

レビラート婚をめぐる救済観

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ABSTRACT Nobuyoshi KIUCHI, “From Law to Salvation - By way of the Levirate Marriage.” This study aims at demonstrating by way of the Levirate marriage (Deut 25:5-8; Ruth), which has tended to be seen as a purely legal matter, that the term “salvation” should be conceived as having various dimensions. On the assumption that all the books of the Old and New Testaments concern themselves with the same God, a new attempt is made to clarify the Deuteronomic passage and its relation to the prohibition of incest in Lev 18:16. Next, the book of Ruth is examined with reference to the relevant passages in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. As a result we find that Leviticus does not envisage a situation which will necessitate the institution of the Levirate marriage as perfect observance of the Law precludes the possibility of a widow without a son, while the Deuteronomic passages envisaging humans who are short of the Leviticus ideal, graciously provide a means to solve the problem in real life of not having a son. On the other hand, while the Book of Ruth appears to presume the principle expressed in Deuteronomy 25, the details of the practice show not a few deviations from the law. It looks as though the author shows no concern about the deviations, rather all of them are seen positively as an expression of the faiths of Boaz, Naomi, and Ruth. Thus, the Levirate marriage is a window through which one can see differing ideas of salvation, i.e., the ideal behind the Leviticus’ legislation (Lev 18), the economical, social predicament of a widow coupled with the idea of perpetuating the name of the deceased as part of the Lord’s promise to the patriarchs (Deut 25), and the faith springing from a particular predicament (Ruth). Lastly, in the prophetic literature as a whole, the

desperately corrupt hearts of the Israelites, who could not observe even the Deuteronomic laws (e.g., Hosea, Jeremiah) is contrasted with the absolute grace of the Lord, the *gô'ēl* in the true sense (Isaiah). It is both from the curse of the high standard of Leviticus legislation and from the rock bottom of human degenerateness presented in the prophetic literature that Christ came to save us.