

“Ruth’s Redeemer”  
Ruth 3-4  
(Preached at Trinity, March 20, 2016)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. One of the great operating themes throughout the entire Book of Ruth is the overshadowing Providence of God. He has an eternal plan and is working it out perfectly. We’ve seen God’s hand throughout this story:  
The famine, the death of Naomi’s husband and sons, arriving back at Bethlehem at the barley harvest, Ruth being at the right field when Boaz arrives, Boaz being a single bachelor, and a suitable kinsman to redeem Ruth.
2. God is reigning and He is working out His redemptive purpose.
3. Last week I briefly mentioned the Old Covenant law of the Levirate—that the brother of a deceased man was obliged to marry his brother's widow.  
Tonight I want us to look at this law because it draws our eyes towards our own Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. According to Hebrew law the brother of a man who died childless was required to take his deceased brother's wife and bear children in his name. This was referred to as the Levirate Law. In addition relatives were required to buy back their relatives if they fell into debt and had to sell themselves into slavery.  
**Deuteronomy 25:5-10 NAU** - "When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be *married* outside *the family* to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. <sup>6</sup> "It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.  
This had a couple important functions:
  - A. First, it provided for the care of the widow. We see this with **Ruth 3:1** "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?"
  - B. Second, it kept the deceased brother’s land in the family. In the Old Covenant land was not to be transferred outside the family. If a person became impoverished and forced to sell his land it was to be restored at the Year of Jubilee.

**Leviticus 25:25-28 NAU** - "If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold. <sup>26</sup> 'Or in case a man has no kinsman, but so recovers his means as to find sufficient for its redemption, <sup>27</sup> then he shall calculate the years since its sale and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it, and so return to his property. <sup>28</sup> 'But if he has not found sufficient means to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hands of its purchaser until the year of jubilee; but at the jubilee it shall revert, that he may return to his property."

Without this provision of Levirate a widow could remarry outside the family and a stranger would then acquire the land.

- C. The Levirate assured that the deceased would have a child to maintain his inheritance. The first-born child would be the heir of the deceased brother.
5. If the brother refused to take his brother's wife there was a process that would symbolize his shame.
- Leviticus 25:25-28 NAU** - "But if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' <sup>8</sup> "Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And *if* he persists and says, 'I do not desire to take her,' <sup>9</sup> then his brother's wife shall come to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' <sup>10</sup> "In Israel his name shall be called, 'The house of him whose sandal is removed.'"
- We'll see this process in **Chapter 4**
6. Naomi clearly understood this law. In the case where the deceased did not have a brother the next nearest kin would then step forward. Naomi knew that Boaz was a kinsman. This meant he was qualified to exercise the law of Levirate.
- It would have been unknown to Ruth but she was willing to submit to the guidance of her mother-in-law. **Ruth 3:5 NAU** - "All that you say I will do."
7. As we will see, Boaz comes forth and he and Ruth become husband and wife. He becomes Ruth's kinsman redeemer.
- Ruth 4:13-14 NAU** - "So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. And the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. <sup>14</sup> Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel."
8. The word for redeemer in **Ruth 4** is לִפְדּוֹת. We find two times where this word was used to describe God as the Redeemer of Israel.
- A. The first was their redemption from Egypt
- Exodus 6:6-8 NAU** - "Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. <sup>7</sup> 'Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> 'I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you *for* a possession; I am the LORD."

- B. The second is when God delivered Israel from their bondage in Babylon  
**Isaiah 43:11-14 NAU** - "I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me. <sup>12</sup> "It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange *god* among you; So you are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "And I am God. <sup>13</sup> "Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?" <sup>14</sup> Thus says the LORD your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, "For your sake I have sent to Babylon, And will bring them all down as fugitives, Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice."  
**Isaiah 41:14 NAU** - "Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel; I will help you," declares the LORD, "and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel."
9. But there is a greater Redeemer for God's people. God has come to redeem us by Jesus Christ our Kinsman
1. We were sold into bondage  
**Romans 7:14 NAU** - "For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin."
  2. We were bound as servants but Jesus has come and paid the price of our freedom. He has purchased us.  
**1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NAU** - "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."
  3. By right He has delivered us and we are his
  4. As Ruth became espoused to Boaz, we have become espoused to Christ
10. Tonight I want to look at the kinsman redeemer as see how it relates to Christ our Great Redeemer. There were basically four requirements a man had to meet in order to qualify as a kinsman redeemer. We'll look at each of them and see that Boaz was qualified and we'll see that Christ met all of the qualifications as our Redeemer.
- I. He had to be a near kinsman – a close relative of the deceased
- A. Boaz was a near kinsman
1. We aren't told his exact relationship to the Elimelech family. We're only told that he was a kinsman  
**Ruth 2:1 NAU** - "Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz."  
**Ruth 3:2 NAU** - "Now is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maids you were?"
  2. Ruth lets Boaz know he was the near kinsman  
**Ruth 3:9 NAU** - "I am Ruth your maid. So spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative."
  3. Boaz admits that he was a near kinsman but knows there was one nearer than him. It would seem that he had already investigated the situation.  
**Ruth 3:12 NAU** - "Now it is true I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I."
  4. Once the closer relative declined that put Boaz as the near kinsman

