

Ruth Chapter 4 - Redemption

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Date: 26 May 2024

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[0 : 0 0] Ruth, I took the liberty, I thought this would be helpful, of printing out, putting together a wee overview of the book. It's not for this chapter, but it's for the whole book. If you could pass that back in your row, that would be terrific.

What I'll do is I'll give you a couple. There you go. Maybe you could take a bunch and pass them. Thank you very much. And this is just a wee helpful thing, and there's other formats if you need. But this is just a helpful wee overview so that we have the bigger story. We've been delving right into, zooming into the story of Naomi and Ruth and Boaz, but this just helps us remember the bigger story at play in these things, and hopefully helps you as you continue to reflect on the book of Ruth and all that is contained in it.

Thank you. Thank you. Okay. So we're in the book of Ruth, chapter 4 today.

And my aim is to be less than 30 minutes. That'll be good, wouldn't it?

You could spend forever in these truths. C.S. Lewis, he says, you know, you go further up and further in, you can't get to the end of it.

[2 : 1 3] But if you have a Bible, please turn to Ruth, chapter 4. And there's Bibles in the pews as well, and it will be up there. And you can keep that up on the screen. I'm not going to read from it right away.

Firstly, I want to, as we conclude our study, I wanted to just recap chapter 3.

There's a couple of things that bridge into chapter 4. So throughout this book, you know, we only really hear people talking about God.

But we see that with trust and with time, God's providence reveals his incredible kindness and sovereignty in our day-to-day lives.

God's character and God's ways are not hidden, certainly not to these people, to the Israelites.

[3 : 1 4] The things that people say about God in this book are to be weighed against what God has already revealed about himself. So it's no surprise then that for Naomi, returning to God is the best thing that she could have done.

And for Ruth, an outsider, a foreigner, taking refuge under the wings of this God, Yahweh, is the best thing that she could have done. And for Boaz, doing what is right in God's eyes when everyone else is doing otherwise, is the best thing that he could have done.

No matter how costly that was. And we may not recognize it at time. But day-to-day, God is graciously and providentially working out his good purposes.

And trusting in him will be the best thing that we could ever do. Even if it doesn't feel like it at the time, time will reveal that to be so.

And so last week when Stan opened up chapter 3, he spoke about God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. Taking Ruth's actions as an example of how God's sovereignty doesn't exclude our actions.

[4 : 3 0] But God in his providence loves to use our active involvement to work out his purposes. I thought that was a wonderful point that Stan made.

But chapter 3, it ends on a cliffhanger. And it's not just from that intimate, vulnerable scene with Boaz and Ruth that ends on a cliffhanger.

The whole book is still on a cliffhanger. The whole book wants to answer certain questions. And so these three questions will be answered in chapter 4. Question 1, for Ruth.

What will happen to the outsider who takes refuge under the wings of Yahweh? Will Ruth find rest and redemption? Number 2, for Naomi.

What will happen to the wayward Israelite who return to God? Will Naomi be left bitter and empty? And finally, for Israel.

[5 : 29] What will happen to God's chosen people as every man does what is right in his own eyes? Will Israel find a king? The book is wanting to answer these big questions.

And chapter 4 will address it in that order. But before we see that, I just want to highlight two important points that I want to add from chapter 3 that form a bridge into chapter 4.

And so I'm just going to read a verse from chapter 3, verse 13. And that was when Ruth was with Boaz in the night.

And Boaz said to her, So firstly, the first big point that forms a bridge is that Boaz says to Ruth, either this closer person will redeem her, and if not, Boaz will redeem her.

This is on the backdrop of when everyone was doing what was right in their own eyes, Boaz is doing what was right in God's eyes. And so throughout the period of judges when they were living, there has been a need, a desperate need for someone who will do what is right in God's eyes.

[7 : 01] And Boaz, he's going to do the right thing. Even if this other closer redeemer doesn't do the right thing, Boaz is going to do the right thing to ensure that Ruth is redeemed.

Even if he himself is not the one to do it. If he will redeem you, then good, let him do it. And so Boaz is going to do the right thing for Ruth's sake, not for his own benefit.

