The *Gō'el* Concept:

Comprehensive and Incarnational Redemption

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Carl Schultz, PhD
Houghton College
Houghton   NY   14744
USA

I. INTRODUCTION

While a variety of predications can be provided for the establishing and administering of justice for the poor, none is, or should be, more influential in Wesleyan thought than the Scriptures. Facilely the New Testament comes to mind, but the Old Testament also offers significant direction.

A promising and productive topic of the Hebrew Scriptures that I believe can contribute significantly to a biblical foundation of justice for the poor is the *gō'el* concept. It provides a model of principle and practice, establishing not only the appropriate action on behalf of the poor, but also determining the identity of the needy and the responsible and privileged respondent.

This paper will explore this *gō'el* concept in its Semitic context and will establish principles and procedures of justice applicable to our times.

II. ETYMOLOGY AND PARALLEL ROOTS

Gō'el is the active participle of the Qal stem of the verb *gā'al* which is used with its derivatives 118 times in the Hebrew Bible.[1] While *Gō'ēl* is a form of the verb, it is for all practical proposes, a substantive in its own right.

The root *g'l* appears to be almost exclusively Hebrew so that its original meaning cannot be determined etymologically.[2] Its synchronic use, rather than its diachronic use, must be determinative in establishing its meaning. Basically, this root means to deliver, to rescue.[3] The main word that stands in parallelism with, and is almost synonymous to *gā'al* is *pādhâ* (to ransom).[4] Further *yāsha'* (to save, deliver),[5] *nātsal* (to save, rescue in the Hip'il stem),[6] and *'āzar* (to help),[7] also occur in parallel structure. The use of the Hebrew preposition *min* (from) also indicates that from which a person is rescued.[8]

Gō'el, used some 44 times in the Hebrew Bible,[9] designates a person or God who rescues, who delivers, who redeems. A consideration of the passages in which this word occurs will reveal both the function of the redeemer and the relationship between the redeemer and the redeemed.

III.   APPEARANCES IN LEGAL PASSAGES

The *gō'el* is found in five situations, depicting actions
that a true man would take for a dependent kinsman.

a.   The repurchasing of a field which had been sold in time
of need, in order to restore the possession to the
family.[10]

b.   The freeing of an Israelite slave who had sold himself
in a time of poverty.[11]

c.   The avenging of a murder by familial retribution within
the context of clan law.[12]

d.   The restoration/redemption of a votive offering, dedi-
cated to deity or the redemption of the firstborn of an
unclean animal. In these cases the redeemer would have
been the owner of the property.[13]

e.   The receiving (rather than giving this time) as the
responsible head of the family, of restitution for a
wrong done to an injured party.[14]

These Pentateuchal passages emphasize that the family must
be maintained both in terms of persons and possessions. Obvious-
ly, transmittible possessions are inconsequential if there is no
family to receive and retain them. Both property and persons are
viewed as God's possessions and therefore a special sense of
stewardship surrounds not only the land, but also the relation-
ships which human beings have one with another.[15]

But even in these judicial contexts, it must be noted that this responsibility of redeeming was social and not legal. There is no indication that failure to act resulted in legal penalty, nor that a person could be forced to respond by a legal process. While there was no legal consequence, clearly there was social consequence. Ultimately opprobrium was more attractive than suit for breach of duty.[16]

IV. APPEARANCES IN FIGURATIVE PASSAGES

In contexts other than that of the Pentateuch, the *gō'el* concept is used in a figurative sense. It is utterly critical for people to have a *gō'el*.[17] If they do not have such, there is no one to care for their rights and honor.[18]

In such extreme cases *Yahweh* is invoked. He is needed to plead the cause of the fatherless and widow[19] and to save the worshipper from distress[20] and death.[21] But not only is this divine redemption personal, it is also corporate.

G'l is used in connection with the exodus from Egypt, emphasizing the deliverance from the distress of bondage.[22] Minimally then, the release from slavery is in mind, but perhaps also the restoration of an earlier relationship between *Yahweh* and Israel is included since reference is made to the patriarchs with whom *Yahweh* had already entered into a covenant.[23] Further, Ps. 74:2 characterizes the exodus as God acquiring a congregation

which He in turn made His heritage.   Whether restoring or acquir-
ing, the matter of relationship seems to be included, thus again
stressing the personal rather than the material aspect of redemp-
tion.

