

The Redeemer Redeems

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[0 : 00] Dear Father, we just thank you for the God that you are, this good and gracious King who rules with a sovereign, powerful hand, who knows his sheep. One by one, he knows our needs.

Father, if there's anything that we can take away from this incredible story, is your consistent kindness, your consistent desire to forgive, your consistent desire to relate to those who are hurting and need redemption.

Father, I pray that this book would resonate in our lives beyond these last few weeks that we've studied it. May we continue to open it up, understand it, and see a wonderful, incredible picture of you, our good and gracious King.

Thank you. In your name, amen. As we all know, we are just finishing off this incredible book of Ruth, so please turn with me to chapter 4.

I've entitled this sermon, The Redeemer Redeems. This is a thick chapter in many different ways, and it brings some incredible points that I want to bring to your attention on this Sunday morning.

[1 : 37] In case you're wondering where we are going after this, I took up an informal survey, which means I asked three people, and they have asked that I would preach on the book of Revelation.

So, in a couple of weeks, we're going to start a very short series, kind of giving an overview, an understanding of end times, the end things in this incredible book of Revelation.

It's a rich book, and my plan going in is just to summarize it for you, to give you the sections, what's going on, to help you understand it.

As you all know, most people are confused. There's a lot of imagery that is used that we don't always understand, but the message is quite clear, and it is quite compelling.

So, that is where we are going to be going in the next couple of weeks. How long it will last, I do not know, but I'm sure it is going to be a tremendous time of worship, because it is the ultimate book on worship.

[2 : 54] So, getting back to Ruth, hopefully you're at chapter 4. As I go through the sermon, we're going to be reading the parts of the book, so I'm not going to pre-read it.

We're going to read it as we come to the points that I would like to make that's here. As you all know, we're kind of left with a bit of a cliffhanger. And just to give you a quick summary of the book of Ruth, where we've been, we have this family, wandered away from God's people, God's land, God's truth, found themselves in a foreign land.

Sadly, the husband, both sons, died during that time away. And this one woman named Naomi is left with two daughters-in-law.

One of the daughters-in-law decides to come back to go home with Naomi, and her name is Ruth. Naomi had heard that God had visited his people and has brought food to them.

So, she is returning back to the promised land that God had promised her earlier ancestors. While she's there, she has no plan.

[4 : 05] She's a broken-hearted woman. She feels that God, although has dealt with her rightly, she is left bitter and hurting.

As it would happen, and the text tells us, that Ruth is going to head out and glean from the harvest.

That means she would follow in the fields that they were being harvested by the farmers and just pick up the scraps that were left behind. And Scripture gives us an indication that she comes to this field, which is owned by this man by the name of Boaz.

And he is a righteous man. He is a God-fearing, God-loving man. He believes in God. He lives his life with an understanding of God.

And it doesn't say that he takes pity on Ruth, but he notices her. And she receives his favor. He asks her to stick with his maidens so that there she is kept safe.

[5 : 08] She's not abused. And he makes sure the farmers who reap leave extra food for her. And even at the text, at the end of verse chapter 2, the amount of food she goes home with is an extraordinary amount of food.

Last week we looked at chapter 3. We understand that Boaz is a redeemer. And a redeemer means he is a kinsman.

He's a member of the family. And he's actually in a position to help them out. So Naomi puts a plan together, which I called Operation Rope in Boaz.

And she sets it in motion. And Ruth does exactly everything that Naomi has instructed to her. She planned what night to approach Boaz.

She planned what she would wear, what she would smell like, and even the speech that she would express to Boaz. And ultimately, Ruth would ask Boaz to redeem her, to make her his wife.

[6 : 22] It's a compelling story. It's an incredible story, dramatic story that draws us in. The man that she's asking to marry her is known as a worthy man.

He is an honorable, caring, kind man. And we see through him a reflection of our own God. Not only did he protect Ruth, but he provided for her.

And he went far beyond any of her concerns. So on a night at the end of the harvest, it's kind of a funny story. But in that culture, I'm sure it makes perfect sense.

She asked Boaz to cover her with his wings and make her his bride. She simply says, I am Ruth, your servant.

Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer. In modern day parlance, we would call that marry me.

[7 : 28] But what's interesting, this story, the author, the writer of this story, through the power of the Holy Spirit, drops this issue, which we did not know going into it.

Not only does she ask this question, which obviously would be such an emotional question, He simply responds, do not fear, yes, I will.

I will do all you ask, for all my fellow kinsmen know you are a worthy woman. But then he lets her know, yes, it's true that I am a redeemer.

Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. So there is actually another member of the family that's actually closer to her than him.

Let's be honest. This is the type of drama we see in a Hallmark movie special. And the question that I have for you today, have you ever wondered why there is a need for chapter 4?

[8 : 41] Because he could have said, hey, listen, there's someone there, but don't worry, I'll take care of it. And they lived happily ever after. The author could have spared us this one last twist to the story.

And it would have been beautiful and wonderful without this last twist. But the power of this story is actually found in chapter 4.

It is necessary. It not so much because it adds drama, but it actually is explaining the process of redemption that we experience through Jesus Christ.

The reality is the Old Testament in many areas has these different stories. And they're like shadows of what is to come.

And we have this incredible shadow of the future God who will walk on this earth in the flesh, Jesus Christ, and what his life will signify.

[10 : 03] And in this book, it's going to reveal what happened on the cross for us needed to happen. There is one truth that the Bible is absolutely clear about.

is that God's people always need redeeming. We have always needed redeeming.

From our very first forefather in Adam, to Abraham, to Noah, to Joseph, all these people that we call heroes of the faith have always needed redeeming.

And there's two truths that we need to understand for this word redemption. The first is that in order to be redeemed, it implies that there is trouble.

There is a problem that someone needs to be redeemed from. The second implication is the person in need of redeeming is incapable of redeeming themselves.

[11 : 20] So this is a story we see over and over in the pages of Scripture. We know the ultimate story of redemption in the Old Testament is God's people enslaved to Egypt.

God raises up Moses, and God demonstrates his power to his people through these incredible miracles to bring his people out. And we have this exodus, and God is in the promised land.

And now, we have this short book of Ruth. A story of redemption, a story that prepares us to understand the redemption that we will find eventually in Jesus Christ.

So let's take a look at chapter 4. As we all know, as I stated, Boaz left Ruth at the end of chapter 3 with the intention of solving the Redeemer problem.

So let's look at the text and see what we can learn about a Redeemer. So let's take a look at verse 1. Now, Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there.

[12 : 36] And behold, the Redeemer of whom Boaz had spoken came by. Now, there's several things that I want you to take note about from this introductory verse.

The first thing we see, Boaz is a motivated man. Boaz wants to take Ruth as his wife. He wants to redeem it. This is a problem. He's going to solve it.

Even though, he admitted, if the other Redeemer wants to do it, she's still in God's hands. It's a wonderful thing. But there is a personal stake in this for him.

So, as Naomi laid out a perfect plan in chapter 3, we see Boaz becoming this man of action and operating under God's plan puts this story together, this plan.

Now, it's interesting. Some of the commentators have made this connection that the word behold was almost the same term that is used in chapter 2 with Ruth where she kind of came upon this field as luck would have it and God's sovereignty is involved in the same way God's sovereignty is involved in bringing this Redeemer before Boaz.

[13 : 54] I completely reject that thought process and I'll tell you why. Boaz knows exactly what he's doing. This is a relative. He knows who the man is. He knows who the pattern is.

This is a problem he's going to solve today. He's not leaving it to chance. He knows what he needs to do. So he goes to the front gate. Now, here in the gates of these small towns, it would have been the entrance of the city.

People had their farms outside the gates so they all had to go through the gates in order to go to their farms, their fields, or the work that they had to do.

And it's also a court side in the beginning and inside the city you'd have the marketplace but immediately as we're going to see it was also a place where people could make trades, do deals, businesses, and that sort of thing.

We see in other places of scripture that the elders who would generally be the older men of the city who are too old to be out actually doing the physical labor would be back in the town and people could bring different issues, legal issues, problems that needed to be rectified in that community.

[15:08] So this is a morning and Boaz is sitting down waiting at the gate and he sees the man that he knows as the redeemer.

So Boaz said, turn aside friend, sit down here. I know you're going someplace but I want your attention here. And it says, the text tells us that he turned aside and sat down.

What's interesting about this story is our texts call him friend but in the Hebrew that's not the term that is used here. It is an ambiguous term.

Some commentators mean it's calling him like Joe Schmo or John Doe or whoever he is. I believe there is a purpose.

we obviously know Boaz knows who he is. He's being the same clan, same family tree. But the author is drawing a point here.

[16:11] We're going to understand this point. But it's kind of like saying he who shall remain nameless. Please come down and sit beside me because as we're going to see this man's actions will cause him to be nameless for eternity.

Whereas to this day we still know the name of Boaz. Verse 2 and he took ten men of the elders of the city and said sit down here.