This is a picture of Christ. He will make sure that she is redeemed. And if this man's not willing to redeem her, then Boaz said, As Yahweh lives, I will redeem you.

Either way, the important thing to see is that regardless of Ruth's initiative and her action in chapter 3, she cannot redeem herself. When we're talking about the interplay of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility, there's a point at which Ruth's actions fall short.

She cannot redeem herself. She needs someone else to do that. Now, why did she have to take the initiative in the first place? Well, for Boaz, I reckon it was because it wasn't his place to take the initiative.

[8 : 06] There was a closer redeemer. But when Ruth indicated she wanted to marry Boaz, he would bring it to this man's attention that there's a girl who needs redeemed.

She needs redeemed and she cannot do it for herself. Folks, redemption is something that we cannot do for ourselves. It wouldn't be redemption if we could.

Now, do we need redeemed? What do you think? One of the reasons for some of the historical councils and creeds throughout church history about Jesus and his divinity and humanity was because if you lose either his divinity or his humanity, what is at stake is our redemption is not possible.

And so there was a guy called Gregory Nazianzen, and he famously said this. He said, That which is not taken up is not healed. And there was this debate about how human Jesus is if he's the Son of God.

And so Gregory is saying he needs to take up the whole of humanity if the whole of humanity is to be redeemed. He goes on to say, That which is united with God, that will be saved.

[9 : 25] If half of Adam fell, then half will be taken up and saved. But if all of Adam fell, then all of his nature will be united with God, and all of it will be saved.

So let me ask you a question. Is there a single part of us that does not need redeemed? Can you think of a part of you that doesn't need redeemed? I mean, we're all familiar that our bodies need redeemed.

But what about your mind? You know your mind better than anyone else. Does it need redeemed? I know minds does. What about your soul? What state is your soul in?

Does that need redeemed? Well, every part of our humanity needs redeemed. And like Ruth, we cannot do it ourselves. We have to have another redeemed for us.

And that's an important point. Is there a person who can redeem us? So what will happen to Ruth? That's what the story of Ruth is telling humanity.

[10 : 29] Ruth has a need for a redeemer. As much as her action and initiative help, she cannot do it. She needs someone who can do it. What will happen to Ruth?

Well, from that first point, when Boaz says, if he doesn't do it, I will do it. One way or another, Ruth will be redeemed. Not just the land, but her.

God cares about you more than the dirt that you walk on. Whoever you are, whatever your country of origin, like Ruth, whatever idols you worshipped in the past, if you turn to Jesus and take refuge in him, you will be redeemed.

Secondly, secondly, while Ruth acted and drew towards Boaz in faith, because she couldn't redeem herself, she had to trust and wait.

Right at the end, it says this, in the end of chapter 3, Naomi tells Ruth that she must wait until she learns how the matter turns out, and she assures her that Boaz will not rest.

[11 : 32] Verse 18 of chapter 3, Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today. The man will not rest.

Boaz has already said that she'll be redeemed. Naomi told her, the man will not rest, but will settle the matter. You see, sometimes faith requires action, sometimes faith requires waiting.

Sometimes faith requires waiting. And so let me ask again, has Jesus left us guessing whether he will redeem us or not? Are we waiting in vain?

Is Jesus going to do it? It's been 2,000 years. It's been your whole life. But through the back, we've got this reminder from the scriptures, as we wait for our blessed hope, the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Your redeemer. Is he going to do it? So the first part is we cannot redeem ourselves. We need another who is able to redeem us. And the second part is to trust Jesus who said he will do it and wait until he settles it for good.

[12 : 43] To know that Jesus isn't resting in heaven. He isn't lazing about his father's house, watching heavenly sports with his feet up until we arrive at the door.

If Naomi said that Boaz will not rest, but he will settle the matter, how much more will Jesus be actively working to settle the matter for my redemption and your redemption?

He is always working, subjecting all his enemies while we were sleeping, ruling above all things as we got up this morning. As it says in Hebrews 8, 25, he always lives to make intercession for those who draw near to God through him.