In Deutero-Isaiah *g'l* is used relative to the anticipated
release from Babylonian captivity, which the prophet describes as
a new exodus.[24]   Nine times *gō'el* is used as a title for God[25]--a
kind of stereotyped divine epithet, emphasizing a variety of
saving acts, such as the forgiveness of sin,[26] resulting in
glorification of *Yahweh*.[27]

While the Deutero-Isaiah passages are likely late, suggest-
ing that the secular use of *gā'al* preceded the religious use,[28]
the reference in Ex. 15:13--a twelfth-century triumph song--must
be early.   Perhaps also early is Gen. 48:16 where God's angel is
praised by Jacob as the one who redeemed him from all. harm.   Thus
this transition of usage to the divine probably began before
Deutero-Isaiah.   As Campbell observes: "This language is old
enough to have been used about God very early in Israel's history
with the full implication it bears in later legal formulations;
God shows familial concern and protects both people and property
(Israel is both to him!)."[29]   Gutiérrez observes that the term
gō'el had the family for its initial setting and then subsequent-
ly found a place in the sphere of the covenant.[30]

Snaith objects to the idea of kinship between God and
Israel, for that relationship, as close as it was, was between
unequals.[31]   Indeed, yet even the covenant was one of non-parity,

but that did not prevent covenant language from depicting this relationship between God and Israel as spousal and paternal-- rather close relationships. God represented as gō'el must be seen, I believe, as the responsible relative of Israel,[32] thus underscoring the personal dimension of *gō'el* in the religious as well as the secular sphere.

V. APPEARANCES IN NARRATIVES

Narrative usage of the *gō'el* concept will further elucidate its meaning. The Pentateuchal laws are not complete or codified, but are given to be illustrative and didactic[33] or for less than routine occurrences.[34] As Mendenhall notes: "Laws are then mutual understandings among human beings, culturally determined and relative--as well as changeable."[35]

This changeable quality is seen in the tale crafted by the wise woman of Tekoah in defense of Absalom. A widow, who had just two sons, one whom has killed the other in a quarrel, is confronted with the loss of the surviving son by *gō'el haddam*. Her appeal to David is heard as she is promised that the *gō'el haddam*, who seems to be prompted to action from self interest--to gain the inheritance, would be kept from acting.[36]

Campbell observes:

> Redemption practice, then, is seen with a
> specific set of mitigating circumstances, and
> principle must come to bear. The widow can-
> not claim that her surviving son is innocent,

but only that he is necessary for her own
welfare and for the continuance of her hus-
band's name. In effect, customary law is
interfered with because it clashes with prin-
ciple, a not infrequent circumstance in the
Bible. The principle is that those whose
needs can be easily ignored must be given
special consideration in practice.[37]

The narrative passages in Job and Ruth will be considered in
this paper.

A.   JOB

While it can be claimed that Job 19:25 is not narrative--
indeed it appears in the dialogue part of the book, sandwiched in
between the prologue and the epilogue--it can only be interpreted
in the context of the narrative of the book. Job clearly quali-
fies as a person needing a *gō'el*.

An examination of this verse will continue and intensify the
personal dimension of the *gō'el*. While translated "Redeemer" by
the familiar KJV, it is better rendered "Vindicator" (NJPS, NEB
and NRSV Footnote).[38] Job does not primarily need to be rescued
from death--in fact, he longs for it[39]--but needs to be vindicat-
ed before the accusing Satan figure (of which he is unaware) and
the three friends.

His possessions are not critical. He never seeks their
return. It is his person, his name, his relationship to God (now
strained) that is the focus here. The context of this passage is
forensic. He expects God to rise in court and speak on his
behalf.[40] He waits not for physical relief, but for moral vindi-
cation.[41] As Ringgren observes, the language here is the figura-

tive language of the lawsuit.[42]   That the anticipated Vindicator
must be God can be seen in Job's strong language here in contrast
to the more tentative language used when he wished for an arbiter
or witness.[43]   As Hartley notes, "Choice of this term . . . . is
an intentional allusion to the special nuances off deliverance
and love that are associated with this title for God.[44]   Dhorme
sees this role of Vindicator as one to which God is often invoked
in the Psalms, being urged to defend the rights of the op-
pressed.[45]

Job needs more than the return of his material possessions.
While in traditional wisdom teaching material possessions are
indicators of divine favor, and while Job had likely held such a
view prior to his suffering, he never prays for their return, but
rather that God will vindicate him before death--which God
does.[46]   The restoration of his wealth in the epilogue does not
rehabilitate Job.   He is already rehabilitated even before the
return of his wealth, which is necessitated by the artistry of
the book.[47]   It is vindication that is critical.