So they sat down. 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 our relative Elimelech.

Now I need you to understand something. It's using the term sell but that's not actually what she's doing because when God gave people the land God was the owner and he gave each tribe and within their tribes families would have an allotment of land and for some reason say they needed to they didn't sell the land but you could give sell the rights to someone else to use that land.

Alright so say I grew up I'm not a farmer I've got a farmer's field maybe I'm a blacksmith or something else I could rightfully rent out that sell the right to use that land to someone else.

[17:51] Now I did not have to do it to a family member I could do it to someone else however that's why we understood last week and we're going to explain a little bit more there was a concept a law of the redeemed the redeemer so we're going to get to that in a second so she's not selling the land per se but she was selling the rights for someone else to use it so verse 4 so I thought I would tell you of this says Boaz buy it in the presence of those sitting here and 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 besides you to redeem it and I come after you and he said I will redeem it this is Boaz playing hardball he is wanting this man to make a decision on this very day and how he constructs the question and he puts it before him he's strategic been at the front of the gate elders have already gathered listen this is your job are you going to do it now as last week

I described to you what it meant to be a redeemer and there's two ideas there is the goel and the levirate and I'm not going to go into all the details but the goel part was the one who would redeem the land so if someone else had the land the redeemer someone in that family would buy back pay off the debt for their family member now Ruth and Naomi are like the no brainer good deal family to do this for because if you do that they have no family to farm the land so we would kind of come under your clan as well so you've just enhanced your standing by getting more land and at the same time you know that Naomi is a widow there's going to be no son so the fact of the matter is if you claim it for it's going to fall under you anyway when she eventually passes so this is the situation so it's called a no risk high reward situation to be the go well in this in this situation so

Boaz front loads his statement and he says it with this this strength and resolve buy it in the presence of those sitting here and 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 besides you to redeem it and I come after you and of course the nameless one says I will redeem it it's a no brainer why wouldn't I then as we all know Boaz is quite shrewd he then drops the other shrew so to speak all right you're willing to fulfill the go well part of the redeemer now there is the levirate part of being the redeemer and that means to perpetuate the line of a lamelech so this man would have been single and part of his role would have been to marry

Ruth and that first son would inherit that land so that bonus that would have been the no risk high reward no longer exists now what's interesting is notice how Boaz refers to Ruth then Boaz said the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi you also acquire it's almost like there's this weight attached to this deal Ruth the Moabite the widow of the dead in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance this is a huge shoe that he drops here now notice what he calls Ruth he calls her

Ruth the Moabite doesn't call her Ruth the faithful one does not call her Ruth the worthy one does not call her the servant doesn't call her the woman who worked so hard and lovingly for her mother-in-law Naomi she doesn't tell him about what happened in Ruth chapter one where Ruth said do not urge me to leave you Naomi or return from following you for where you will go I will go and where you lodge I will lodge your people shall be my people and your God my God where you die I will die and there I will be buried may the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts you from me these are incredible noble things that he could have told her told him about Ruth but he doesn't he simply speaks truthfully she is simply

[23 : 40] Ruth the Moabite now what's interesting is he simply states then the Redeemer said I cannot redeem it for myself lest I impair my own inheritance take my right of redemption yourself for I cannot redeem it now there's some speculation as to what he would be given up it's interesting because what would happen here and I think probably one of the most plausible arguments is Ruth is no longer a fair maiden she spent 10 years growing up in a foreign land and she's come back she's a hard worker truth be told she is past her childbearing years what's interesting how many chances are they going to have to bear a son so what would happen is if this nameless one redeemed the land and he redeemed

Ruth the first born son would have that land would get it in perpetuity but what's interesting is if he wasn't able to have a second son his family line would go to the line of Elimelech and his family's inheritance would be lost it would go to that family line so obviously this man has a father probably a brother or a cousin to possibly Elimelech another uncle something going on there in that family tree but this is the first thing we learn about a redeemer in the act of redemption redemption is costly redemption is costly you see the act of redeeming someone is not meant to further your advancement it is a selfless sacrificial act so the only reason this man would do this the first part it's attractive

I get land but then the second part I might lose that land he's refusing to still do the right thing which is the command that God has given his people to protect the widows the orphans and to provide for your family even though it's the extended family he makes the decision not to see Naomi and Ruth need to be redeemed but here is this man Boaz who steps in and says he will do it he takes the same risks as the nameless one by following after God he's attaching himself to a line there's four things we find in a redeemer that are echoed in