B. Jesus Christ is our near Kingsman

1. He took upon Himself our humanity becoming intimately related to us. **Hebrews 2:14-17 NAU** - "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. <sup>16</sup> For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."
2. Christ became the seed of Abraham, our father in the faith. In Christ we have received the adoption of sons – He is our elder brother. We are intimately related to Him.

II. He had to be willing to redeem

A. Ruth had won the love of Boaz

1. It wasn't love at first sight as some expositors insist. At the beginning we are simply seeing the character of Boaz towards the poor. He was merciful and gracious.
2. But in time her excellence won his heart. By the time she made her midnight call Boaz had already investigated and made plans to be her redeemer. He was more than willing. **Ruth 3:13 NAS** - "if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives."
3. The other kinsman was not willing. He had the means but was unwilling. An interesting note: this man remains unnamed and unknown. In his unwillingness to serve as kinsman redeemer he forfeited the chance to be in the lineage of our Lord. **Ruth 4:3-6 NAU** - "Then he said to the closest relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. <sup>4</sup> "So I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.'" And he said, "I will redeem it." <sup>5</sup> Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance." <sup>6</sup> The closest relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, because I would jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it."

4. Boaz was willing. He could have found many loopholes. He was not Mahlon's brother. He was under no legal obligation. And Mahlon had married Ruth illegally. She was a Moabite. But he had chosen Ruth.  
**Ruth 3:18 NAU** - "Wait, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out; for the man will not rest until he has settled it today."
- B. Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, was willing to redeem us. He wanted to redeem us.
1. Jesus set His heart upon us from eternity. He came redeem His people.  
**Matthew 1:21 NAU** - "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."
  2. With joy, He suffered in our place. It was a willing sacrifice.  
**Hebrews 12:2 NAU** - "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."  
**John 15:13 NAU** - "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."
  3. Simply put, Jesus loves us. We are His beloved, His precious Bride
- III. He had to be able to redeem
- A. A kinsman redeemer had to have the means to redeem
1. Redemption required paying all the debts in order to receive the land  
**Leviticus 25:25-28 NAU**- "if a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold.
  2. As we've seen, the near kinsman was able but unwilling. Boaz was wealthy, willing and able.  
**Ruth 2:1 NAU** - "Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz."
  3. I'm sure Naomi probably had plenty of poor relatives. But Boaz was a man of means. He was willing and he was able.
  4. And we might note, he had to be able to provide the legal tender – that which is acceptable. You couldn't buy back a piece of land using the tender of Babylon.
- B. Jesus Christ was willing and more than able
1. His blood was of infinite value.
  2. Peter referred to it as precious – far above all silver and gold  
**1 Peter 1:18-19 NAU** - "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, <sup>19</sup> but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."
  3. Our Redeemer had to be spotless, infinitely pure and holy. Only Jesus was able to meet this requirement. He alone has fully met the demands of the Law.  
**Hebrews 7:25-26 NAU** - "Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. <sup>26</sup> For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;"

4. His blood was the only sufficient payment. Nothing else would do  
At the heart of saving faith is our confidence that He is able.  
**2 Timothy 1:12 NAU** - "for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day."

Conclusion:

1. One of the wonderful aspects of the kinsman redeemer was the right of inheritance. The first-born child produced in the marriage would be the rightful heir of the deceased husband.
2. The kinsman who was nearer than Boaz was not willing to jeopardize his estate. He was not willing to share his inheritance. Perhaps he had other children.  
**Ruth 4:6 NAU** - "I cannot redeem it for myself, because I would jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it."
3. Jesus has purchased for us an inheritance, unfading and imperishable. We are heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. He was not ashamed to share His infinite wealth with us.  
**Romans 8:16-17 NAU** - "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him."