

Redeemed by the Kinsman Redeemer Ruth 4

Introduction

The marriage of Ruth and Boaz is more than a beautiful love story. So many people ask, "What does faith look like?" Ruth and Boaz are excellent examples of living by faith. That alone makes these two people precious to Christian history. However, the blessings from the book of Ruth do not stop there. This book teaches us about redemption. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Kinsman Redeemer for each and every Christian, and this book explains what that means. As if that isn't enough, there is even more! This book is the connection between the genealogies of God's chosen people in the book of Genesis and the monarchy to come in 1 Samuel under future King David and his descendants. Without the Book of Ruth the connection would be missing. The book of Ruth shows how God kept His promise to produce a ruler through Judah's descendants (Genesis 49:10). That ruler would be the Redeemer that was promised to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15) and spoken of with assurance by Job (19:25-26).

Outline of Ruth Chapter 4

- I. A Kinsman Redeemer - Ruth 4:1-12
- II. A Marriage and a Baby - Ruth 4:13-22

I. Boaz Redeems Ruth - Ruth 4:1-12

Boaz went up to the gate and sat down. Important city business took place at the gate. Men gathered there every day to discuss their complaints and problems and get decisions. Today, we would compare the city gate to a city hall or courthouse.

There are many examples of business being done at the city gate. Abraham went to the city gate to buy a field from Ephron, the Hittite, for Sarah's burial (Genesis 23:10). (See other examples in Genesis 34:20; Deuteronomy 22:15; Joshua 20:4; 2 Samuel 15:2.)

As Boaz prepared to wait by the gate, the close relative came by, and Boaz called him over. The writer does not tell us the name of the close relative. Seeing how the man responds to Boaz' carefully planned conversation, it seems appropriate for the man to be left nameless.

Boaz began by gathering *ten men of the elders of the city*.¹ He then explained that Naomi needed to sell some of the land which had belonged to her husband, Elimelech. Boaz described Elimelech as 'our brother.' Leviticus 25:25 says, *If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possessions, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brethren sold.* Clearly the next of kin standing before Boaz was that person. Boaz told him to redeem it, or he would do it himself. When the man told Boaz, *I will redeem it*, Boaz took the conversation a step further.

Boaz told this man, *On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead on his inheritance.* In other words, when you buy the land back to redeem it, you also need to take care of Ruth, the widow of Mahlon. She came back with Naomi, and her future son will carry on the inheritance and name of Elimelech.

According to the law of Moses, *If brothers dwell together and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not*

1 Later, the Jewish religion would consider ten men the necessary number of men needed to have a synagogue (Jewish place of worship and instruction). When the apostle Paul met with a few women having a prayer meeting by the river in Philippi, it is commonly believed the cause was not having ten Jewish men in the city to establish a synagogue (Acts 16:13).

be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, and take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel (Deuteronomy 25:5-6). That wasn't all it said though. It also told what the consequence would be if a man did not obey this part of the law. *If a man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders...* (Deuteronomy 25:7). The elders would make sure the man had truly refused to do his duty. If so, the widow would pull off the brother's sandal and spit in his face, and say, *so shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house* (Deuteronomy 25:8-9).

Hearing this additional information from Boaz, the kinsman (probably a brother, uncle or cousin) refused to marry Ruth. He said that it could ruin his own inheritance. He was not ashamed to show that he was more concerned about himself than carrying on the name of his closest relative who had died. In comparison, Boaz gratefully and joyfully accepted the privilege and huge responsibility.

This custom was part of the law, as we have seen. It was fortunate for the closer relative that it was Boaz and not Ruth who pulled off his sandal. Boaz did not spit in his face. Surely, Boaz was relieved and grateful that the closer relative had refused to marry Ruth.

Boaz asked those present to witness the fact that he had bought from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and to his sons, Mahlon and Chilion, *that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate*. He was saying the needed words out loud to make the agreement legal. However, the words he chose showed that he was a generous man and eager to do the right thing according to God's law. The elders and everyone at the gate said they were witnesses to Boaz' actions that day.

