

## **Ruth Chapter 4: Jesus Christ, Our Perfect Kinsman Redeemer**

When we last saw Ruth, she was incomplete. She still lacked security, someone to redeem her.

But God in His greatness and goodness not only saw Ruth's need, but too, was looking ahead and seeing Israel's need for a king, and even further, the world's need for a Savior.

He was not just providing a solution for Ruth and Naomi's problem, but was paving the way for salvation—the solution to the world's sin problem.

### **He must be a relative.**

Boaz had a major obstacle to overcome. There was another kinsman even closer than he who had first rights to redeem Ruth.

Back in those days, the city gate was much like the small town courthouses we see today. Boaz, knowing he would eventually see this other kinsman there, would be able to take to him to court right then and there to settle the matter.

The text doesn't give us the other kinsman's name. Surly, Boaz knew his name. They both lived in Bethlehem were both related to Elimelech.

Because both men were related to Elimelech, this made them eligible to be a kinsman redeemer.

In order for Jesus to come and redeem us, he had to become related to us. He had to become flesh and blood.

His flesh not only made Him related to us, but made Him relatable to us. Jesus' humanness made him understand ours and He now intercedes on our behalf.

### **He must be willing.**

Boaz knowing that property had to be redeemed before a person could be redeemed makes this the first priority in his proposal, asking the kinsman if he will redeem it, since he is first in line.

When the kinsman says he will indeed redeem the land, Boaz then states that a Moabite woman is attached to the property. To gain the property he must also marry her.

Mosaic Law stated that an Ammonite or a Moabite could not enter the congregation of the Lord. By this man redeeming Ruth, it would jeopardize his own property and everything he owned.

Also, if Ruth and he had children, he would have to split his estate between them and his other children before her. Seeing what was at stake, the man was not willing to go through with it.

The same risk also applied to Boaz.

Boaz loved Ruth and was willing to make the sacrifice. He was willing to lose it all as long as he got Ruth for His very own.

Just as Jesus loved us. He willingly left his home, His glory and gave up everything, including his own life, that we, as outsiders, can be redeemed, set free. He willingly lost it all, to make you and I His very own.

When God asks us to step out in faith, we often, like this other kinsman, step back and view it in light of what we have to lose instead of what we have to gain.

In those moments, we are motivated by fear, rather than love, leaning on our own understanding. And like this other kinsman, in trying to protect ourselves and hold on to our security, we lose something far greater.

If we truly love our Savior, we won't view God's plans for our life in light of what we have to lose or gain, rather we view them in light of Jesus—worthy of everything.

At the time, neither this kinsman nor Boaz knew that indeed a lasting name was at stake. The family line of Boaz and Ruth would expand to include Obed, then Jesse, then David, and eventually Jesus. But in trying to protect his name and all that he owned, this other kinsman would forever remain nameless.

### **He must be free.**

Certain conditions had to be met before Boaz could act on Ruth's behalf.

Though Boaz was willing and waiting to redeem Ruth, she first had to claim him as her redeemer.

In chapter 3, Ruth boldly came to Boaz and professed to him her acknowledgment of him being her redeemer and was asking him to do so.

In the same way Christ cannot redeem us until we claim Him and acknowledge Him as our redeemer and ask Him to do so, then and only then is He free to free us.

In order for Boaz to be free to redeem Ruth, there had to be a public exchange whereas Boaz acted upon Ruth's behalf. Witnesses were needed to testify years later that indeed this transaction took place.

When this kinsman took off his sandal and handed it to Boaz, in that moment, Boaz was indeed acting on Ruth's behalf.

In the same way there was a public exchange when Christ acted upon our behalf on the cross, and witnesses were there to testify that the transaction did in fact take place. But, it was not a sandal that was exchanged, it was our sin that He gladly took and gave us His righteousness, so that **we** could become His bride.

### **He must be able.**

Resources: Esther and Ruth by Iain M. Duguid; The book of Ruth by Robert L. Hubbard Jr.; Ruth by J. Vernon McGee; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary; NLT Parallel Study Bible; [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com); [www.ministry127.com](http://www.ministry127.com)

Ruth is no longer known as the Moabite woman, but now is known as Boaz's wife. She has been given a new identity and freedom that she was unable to give herself. But Boaz was.

Boaz being a wealthy man was able to pay the price for Ruth, just as Jesus, rich in every way, paid the price for us. A price we cannot afford.

But unlike Boaz who paid from his abundance and without agony, Christ paid with His own life. The shedding of his blood bought our freedom and paid for our eternal redemption.

Boaz had to overcome obstacles in redeeming Ruth, but Christ overcame the world. There's nothing He can't do.

For 10 years Ruth had been unable to bear a son for her husband, Mahlon, but now the Lord was able and opened her womb and she gave birth to Obed.

Obed signifies Naomi's emptiness in the beginning of the story that has now been exchanged with joy and fullness through God's grace and goodness at that end of the story.

Naomi took to him and cared for Obed as though he were her own. And though she had to lose two sons, she gained one who was better than seven sons. Even more, she grew in her love and knowledge of God.

As we look back on the story of Ruth, we see one of loss and tragedy turned into fullness and triumph by God's marvelous grace.

No matter how far away we stray from the Lord, no matter how bitter we may become, the Lord still loves and cares for us. No situation is too far gone for the Lord to turn around.

Nobody, no matter who you are or what you have done, is excluded from His redeeming love.

## Homework Questions

1. How does Jesus becoming related to us make Him relatable to us?
2. How does knowing that Jesus became human in flesh and blood bring you comfort?
3. Read Hebrews 2: 10-18. What truths speak to you most in this passage and why?
4. Do you often think about Jesus interceding on your behalf? Why or why not? How does knowing that He intercedes for you bring you encouragement in your walk with Him?
5. Read Isaiah 43: 1-4. How do these verses speak of our Savior's love for you?
6. When it comes to being faithful to Jesus, are you motivated more by love or by fear? Explain.
7. Reflect back on the story of Ruth, in what ways did Boaz put Ruth's interest above his own.
8. When we lean on God's understanding and not our own, we see the way to fullness runs through emptiness. Explain.
9. How does loving with a Christ like love make us selfless, instead of selfish?

10. When the other kinsman declined his right to redeem the land and Ruth, do you think he was acting selfishly or was merely looking out for his own children? Explain.
  
11. Explain why we must first claim Christ as our Redeemer, before He can redeem us.
  
12. Why do you think there had to be a public exchange in order for Boaz to redeem Ruth and Christ to redeem us?
  
13. In the story of Ruth we see that Christ is able. He opened Ruth's womb after 10 years of being childless. In what ways in your life have you seen Christ able? Take a moment to pause, pray, and praise Him for His work in your life.
  
14. Discuss why Obed was better to Naomi than seven sons.
  
15. How does the story of Ruth encourage you to look past your current struggles and see the faithfulness and goodness of our God?
  
16. Read Matthew 1: 1-17. List the women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus. What are some similarities they possess? What does their inclusion in the lineage of Jesus tell us about our God?