Christ the first in Boaz we find a man who is willing he does not hesitate one second when Ruth proposes the idea of him redeeming says yes I will or there's one closer I will fix it the same way with Jesus Christ he was willing to go to the cross to die to save us of our sins the second thing that we see in Boaz is we see there is purpose to him he made a plan he stuck to it and he did not leave anything to chance there's a purpose there we see that he is faithful he told Ruth that he was going to settle the matter right away and he is the fourth thing that we see is this unselfishness this was not for his benefit nor for the benefit of his lying it was to maintain the name of a dead man with his property you see this is why we celebrate communion we come together these are the things that we are to think about at the

Lord's table about everything Jesus Christ did he was willing purposeful faithful and he was unselfish and he was willing to bear the cost of redemption for us 1 Peter 1:18-21 Peter writes knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers so you guys followed in the same sinful paths as your mom and dads before you and your grandparents you're a mess you need redemption and it says not with perishable things such as silver or gold you couldn't redeem yourselves with money or riches but only with the precious blood of Christ like that of a lamb without blemish or spot he was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in

[30 : 02] God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are in God Jesus did not die on the cross save us redeem us from our sins to bring glory to himself no he did it to bring glory to God the father a completely selfless act so we see when we look at the life of Jesus Christ it was a price he paid willingly it was a price he paid purposefully it was a price he paid unselfishly if you ever find yourself asking yourself this question why did Jesus Christ have to live 33 years do you ever wonder about that why did he have to be born to a virgin live those 33 years as a man and there be crucified why didn't

God just send him on Passover Thursday right he still would have been perfect still could be a sacrifice and it would have been a perfect sacrifice except it would not have been entirely perfect he would have lost the identification with us there was purposefulness to what Jesus Christ he identifies with our tears our fears our hunger our temptations he was fully man it's incredible isn't it there was nothing left to chance just like Boaz never left anything to chance so let's take a look at the next section now this is the power of the story that we're going to get to it's not just a recording of some ancient custom verse seven 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 and this was the manner of testing in Israel so when the redeemer said to Boaz buy it for yourself he drew off his sandal and we're going to get to this a little bit more but there was a legal requirement to the selling of the land to handing off this redemption process and then we have this verse nine then Boaz said to the elders and all the people notice that he gathered to himself witnesses people who would be able to attest that he did things right by the law honoring God and obviously honoring

Naomi and Ruth he says you are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilean and to Malon also Ruth the Moabite the widow of Malon I have bought to be my wife to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place you are witnesses to this the redeeming act of the redeemer this is a rich passage the first truth that we understand about redemption is that it is costly the second truth we learn about redemption and what we would see in

Jesus Christ it's actually a legal transaction notice Boaz plans to have it at the front gate where the elders are easy to draw witnesses second we have the witnesses that was my second point we have this declaration we see Boaz being very deliberate in all of this he probably could have married Ruth without all of this but this is a man who's got a moral standing with God remember this is the time of judges the people didn't give a hoots hollow about what God thought but he did so Boaz understands that the law needs to be satisfied not bypassed in the same way when

[35 : 24] Jesus lived here on earth he had to fulfill the law not place himself higher than the law and says the law has no bearing on me but he fulfills the law the reality is like I said this story could have been really simple there did not need to be a second redeemer he could have ended the story hey I'll marry you we'll live happily ever after but we would not get this other picture of Jesus Christ without chapter four you see the Bible is clear that the whole of humanity is a mess because of our sin the law of God demands that sin and rebellion should and must be punished in accordance with God's justice in God's perfection and righteousness

God cannot overlook our sin the right and just demands of God's law have to be met they must be met there's no workarounds to it and that is exactly what happened when the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross in his perfection Jesus died to satisfy the just demands of God's law because you and I couldn't do it we could not satisfy the law and God knew that and that's what he says listen I'm going to give you someone who can through the cross the law was not bypassed the law was satisfied the reality is on the cross where

Jesus died a legal transaction occurred in Jesus taking the penalty for my sins God had declared him unrighteous and you and I he declared righteous and it was the satisfaction of the demands of God's law that Jesus proclaimed from the cross you see this answers the question why doesn't God just forgive us does he not just love us does he not understand our sin is he not like a wonderful grandfather who just kind of winks at sin lets it go the problem is forgiveness in itself does not satisfy God's law or his need for justice there needs to be justice and I think you need to think about this in terms of a great wrong had happened to you there was a family in one of the churches that I attended in