Here in Job the *gō'el* concept again focuses on the individu-
al rather than on his possessions.

B. RUTH

The *gō'el* concept is explicated most fully in the Ruth
narrative where this participial form is found eight times.[48]   It
gives us the underlying principles, and shows us the policy at
work in ancient Israel.[49]   Further, it provides remarkable in-

sights which provide us with procedure for today. Nowhere is the personal dimension of the *gō'el* function shown as here.

1.   RELATIONSHIP OF BOAZ TO RUTH

This narrative fleshes out the Priestly materials, which apart from the release of debt in the Year of Jubilee, reflects old conditions.[50] The P source alone provides information on the order of succession in filling the *gō'el* role. The hierarchy of duty designates first, brother, then uncle, next cousin, and finally any fellow member of the *mishpāḥāh*.[51]

Given these relationship and sequencing, what was it that made Boaz (and the unnamed nearer person) responsible to serve as *gō'el*? They are not of the immediate house of Elimelech for all males of that house had perished.[52] Apparently Boaz qualified as an instance of one of the fellow members of the *mishpāḥāh*.

Translating *gō'el* as "kinsman" can suggest that only a blood relative had the *gō'el* responsibility and that a person lacking such a tie was exonerated, but the narrative in Ruth shows otherwise.

Boaz is not a blood relative of Ruth or for that matter, Naomi. While in some English translations of Ruth 2:1, he is identified as a relative, it must be noted that this rendering is based on the *Qere*[53] rather than the *Ketib* which has *M'YUDDĀ'* - a *Pu'al* participle of *YD'* - a root associated

with covenant terminology.[54]   Thus Campbell renders the text
as per the *Kethib* "covenant-brother."[55]

This would then demonstrate the *gō'el* responsibility
goes beyond blood ties.   As we noted above, Boaz would have
qualified to assist by virtue of belonging to the same
mishpāḥāh - a unit larger than the *bēth 'āv* - the extended
family.[56]   Clearly when the *bēth 'av* was unable to act on
its own behalf, responsibility devolved upon the *mishpāḥāh*,
which Gottwald considers a technical term for a protective
association of families.[57]

The size of the *mishpāḥāh* is difficult to ascertain.
While larger than the *bēth 'āv* it is smaller than the
šēbet.[58]   The figures of Numbers 26 where some 57 *mishpāḥôth*
are listed seem incredibly large, but Andersen states that a
mishpāḥāh must have had at least 10,000, by a conservative
estimate.[59]

Gottwald believes that the book of Ruth throws some
light on the size of a *mishpāḥāh*.[60]   He notes that Elimelech
and his family are said to be "Ephrathites from Bethle-
hem."[61]   This gentilic form is also used to identify David,
"son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem."[62]   Further, Rachel is
"buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).[63]   The
witness to the transaction of Boaz prompted this response,
"may you prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethle-
hem."[64]   Finally Ephrathah is associated with Bethlehem by
Micah "O Bethlehem of Ephrathah."[65]

While all these citations associate Ephrathah with Bethlehem, they also ". . . make it clear that Ephrathah was not simply an alternate name for Bethlehem, comparable to Laish-Dan or Bethel-Luz. Ephrathah appears as a place in its own right, near to Bethlehem, and encompassable within Bethlehem conceived as the city and its environs."[66]

Gottwald locates Ephrathah as south of Bethlehem and concludes that this region was inhabited by a single *mishpāḥāh* and that ". . . when Elimelech's family members are called 'Ephrathites' it means more than that they lived in Ephrathah; it means that they were of the protective association of families known as *mishpāhāh* Ephrati . . ."[67]

The *gō'el* responsibility is thus not limited to the extended family, but goes at least to the phratry.[68]

Mendenhall notes the limitations of kinship:

> No one is likely to deny the constant importance of real kinship in ancient Near Eastern cultures, or for that matter in most societies of human history. Nevertheless, the function of real kinship ties in society is so limited that something larger is needed, particularly as population density increases and social conflicts become more complex. Furthermore, kinship ceases to be of much importance as the common ancestor of two persons becomes more remote . . . .

