! May his name be perpetuated in Israel!

More blessings. Why is it more surprising now? What is the theme again? Whose redeemer is this? Tzror Hamor: Why were they comforting her? She had PTSD

וְהָיָה לְךָ לְמַשִּׁיב נְפֹשׁ וּלְכֹלֵל אֶת־שִׁיבְתֶךָ כִּי כִלְתֶךָ אֲשֶׁר־אֶהְיֶתְךָ
יִלְדְתוּ אֲשֶׁר־הִיא טוֹבָה לְךָ מִשִּׁבְעָה בָנִים:

He will renew your life and sustain your old age; for he is born of your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons.”

Who else is better than 7 sons? Who is involved in the true love story here? Whose problem is solved? Whose book is this? This book has gone from despair to hope. Why is this so needed now?

See Job at the end

וַיְהִי־לוֹ שִׁבְעֶנָּה בָנִים וְשְׁלוֹשׁ בָּנוֹת:

He also had seven sons and three daughters.

Why the parallel to Job?

וַתִּקַּח נְעֻמִי אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד וַתְּשִׂתּוֹ בְּחִיקָהּ וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִמָּנָת:

Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom. She became its foster mother,

וַתִּקְרָאנָהּ לּוֹ הַשְּׂכִנּוֹת שֵׁם לְאִמֹּר יֵלֶד-בֶּן לְנַעֲמִי וַתִּקְרָאנָהּ שְׁמוֹ עֹבֵד
(הוא אבי-ישי אבי דוד: פ)

and the women neighbors gave him a name, saying, “A son is born to Naomi!” They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, father of David.

Genealogies in Genesis denote the end of an era and the sifting of characters we don't need to know. What is happening here? Why ten generations? Surely there were more in 450 years! Why did the women call his name? Why not Boaz? Is he..? Or is there a dispute? Or...? Eshkol Hakofer: They called him “Name”. Why is this significant?

וַאֲלֵהָ תּוֹלְדוֹת פֶּרֶץ פֶּרֶץ הוֹלִיד אֶת-חֲצֵרוֹן:

This is the line of Perez: Perez begot Hezron,

וְחֲצֵרוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת-רָם וְרָם הוֹלִיד אֶת-עַמִּינָדָב:

Hezron begot Ram, Ram begot Ammi-nadab,

וְעַמִּינָדָב הוֹלִיד אֶת-נַחֲשֹׁן וְנַחֲשֹׁן הוֹלִיד אֶת-שַׁלְמָה:

Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon,

וְשַׁלְמוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת-בֹּעַז וּבֹעַז הוֹלִיד אֶת-עֹבֵד:

Salmon begot Boaz, Boaz begot Obed,

וְעֹבֵד הוֹלִיד אֶת-יֵשׁוּ וְיֵשׁוּ הוֹלִיד אֶת-דָּוִד:

Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

Why is it nice to end with names? Where is the suspense? Who is left out? Whose son is Oved? Why is levirate marriage so important? Why important now? Why does it say he gave birth? (U. Simon: each birth a miracle?)

Deut. 25

וְהָיָה הַבְּכוֹר אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵד יִקְוֶם עַל-שֵׁם אָחִיו הַמֵּת וְלֹא-יִמָּחַה שְׁמוֹ מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל:

The first son that she bears shall be accounted to the dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out in Israel.

What is the purpose of this book?

Ruth Rabbah 2, 14

*א"ר זעירא מגלה זו אין בה לא טומאה ולא טהרה ולא איסור ולא היתר ולמה נכתבה
ללמדך כמה שכר טוב לגומלי חסדים:*

Legal questions

Status of Moav; is it is a polemic for who is kosher in Ezra's days?

Status of David (zohar chadash)

Law and Mercy: is it really leverite? Is it really gleanings? Is it really the law of Moav?

Conversion

Philosophical questions

Ways of providence

The problem of evil

From a good thing comes good.

Ethical *R. Etshalom: the prophets get to the essence of the law*

Kindness how is this related to human action and redemption?

Continuity

Responsibility

It is the Rivka story of David...

The role of Chesed

The responsibility of the wealthy

Eschatological

How do we bring redemption?

A book of Israel on a holiday of Israel. The 2 bread must come mimoshvoteichem.

Which meaning connects to Shavuot?

Conversion

Harvest time (Avudrahm)

Getting the torah, like Ruth or through suffering (yalkut shimoni)

All chesed

David is born on this day

It shows the oral tradition