Illinois that had an exceptional tragic accident while on a family trip in a minivan piece of metal fell off a transport truck bounced under their minivan bounced up hit the gas tank and blew it up and it immediately caught fire that mom and dad in the first two seats were not able to save their four kids in the back it was absolutely horrific accident it was all over the news at the time the details are heartbreaking but the mom and dad escape and the question that obviously happens is why was it just simply a piece of metal that fell off the truck well the investigation that would soon follow indicated that this transport truck company had been warned and fined many times and that they had actually paid off previous investigators or law enforcement people to enforce those rules and it turned out it went all the way to the governor of

Illinois for which he went to prison for does it restore the loss of their kids of course not but in that horrible story it was laid to rest that it was just an accident or why I know people who have lost loved ones to why and there's this desire for justice to happen that who was responsible needs to pay and for the government just to say we forgive them without payment the acknowledgement leaves this horrible empty void the legal means of the law need to be met and this leads to the second point of significance by the actions of Boaz when he makes that declaration before all the people is reminiscent of John 19:30 which records

[41:09] Jesus last words it is finished the work of redemption has been complete so this is what Boaz is doing it's completing the transaction as if when we go to a notary to finalize to authenticate a document it all the necessary legal requirements have been fulfilled and Boaz shouts it out to all the witnesses on this day the final point I want to make about redemption the first one it is costly there is a cost the second aspect of redemption there is a legal transaction that occurs the third point

I want to signify is redemption changes lives redemption changes lives the first most obvious one is Ruth right look at verse 13 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 now what I want you to go back to verse 11 and I want you to hear their response that all the people who were at the gate and the elders said we are witnesses may the Lord make the woman who is Ruth 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 remember this is Ruth of Moabitess right she's not even of their people but if you remember this story Abraham Isaac Jacob father Isaac went into a foreign land and married Rachel and Leah had 12 kids who eventually became the mothers of the 12 tribes of Israel foreign women kind of grafted in to God's wonderful glory this is their hope for Ruth so here we see Ruth is redeemed she has a husband who cares for her who gives her a son he is a God fearing man she is no longer Ruth the Moabite she is now

Ruth the wife of Boaz the soon to be mother of Obed the father of Jesse the father of David Israel's greatest king and a forerunner to Christ then we see redemption changing Naomi notice verse 13 the pregnancy that Ruth experienced was because of God the Lord the personal God Yahweh gave her conception but notice right after 13 verse 14 is a focus on Naomi not Ruth and it said 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

Naomi's redemption doesn't come through Boaz but comes through the child remember at the beginning she had no hope she had no future she had no purpose she was bitter she was beaten up by the hardship of life if you were to make a movie of this scene this is the scene you would end it in then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap became his nurse tell me isn't that what every grandmother wants she buys a special rocking chair she makes a favored part of her house that's where she will rock and read and hold her grandchildren verse 17 and the woman of the neighborhood gave him a name saying a son has been born to

[46:46] Naomi they named him Obed he was the father of Jesse the father of David now these are the generations of Perez Perez fathered Hezron fathered Ram fathered Aminadab fathered Dahashon fathered Salmon Salmon fathered Boaz Boaz fathered Obed Obed fathered Jesse and Jesse fathered David if you want to know more about this genealogy I preached them just before Christmas I'd encourage you to go back and see how wonderfully it connects to the Lord Jesus Christ this is what we're left with we're left with the man who had the rightful first opportunity to redeem and he doesn't and he forever goes down in history as the nameless one but here

Boaz close to 4,000 years later we read about this incredible story that God does through this obedient man who loves God what an incredible story we find the story starts with a family in rebellion against God and his law with a family going on their very own way instead of God's way and here it ends with the renewal of life for Ruth Naomi and Boaz and ultimately for the line of Jesus Christ this is what Jesus Christ does my prayer for you is that you will allow him to redeem your life as well let's pray dear Lord heavenly father we thank you for this incredible story how it echoes thousands of years later gives us greater understanding to the truth of the cross it answers these important questions that we have father how you have put together your word is so wonderful beautiful and consistent this old testament there's echoes of your love your grace your mercy and how even this even more so because you withheld your righteous until that justice could be paid on the cross we are thankful for what you did for

Naomi let's be honest many of us can identify with that story God you still redeem lives you still bring purpose truth power miracles through broken lives through our sinful decisions and some of us live in the consequences and we all have thoughts what we should have could have would have done but God through confession of sin and repentance meets us where we are doesn't hold those things against us often he makes them strengths and pillars of us to serve you God you are so beyond us and yet so real thank you

Jesus thank you your name amen