

The Throne Room of God IV The Lord Jesus

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His Qualifications

Now this is the case for the following three legal characteristics which He fulfilled. These are the three that qualifies Him in a strict legal sense to take the scroll which is a Title Deed:

He is our avenger of blood, also known as the "Goel". The Hebrew word is the Goel.

[The term go'el often translated "redeemer," has this basic idea; the go'el is principally the "protector of family rights" (see Leviticus 25:48; Ruth 3:13).]

The law of the levirate marriage where He is our Goel within the law of Levirate marriage. He is the Goel or Kinsman Redeemer.

He Meets the Legal Requirements

These are three legal concepts that Moses wrote in the Mosaic Law in the book of Leviticus and the book of Deuteronomy.

Within the Mosaic penal code they had this principle of retribution for murder. It is different than vengeance. Vengeance belongs to God, but there were certain circumstances where an avenger was justified in killing somebody in retaliation for them taking the life of one of their immediate family – particularly a brother. So, if someone killed my brother in Old Testament times, I had the legal right to avenge his blood by killing that person, that is, if it was first degree or premeditated murder. If it was second degree or manslaughter, the individual who did the killing could go to one of the Cities of Refuge and he could hide there and I couldn't touch him. It doesn't mean I wouldn't try, because the concept of forgiveness was not extant as it is now.

There was a legal retaliation. The Romans called it "Lex Talionis" and it was a legal principle that there was a retaliation that was justified. Even our legal system has it today, but the individual does not go off and kill somebody. They do it through our court system and we have a systematic way of dealing with the issue. You would still forgive the person, but there are still responsibilities for what they did. The purpose here is different than vengeance. Vengeance is just going out and killing someone because you hate them or because they have harmed you in some way. That's not what God allows. The only thing He allows in one narrow sense, that if somebody killed a brother, the other brother could be the avenger of blood within certain circumstances..

The Avenger of Blood

Moses gave the following directions for the avenger of blood:

The willful murderer was to be put to death without permission of compensation, by the nearest of kin. [Numbers 35:32 says never accept a ransom payment from someone who has fled to a city of refuge, allowing the slayer to return to his property before the death of the high priest.]

The Law of retaliation (Lex Talionis) was not to go beyond the immediate offender.

(Deuteronomy 24:16; 2 Kings 14:6; 2 Chronicles 25:4 etc.) In other words, this person couldn't

go out and kill a family, he couldn't steal all his money, there were a lot of things he couldn't do. He was simply limited in this narrow sense

If the individual committed second degree murder or manslaughter then he could hide in one of the Cities of Refuge. Note the interesting aspect of that - he could stay there without harm – protected. He could stay there protected until the High Priest died, but if he left, then he was subject to being killed by the avenger if the avenger was still nearby looking for him. When the High Priest died, then the avenger lost his opportunity to take vengeance or legal right to kill this person for murdering his brother. This is another picture of Jesus. He is our High Priest. He died so that we can be released from being locked in our sins.

When we look at this, we see think we see a picture of the Lord Jesus here. He is our avenger of blood. Satan took the life of Adam and Eve, spiritually and physically. Adam and Eve would have lived for ever had they not sinned - been tempted by Satan to sin. The Lord Jesus is our avenger of blood. Even if the crime would have been manslaughter – it's not, it was premeditated murder – and when the High Priest dies, the person that did the murder is now is free.

Which of us is guilty of sin? When Jesus died, you're released from the sin just like the slayer [who was able to flee to a City of Refuge and was able to go free after the death of the High Priest.] It's awesome to see how this works out.

Law of the Levirate Marriage

Moses gave the following instructions for the Law of Levirate Marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10): Essentially, the Law of the Levirate marriage was this: If married brother had no male offspring dies, it would be my obligation to marry my brother's widow and have children with here at least until she had a son to carry on the name of my brother. His name is what would be carried on, not mine. They had different names back then. They had back then multiple wives, so they had to make that real clear. The idea was to carry on the line within the nation Israel of the individual that died. The woman, the widow, was unable to go out and marry a stranger. That was against the law.

The closest surviving brother was to take her as his wife.

The firstborn son of this union took the surname of the deceased thus continuing his name in the family register that it might not perish out of Israel.

If a brother did not wish to take his deceased brother's wife as his own, (say somebody said, "Not her; I'm not going to marry her"). She had the legal, right in the center of the city square where the elders (the decision makers) were, to cite him legally before the elders. This consisted of removing his sandal that signified that he gave up all claim to the deceased brothers estate.

If he were to marry her, he got the brother's estate. If he didn't like the woman and he hated her so much, he was really going to suffer for not carrying out the law and she could spit in his face. Once she did that, he was vexed forever for the rest of his life, he had no more respect, and he would never ever be part of the elders. He couldn't even carry out normal business activities. He had to leave the community, he had to go a long ways away in order to earn a living and survive. Spitting was an act of humiliation, it's still there today.

We see this Levirate law back in the Old Testament. We see this with the story of Judah and Tamar.

Onan was one of Judah's sons. Onan dies and Tamar comes to Judah and says, "I need a husband." Judah had one more son that was a very young man and Judah says, "I'll give you him when he's old enough." And she says, "OK, I'll wait" and Judah never gave her that son.