And so like Ruth, who had to wait and trust and hope, Romans 8, 23 says, we wait eagerly for the redemption of our bodies.

Naomi said, wait, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter. How much more should we wait eagerly and with confidence for the God-man, Jesus Christ, to settle the matter?

[13 : 49] These two things carry on into chapter 4 when we see if the matter will be settled and who by. And so, as I've been doing before, I'm not going to read the whole chapter at once, but I'm going to read it in sections and answer the following questions that we discussed.

These three questions. Firstly, what will happen to the outsider, Ruth, who's taken refuge in Yahweh? And then secondly, what will happen to this wayward Israelite, Naomi, who has returned to God?

And thirdly, what will happen to this wayward nation who's struggling to be the people of God? So, let me read the first 12 verses and look at how Boaz redeems Ruth.

Now, Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there and behold, the redeemer of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So, Boaz said, turn aside, friend, sit down here.

And he turned aside and sat down and he took 10 men of the elders of the city and said, sit down here. So, they sat down and then he said to the redeemer, Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to her relative Elimelech.

[15 : 02] So, I thought I would tell you of it and say, buy it in the presence of those sitting here in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it.

But if you will not tell me that I may know, for there is no one beside you to redeem it and I come after you. And he said, I will redeem it.

Then Boaz said, the day that you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.

Then the Redeemer said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. No, no, no. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.

Now, this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging. To confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the manner of attesting in Israel.

[16 : 03] So, when the Redeemer said to Boaz, buy it for yourself, he drew off his sandal. Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Killian and Malon.

Also, Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Malon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead and his inheritance. The name of the dead might not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place.

You are witnesses this day. Then all the people who were gathered and the elders said, We are witnesses. May the Lord bless.

May the Lord make this woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem and may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman.

Amen. Well, what will happen to Ruth? She will be redeemed. Notice the contrast between verse 4 and verse 6 when the other man says, I will redeem it.

[17 : 21] And then a few minutes later he's like, No, no, no, no. I cannot. I cannot redeem it. I cannot redeem it. What a contrast. And it's funny because in this account and you can't see it in the English in this account the man, whoever he is is only referred to as so and so.

In verse 1 when Boaz says turn aside friend actually in the Hebrew it's not friend it's such and such. Hey you, such and such come over here. That's how the man is referred to.

And yet he's worried about his name perpetuating his name and because of his decision because he didn't do what was right. His name is lost to history. Hey, such a one.

Sit down. We have some business to attend to. At the city gate this is where all the transactions would take place all the elders and witnesses and they would do some business.

Here's some land here. Will you redeem it? The guy's scrambling to get his sandal off and Boaz is like, No, no, wait, wait. If you're going to redeem it you get Ruth. And he says, Well, I cannot redeem it.

[18 : 28] I'm only interested in land, not people. Have you ever known anyone like that? I'm only interested in things but not people. No matter the cost, Boaz is going to redeem her.

So Boaz knows that although the man will perhaps be interested in the land, Boaz knows that redeeming Ruth will be costly. This man will likely not be willing.

But Boaz is a worthy man. He's a man doing what's right in the eyes of God. A man not thinking of his own benefit. A man who will redeem regardless of the cost.

Does that ring any bells? These things are pointing towards Jesus. Redemption is costly. It's not for his own benefit. The other man, such and such, knew that if a person is redeemed, not just land, if a person is redeemed, that is more costly than land.

It means that he would be obligated to perpetuate the person's lineage. He would have a mouth to feed, a person to care for, and they would get the land.

[19 : 32] He would have to give them a child and continue their name and the land would be inherited by them. Notice as well in verse 10, talking about the cost of redemption, Boaz says, I have bought to be my wife, Ruth the Moabite.

Now, that might sound distasteful in our culture, but what you've got to remember is that without this, a widow was left destitute, homeless, without food, without care, without someone to protect her.

And we've already heard in this account that Boaz is about the only one that's going around to try and protect Ruth. And so without that, what happens to a widow in Israel or in that world?