The blessing which the witnesses bestowed had three parts. The first part referred to the nation of Israel's history. Their patriarch Jacob had been blessed with twelve sons by his wives, Rachel and Leah (including their handmaids). Those sons later became the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel (Genesis 29:31-30:24; 35:18). In other words, the witnesses were asking God to bless Boaz with many sons. However, only one son was needed, and only one son is recorded as having been born to Boaz and Ruth.

The second part of the blessing referred to the town of Bethlehem which lay in the region of Ephrathah. It was the town from which Naomi and her family had come (Ruth 1:1). The future king, David, would be born there, and it would also be prophesied as the birthplace of David's future descendant, Jesus Christ, a thousand years later (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-7).

The last part of the blessing referred to Perez (Pharez), who was descended from Jacob's son, Judah. Perez had many descendants and came to be the main ancestor of the people of Bethlehem and Ephrathah.

It was necessary for the kinsman redeemer to be: 1)related, 2)willing, 3)able, and have the price needed to redeem the property and/or person. Like Boaz, our Lord Jesus Christ meets all three requirements and He is our God-appointed Kinsman Redeemer.

1. The first requirement of a kinsman redeemer was that the redeemer had to be family. Jesus Christ took on our humanity to become our kinsman. When John describes Jesus as the Word, he says, *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us* (John 1:14). The apostle Paul described Jesus' birth this way: *When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the Law* (Galatians 4:4).

2. The second requirement for the kinsman redeemer was that he needed to be willing. Jesus said, *I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself* (John 10:17,18). Jesus willingly gave His life for us. Hebrews 12:2 says, *Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.*

3. Lastly, the third requirement was that the redeemer must be able to do the job. We are redeemed by Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24). He did what was required by dying in our place. *God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8). Hebrews 7:25 proclaims *Jesus is able to save...those who come to God through Him...* Just as Boaz willingly offered himself as the kinsman redeemer for Naomi and Ruth, Jesus freely offers to be our kinsman redeemer. Have you accepted Him as your Kinsman Redeemer?

II. A Marriage and a Baby - Ruth 4:13-22

Ruth 4:13 is a beautiful verse! *So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son.*

Ruth and Boaz were not the only ones who were blessed! Naomi received a double blessing through their marriage. She was able to live out her life on her ancestral land. She also experienced the joy of having a grandson who bore her family name, would carry on the inheritance, and care for her. These blessings were Naomi's because Boaz carried out his duty as her kinsman redeemer. And, that was made possible because Ruth, her Moabite daughter-in-law, had stayed by her side: BY FAITH!

The neighborhood women blessed the Lord for all the blessings Naomi had received from God. They told Naomi that Ruth was better than having seven sons. Can you imagine how Ruth must have felt to be honored with such a grand compliment from the women in this

new land. Clearly, the Israelites had not only accepted her as one of their own, they also recognized her as priceless.

The neighborhood women named the son of Boaz and Ruth, Obed, which means servant. Obed was probably born in the home of Boaz in Bethlehem. He was of the tribe of Judah. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David (1 Samuel 16:1-13). David was to be the future king of Israel, and an outstanding king at that.

The book of Ruth goes on to establish the lineage of Obed dating back as far as Judah. We know with certainty that the genealogies are accurate and trustworthy. They appear several times in Scripture: Genesis, Ruth, 1 Chronicles, Matthew, and Luke. Some critics would like you to believe that the Bible is full of missing information and cannot be trusted. However, the opposite is true. There is much more evidence supporting the Scriptures as true, than there is evidence to suggest it is false. This is because the Bible IS true. The book of Ruth in the Bible is true. We are blessed that God wants us to understand what a kinsman redeemer is and how Jesus Christ became ours. †

Prayer

Thank God that you were able to study the books of Judges and Ruth. Thank him for being your Redeemer and giving you eternal life with an eternal family. His blessings are never ending!

Memory Verse

Romans 3:23-24 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*