So what the Lord did is he brought Tamar to Judah, this was some years later, dressed as a harlot and enticed him into a sexual relationship. He was more than willing. She didn't have to try too hard. Before she would have intercourse with him, he said, "What do you want?" She said, "Why don't you give me your signet ring and this other piece of jewelry in the mean time, so I'll know you're going to come back and give me what you said you were going to give me." "OK, I'll do that."

She gets pregnant and the word goes out that Tamar has been having intercourse outside of marriage and she's now pregnant. Judah is the man of retribution. "Who is she to do this? She needs to be killed. She needs to be stoned under the law." So they bring Tamar before him and he asks her, he doesn't recognize her now – she doesn't have that dress of a harlot – "Who did this, how can you do this?" She holds up his jewelry – "By this guy." Obviously the situation changes, the situation dissipates, it's not going to carry on, and it's not going any farther.

The Lord did that to carry the line of Judah through to the Christ. The progeny of that union was Perez and Perez came into that line to keep that line flowing through to the Lord Jesus.

Goel, the Kinsman Redeemer

Moses gave the following instructions for the Goel or Kinsman Redeemer.

The provision was also made for the Kinsman-Redeemer or Goel in addition to the Levirate marriage. To "redeem" means to "buy back", "to take from", and "to make right."

Provision was made for a poor person to sell their property [or himself into slavery] to someone else for money. But they could buy [the property or themselves] back; they always had the ability to buy it back. It's a different system of real estate than what we have. It's more like a tenant relationship. Because once Israel got the land, they never lost it. And even within the tribes, if the property was moving from one tribe to another, they never lost it. They held a [permanent deed] to the property and in essence when they "sold" the property they were getting a lease-hold arrangement when they were giving up the land for some temporary money. They did this on a regular basis and there were some specific laws in Leviticus 25:48 on how this would be worked out.

You can sell you property and ideally if your nearest of kin had the willingness and the ability to buy it back, your nearest of kin could buy it back for you. There were specific instructions on what the cost was going to be. They divided out the seven years that you would be indentured in slavery. Specifically the land, you were instructed as the redeemer not to pay more than what the original price was, to take off for the number of years that the property had been with the other person, and to determine the value of the property by its remaining years. Usury or interest was not to be charged. No interest was to be charged amongst the Jews at all.

The kinsman redeemer was essentially a rich benefactor. He could pay this ransom price to get the land and/or the individual who sold themselves into slavery back. At the end of seven sevens in the fiftieth year which is called the Jubilee, all land went back to the appropriate tribe, it didn't matter. Now the Pharisees in later years tried to get around that by signing new agreements that took effect after the Jubilee. They would go to people and say, "I know the Jubilee is coming and you've got to get your land back, but I'll give you 'use and money' if you sign another deal with me." These guys were crooks. Unbelievable. Crooks are still around, aren't they? "If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold." (Leviticus 25:25). The nearest of kin had the responsibility, but they had to have the qualifications to do it. It is the Goel, the same person, that can take somebody out of slavery that can perform the Levirate marriage.

The nearest of kin had the responsibility of redeeming his kinsman's lost opportunities. If a person was forced into slavery, his redeemer purchased his freedom. When debt threatened to overwhelm him, the kinsman stepped in to redeem his homestead and let the family live. If a family member died without an heir the kinsman gave his name by marrying the widow and rearing a son to hand down his name (The Goel is the also the brother who fulfills the law of Levirate Marriage).

We see the concept of the Kinsman-Redeemer or Goel in the book of Ruth. The Goel is Boaz, Ruth is a Gentile widow of a Jewish man whose father had sold their land because of debts, and it's Naomi's husband Elimelech who has sold that land and they had to move to Moab. Something happened in his past where he got poor. He got down on his luck, so to speak. He got poor and he had to go to Moab to live. Now that's where one of his sons married Ruth. They were not to marry out of the faith, a major no-no, but the story that is here has a purpose.

Naomi's name means "pleasant one". It is a picture of Israel that had wandered away from Bethlehem, which means, "House of Bread". This guy Boaz was to become the kinsman redeemer. Naomi and her daughter's-in-laws had all lost their husbands. The husbands were all dead and they were all widows. Naomi tells her daughters-in-law to leave and go someplace else and go find other men, but Ruth wants to hang around, she does not want to leave. She loves Naomi. It's a beautiful love story too, but the central thread through this is showing us the roll of the Kinsman Redeemer. Boaz, whose name is on one of the pillars of the Temple, became foundational in the line to bring the Lord Jesus Christ's body into the world.

Naomi had become bitter and she saw this union with Boaz as a way out for Ruth. So, she instructed Ruth in what to do, how to effectuate the kinsman redeemer, the Goel's responsibility.

Now there was another man who was [a closer kin than Boaz to Naomi's dead husband, Elimelech] and he agreed to buy the land – to buy it back, to redeem it until he found out that Ruth came with the package. A Gentile woman came with the package. In Israel, that was forbidden – the Jews did not marry Gentiles. If they did, there was going to be a lot of problems moving forward socially. Socially, they were going to be outcasts unless that person converted.

It still would be a tough marriage, a tough marriage, because they would always view them as being an “outsider” even if they converted.

When the nearest Kinsman Redeemer got involved and found out that Ruth was part of the package, he backed out, because that was going to harm his inheritance somehow. The story doesn't tell us how, but it was going to harm his inheritance. Boaz now becomes the nearest of kin and he has the privilege of redeeming her land and her with it. So, he takes the land and he takes a Gentile for a bride.