> Beyond the fourth generation of descendants there is no corporate responsibility, and probably no other important social function. Forms of social organization not based on kinship have already taken over in the earliest recorded historical societies.[69]

Campbell summarizes well the extension of the *gō'el*

responsibility beyond the extended family:

> . . . the complex societal framework in
> which this practice was to function
> probably included both blood and cove-
> nant ties, the latter reaching out be-
> yond family interests to a circle in
> which ties were entered upon even more
> voluntarily and graciously than might be
> the case in a family.[70]

2.   RANGE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Not only is the personal dimension seen in the *gō'el*,

but also in the person receiving the assistance--in this

case, Ruth.

Here levirate marriage is combined with redemption.[71]

Not only must a piece of property belonging to Elimelech and

his family be redeemed, but the widow, Ruth, must be taken

and provided a son.[72] While no legal code juxtaposes the

redemption and levirate practices, it is a natural one,

based on principle.[73]

> Campbell observes that the levirate practice

> . . . is not simply concerned with pro-
> ducing a male child, nor even with producing
> an heir to the dead man's property; it is
> concerned every bit as much with the care of
> the widow. Indeed, the care of widows is the
> main motive of Naomi's speculations in chap-
> ter 1 about the prospects of levirate mar-
> riage for herself. . . . [74]

The concern of the *gō'el* again is not simply with

possessions, but with the person. While Boaz has been seen

by some to have acted out of self interest,[75] the narrative

is clear that he was both proper[76] and considerate. He

respected Ruth whose own character was such that she de-
served such treatment.[77]

VI. SUMMARY

The purpose of this summary is not to be exhaustive, but
rather selective of data which contributes to the concern of this
paper--comprehensive and incarnational redemption. Three dis-
tinct ideas stand out:

A.   The *gō'el* function is not simply concerned with pos-
sessions, but also extends to the person. Relationships are
more important than things.

B.   The *gō'el* function is not limited to blood ties, but
extends out to covenant relationships.

C.   The *gō'el* function is not to be implemented on legal
pronouncements alone, but must be practiced on the basic
principle of caring responsibility. It is not charity or
pity, but the expression of a fundamental personal relation-
ship.

VII APPLICATION

Space does not permit the development of these suggested
applications. Nor do I feel totally competent functioning in the
area of the social and economic. Hopefully, these practical
conclusions with limited commentary, drawn from the *gō'el* func-

tion, will stimulate discussion and provide a basis for action.

It seems to me that the *gō'el* function moves us:

A. BEYOND RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM.

> Alexis de Tocqueville, who may have
> coined the term [rugged individualism], found
> it alarming. He defined individualism as "a
> mature and calm feeling which disposes each
> member of the community to sever himself from
> the mass of his fellows and to draw apart
> with his family and friends. He willingly
> leaves society to itself. Individualism saps
> the virtues of public life and destroys all
> virtues.[78]

B. BEYOND A SENSE OF PRIDE WHICH REFUSES TO ACCEPT HELP.

In his *Ethics*, Aristotle advocates reluctance to accept

service as a standard for the magnamious person:

> He is the sort of person who does good
> but is ashamed when he receives it; for doing
> good is proper to the superior person, and
> receiving it to the inferior. He returns
> more good than he has received; for in this
> way the original giver will be repaid, and
> will also have incurred a new debt to him,
> and will be the beneficiary.[79]

Jesus rejected such a position when He reminded the reluctant

Peter that unless he allowed Jesus to wash his feet, Peter had no

share with Him.[80]

C. BEYOND CONCERNS LIMITED TO THE NUCLEAR AND EXTENDED FAMILIES.

Rodney Clapp, in challenging the concept of the traditional

family, observes:

> Other aspects of the bourgeois family
> clash with family submitted to the redemptive
> and transforming gospel. Bourgeois family is
> exclusivistic, emphasizing its privacy over
> the good of others. It leaves the public

life of commerce and industry untouched by
the ideals of the kingdom, while maintaining
its private comfort and order. Bourgeois
family is flawed to the degree that it helped
us so long neglect the social implications of
the kingdom. It is flawed to the degree that
it encourages blithe individualism and erodes
a sense of the common good.[81]

D. BEYOND CLINICAL AND TECHNICAL CONCERNS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF THE

LAW.