Never mind Israel. This is a foreigner coming into Israel. And so it might sound distasteful that he bought her to be her wife, but think about it this way, even in our own culture, right?

If you are married, think about this for your upcoming anniversary. how much would you be willing to pay for your wife?

[20 : 50] Don't answer out loud. But there's a point there, isn't it? Boaz is going to pay anything to redeem Ruth. I have bought her.

Like, nothing's too much to redeem this woman. It shows her worth. What is the price of the dowry? You still have to do that. You know, people spend a fortune on weddings these days.

But would you be willing to do that for your beloved? For your wife? And so that's the point here. Boaz is willing to pay as much as is needed to redeem Ruth.

As much as is needed. He made an oath in God's name to redeem her. And he'll pay whatever is necessary to do so because he's going to do the right thing. So in relation to ourselves, here's a question.

What is the price to redeem one of us? What is the price to redeem your life? What do you think the price is? Let me say, it's at least not anything that a fallen man can afford to pay.

[21 : 57] None of us can afford to pay to redeem another person. We place values on human beings all the time and we always undervalue them. you see, we were made in God's image and God has placed a value on our lives that none of us could ever afford to pay.

And so in Psalm 49 it says this, no one can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for them for the ransom of a life is costly. No payment is ever enough so that they should live on forever and not see decay.

No man can do it. None of us can do it. Yet there is one man, the God man, Jesus Christ, God's own son who came and was unstained by sin.

The divine son took up flesh and imperfect righteousness it says in Galatians 3 that Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us so that in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come even to us, the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised spirit through faith.

1 Corinthians 6 says you were bought with a price. You were bought and thank God that you were because no one else could ever afford it. Peter says you were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

[23 : 17] That's what it cost. That's what it cost to redeem one of us. And he's not just an innocent man. He's not just a good teacher. He's the son of God.

Perfect in every way. The blood of divinity. Figure that one out. You know, but Paul says and acts that God purchased with his own blood.

And so in Psalm 49 when it says that no man can redeem the life of another, actually later on it also says but God, God will redeem me from the realm of the dead. He will surely take me to himself.

So like we did earlier with the children, if you're talking about things that only God can do but Jesus is doing it, what does that say about Jesus? That he is both God because only God can do this and yet he is man because only by taking up humanity could God redeem humanity.

So as we see Boaz redeeming Ruth, he's the only one who was going to do it and in doing so we see in the words of the witnesses that she became part of the family.

[24 : 25] all this talk about Rachel and Leah, Perez, Tamar and Judah. Ruth the outsider by redemption has become part of God's family.

What an amazing thing. As we read earlier in Romans 8.23 we eagerly await for the redemption of our bodies. The full quote is actually we eagerly await, we wait eagerly for adoption as sons the redemption of our bodies.

You see, Jesus didn't come simply to forgive us or to cancel our debt or to just put us on good terms with God. He came to fully redeem us and make us part of the family.

It's not that adoption is a benefit of redemption. You cannot have redemption without adoption. Only by being part of God's family will we actually be redeemed. Our redemption is wrapped up in our relationship with Jesus, our Redeemer.

And so that is what this thing is pointing towards. There's only one Redeemer. There's only one who will do it. And we need to wait for Him to do it and trust that He will.

[25 : 35] And redemption is costly. But yet He paid the price that only He could pay to redeem people. And redemption makes us part of the family.

Whoever believes in Jesus has the right to become children of God. Let me read the next section verses 13 to 17 as we consider what will happen to Naomi.

Verses 13 to 17. So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife and he went into her and the Lord gave her conception and she bore a son.

Then the woman said to Naomi, blessed be the Lord who has not left you this day without a Redeemer and may his name be renowned in Israel. He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age for your daughter-in-law who loves you who is more to you than seven sons has given birth to him.

Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. And the woman of the neighbourhood gave him a name saying a son has been born to Naomi.

[26 : 48] They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. Interestingly, in the book of Ruth, the focus moves away from Ruth and back on to Naomi.