Jesus criticized the legalists of His day, noting, "You have

a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God. . . ."[82] By

hiding behind legalisms[83] they freed themselves from legiti-

mate and appropriate demands. Barclay observes:

Jesus was attacking a system which put
rules and regulations before the claim of
human need. The commandment of God was that
the claim of human love should come first;
the commandment of the scribes was the claim
of legal rules and regulations should come
first. Jesus was quite sure that any regula-
tion which prevented a man from giving help
where help was needed was nothing less than a
contradiction of the law of God.[84]

E. BEYOND NARROW AND MINIMUM ASSISTANCE, RECOGNIZING THAT THE ENTIRE

BEING HAS TO BE ADDRESSED, RESULTING IN DIGNITY AND A SENSE OF WORTH.

Bruce Birch in his treatment of *Shalom* emphasizes this

wildness:

Shalom is not only a spiritual condition, but
the condition of well-being intended by God
for all creatures. For humans, this includes
food, health, security from danger, means of
livelihood, shelter, clothing, family, commu-
nity, and relationship to God. Thus, the
vision of *shalom* as well-being forces atten-
tion to concrete dimensions of wholeness in
day-to-day life. If the faithful community
is to take up its task of embodying *shalom*,

then it must be deeply involved in the effort
to ensure this fullness of life for all.[85]

Endnotes

1.   *TWOT* I:144.

2.   *TDOT* II:350-351.

3.   *TDOT* II:351.

4.   Hos. 13:14; Isa. 35:10, Jer 31:11; Ps. 69:19. But the participle of *pādhâ* never becomes a nominal term with any special role in law. With *pādhâ* the emphasis is on the action, not the subject. (*TDNT*, IV: 331). This is a crucial difference from the nominal *gō'el* which places emphasis upon the subject, a near relative, whose duty and privilege it is to redeem. *TWOT*, I:144.

5.   Isa. 60:16; Ps. 106:10.

6.   Mic. 4:10.

7.   Isa. 41:14.

8.   Gen. 48:16; Jer. 31:11; Hos. 13:14; Mic. 4:10; Ps. 72:14; 103:14; 106:10; 107:2.

9.   As counted by *The Mendelkern Concordance* (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1969), pp.244-245.

10.   Lev. 25:25-34.

11.   Lev. 25:47-54.

12.   Num. 35:12, 19-27, Deut. 19:6,12.

13.   Lev. 27:11ff.

14.   Num. 5:8.

15.   The Levitical Year of Jubilee emphasized both the restitution of land and the restoration of individuals. Lev. 25:25-55.

16.   Francis Lyall. *Slaves, Citizens, Sons - Legal Metaphors in the Epistles*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), pp.157-158. Rowley notes that the measure of stigma would be in direct ratio to the nearness of the relationship. H.H. Rowley. *The Servant of the Lord*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), p.181.

17.   I Kings 16:11.

18.   *TDOT* II:352.

19.   Proverbs 23:10-11.

20.   Pss. 69:18; 119:154.

21.   Lam. 3:58.

22.   Ex. 6:6; 15:13; Ps. 106:10; Isa. 51:10.   It should be noted however that *pādhâ* is used more frequently than *gā'al* in speaking of the exodus, especially in the Deuteronomistic literature TDOT II:354.

23.   Ex. 6:3,8.   *TDOT* II:353.

24.   Isa. 48:20.

25.   Isa. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 26; 54:5; 60:16.

26.   Isa. 44:22.

27.   Isa. 44:23; 52:9.

28.   Roland de Vaux. *Ancient Israel - Its Life and Institutions* (New York: McGraw, 1961), I, 22.

29.   Edward F. Campbell, Jr. *Ruth AB* (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1975), p.136.

30.   Gustavo Gutierrez. *On Job - God Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), p.64.

31.   Norman H. Snaith. *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament.* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), pp.85-86.

32.   Applied to God, the *gō'el* thus denotes in family law the dignity of the nearest relative whose duty it is to redeem His elect, whether it be the forefather Jacob (Gn. 48:16) or the people Israel.   Understood thus, the term leads us to the very heart of the relation between God and man.   This is here a bond of kinship which commits God to the duty of redemption, not, of course, by the law of blood, but by that of election.   *TDNT* IV: 332.   Johnson notes: ". . . ideally at least, Yahweh and His covenant people are one, and this being the case, He is their proper Protector, and they are properly His *protégés*."   A.R. Johnson.   "The Primary Meaning of *gā'al*."   *VT Sup* (1, 1953) p.76.

33.   *Ibid.*, p.134.

34.   Dr. Calum Carmichael, NEH Lecture, June 21, 1985, Cornell University.

35.   George E. Mendenhall. *The Tenth Generation.* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1974), p.195.

36.   II Sam 14:4-11.

37.   Campbell, *op. cit.*, p.136.

38.   H.H. Rowley. *Job (NCBC)* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p.138.

39.   Job 3:20-22.

40.   Francis I. Anderson. *Job - An Introduction and Commentary (TOTC).* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1976), p.194.

41.   Dianne Bergant. *Job, Ecclesiastes* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982), p.109.

42.   *TDOT* II:355.

43.   Job 9:33-34; 16:19.

44.   John E. Hartley. *The Book of Job (NICOT).* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p.293.

45.   'Edouard Dhorme. *A Commentary On the Book of Job.* (Nash-ville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), p.283.

46.   Job 40:7.

47.   Rowley. *op.cit.*, p.266.

48.   Mendelkern, *op. cit.*, p.244.

49.   Campbell, *op. cit.*, p.134.

50.   Norman K. Gottwald. *The Tribes of Yahweh - A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel 1250 - 1050 B.C.E.* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1985), p.264.

51.   Lev. 25:40-49. This P source seems to see the *mishpāhāh* as the widest social issue for *gō'el* responsibility. Gottwald, *op. cit.*, p.264.

52.   Ruth 1:5. Rash' conjectures that Elimelech was an uncle of Boaz, with the closer kinsman being Elimelech's brother--but this is indeed conjecture.

53.   The *Qere* form is *MŌDA'* which appears only one other time Prov. 7:4--where it is used in a parallel structure with sister, to designate the relationship of wisdom to the sage's pupil.

54.   In Ruth 3:2 another noun derivative of *YD'* occurs which Campbell renders as "one of our covenant circle." Campbell, *op.cit.*, p.114.

55.   *Ibid.*, pp.88-89.

56.   Hans Walter Wolff. *Anthropology of the Old Testament*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), pp.214-215.

57.   Gottwald, *op. cit.*, pp.267, 270.

58.   Francis I. Andersen, "Israelite Kinship Terminology and Social Structure." *The Biblical Translator* (Vol. 20, 1969), p.34.   Vaux de, *op. cit.*, pp.20-21.

59.   Andersen, *op. cit.*, pp.35.

60.   Gottwald, *op. cit.*, pp.268-269.

61.   Ruth 1:2.

62.   I Samuel 17:12.

63.   Genesis 35:19.

64.   Ruth 4:11.

65.   Micah 5:2.

66.   Gottwald, *op. cit.*, p.269.

67.   *Ibid.*

68.   One verse, Ps. 72:14, suggests that the *gō'el* responsibility is national, extending to the king.   Johnson, noting this verse, argues that in the extreme, the *gō'el* principle is so far-reaching that it expresses the responsibility of the reigning house towards the nation.   Johnson, *op. cit.*, p.72.

69.   Mendenhall, *op. cit.*, pp.177-178.

70.   Campbell, *op. cit.*, p.137.

71.   Such a combination is not found in a single text, but necessitates the linking of Deut. 25:5-10 with Lev. 25:25; 27:9:33.

72.   Ruth 4:5.

73.   Campbell, *op. cit.*, p.137.   Rowley believes it significant that the other two references to the Levirate marriage are referred to in Ruth (Genesis 38/Ruth 4:12; Deuteronomy 25:9/Ruth 4:8)   Rowley, *op. cit.*, pp.174-175.

74.   *Ibid.*, p.136.

75.   Rowley. *op. cit.*, pp.183-184.   Rowley notes that Ruth's child--Obed--was by legal fiction regarded as Mahlon's, yet at the end of the book this child is reckoned as the child of Boaz.

76.   Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp.137-138.

77.   Ruth 3:10.   Here her *hesed* is recognized.

78.   Cited in *Newsweek* (June 8, 1992), p.19.

79.   IV. 53.

80.   John 13:6-8.

81.   Rodney Clapp.   "Is the Traditional Family Biblical?" *Christianity Today* (Vol 32, September 16, 1988) p.26.

82.   Mark 7:9.

83.   In this instance it is the use of *Corban* which is a difficult concept to define.   Whatever its precise meaning, it designates a technical and legal way to escape a moral obligation.

84.   William Barclay.   *The Gospel of Mark*.   Revised edition. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975) p.171.

85.   Bruce C. Birch and Larry L. Rasmussen. *The Predicament of the Prosperous*.   (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987) p.150.

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