At the start of the book, Naomi was questioning how God was dealing with her. Was God dealing with her bitterly? Is she feeling empty and bitter? But now, it's not just Ruth who's redeemed.

We see what they say in verse 14, the Lord has not left you, Naomi. He's not left you without a redeemer. And who are they talking about? They're not talking about Boaz.

It just said in verse 13 that Ruth bore a son. And then the woman said, well, look, this son, Naomi, God's not left you without a redeemer. Your daughter-in-law has given birth to him.

His name will be renowned. He will be a restorer to you, a nourisher of your old age. They're talking about this child, Obed. He is to Naomi a redeemer because of this new life.

[27 : 56] She is restored from all the death that surrounded her in chapter 1. She is nourished in her old age. You see that in chapter 1, all she was surrounded with was death.

And she questioned, what are you doing, God? And now she returns to God and she's given life, a new lease of life through Obed. He is her redeemer.

Remember how she thought God was dealing bitterly with her in chapter 1? How empty she felt. Well, how kind is God? Time and trust will tell. God is not using Naomi to simply get to Ruth.

God will bless and redeem Naomi too. No matter who you are, no matter what your past is, no matter your age and no matter your status, God has not left you without a redeemer.

He's really not. His name is Jesus Christ and his name is renowned. And so, let's move on to the last section as we consider what God will do with Israel.

[28 : 57] Verse 18 to 22. Now these are the generations of Peres. Peres fathered Hezron. Hezron fathered Ram. Ram fathered Aminadab.

Aminadab fathered Nashon. Nashon fathered Salmon. Salmon fathered Boaz. Boaz fathered Obed. Obed fathered Jesse. And Jesse fathered David.

And we know who David is. Right at the start of the book, The Nation Was in a State Without a King. We've seen how Boaz redeems Ruth, answering the question of what becomes of the outsider who takes refuge in God.

They will be redeemed. If you're an outsider, you take refuge in God, you will be redeemed. We've seen how Obed redeems Naomi, answering the question of what becomes of the wayward Israelite who returns to God.

We think about the Jews we should pray for the Jews and we should pray that they would return to their God through their Messiah Jesus. What will happen to them? They will be redeemed.

[30 : 07] And now we see the answer to the question of what becomes of this nation without a king doing what is right in their own eyes. God's chosen people. Well, God will give them a king and a redeemer.

Working through all these things to bring about King David. Not a man who was doing what was right in his own eyes. A man who was after God's own heart.

In this book of redemption, King David redeems Israel. Yeah, we know the story doesn't end there. David was just a foreshadow of the one who would not only redeem Israel, but these cascading examples of redemption of Ruth, then Naomi, then Israel.

Jesus is the one who would redeem the whole world. And so Peter says in Acts chapter 2, Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this day.

But he was a prophet and knowing that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on the throne, that is Jesus, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of Christ that he would not abandon, he was not abandoned to Hades nor did his flesh see corruption.

[31 : 27] This Jesus God raised up and of that, remember all the women and the elders, we are witnesses. And Peter says, well of this fact that Jesus was risen, of that we are all witnesses.

Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. David did not ascend into the heavens but he said, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make my enemies, your enemies, your footstool.

And so Peter says, let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ. This Jesus whom you crucified. See God knows the end from the beginning and throughout these characters in the book God has always planned to bring about a king and a redeemer for the whole world so that me and you have a hope of redemption and have a hope of future.

So let us trust in Jesus and let us wait for him to settle the matter. And let me finish with the words of Job chapter 19. I know that my redeemer lives and that in the end he will stand on the earth.

And after my skin has been destroyed yet in my flesh I will see God. I myself will see him with my own eyes, I and not another. how my heart yearns within me.

[32 : 49] Amen. Let me pray. Heavenly Father we thank you for this wonderful testimony of your kindness and your grace and your sovereignty to bring about a king and a redeemer that the world needs.

We thank you that this time in the book of Ruth has shown us your son Jesus. May we see your need for a redeemer and may we see that you have provided one in your son Jesus Christ.

May his name be renowned in the whole world. Amen. Amen. Amen.