

To Buy or Not To Buy
Ruth 3:14-4:6
August 22, 2018

Introduction

Last week, we studied the verses where Ruth and Naomi executed their plan to request that Boaz redeem them. Ruth took what, for that time period, would have been a big risk. She went down to the threshing floor where Boaz was guarding his grain at night. Unannounced, she uncovered Boaz's feet when he was sleeping. Then she lay down next to him and waited for him to wake up.

Look at verses 3:8-13.

⁸ At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! ⁹ He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings^[a] over your servant, for you are a redeemer."

¹⁰ And he said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. ¹² And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. ¹³ Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."

Verses 12 and 13 had some new information that complicated the situation. We learned at least one reason why Boaz had yet to redeem Ruth. Another person was closer in line.

In one sense, that meant that Ruth and Naomi's fundamental need for rest was already resolved. One way or another, Ruth and Naomi would be provided for, whether by means of Boaz or this other person. Yet in another sense, we are still in suspense about Ruth's future. Would Ruth end up with Boaz or with this mysterious stranger instead? Even though we have not yet met him, we instinctively feel that he couldn't possibly be the right man for her.¹

¹ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 180.

This must have been a bitter blow to Ruth, who at this point was surely feeling that things had been progressing rather well.... But ... Boaz would take care of this unwanted and unexpected complication. In the morning, he would approach the man and sound him out.... If he were not absolutely delighted to undertake [redeem Ruth and Naomi], then Boaz swore that he would do it himself. One way or another, Naomi and Ruth would certainly be taken care of.²

Tonight, we will look at some of the interaction between Boaz and this closer relative. What will this relative do when Boaz asks whether the relative will redeem Ruth and Naomi? For this closer relative, to buy or not to buy, that is the question.

Let's read verses 3:14-4:6. In verse 14, Ruth is still laying at Boaz's feet.

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. ¹⁶ And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, ¹⁷ saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" ¹⁸ She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."

4 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. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³ 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. ⁴ So I thought I would tell you of it and say, '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^[a] 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." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth^[b] the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." ⁶ 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."

² Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 174.

The ... purpose of the Book of Ruth is to teach us about redemption, more specifically, to teach us about Christ, our Kinsman Redeemer.... Boaz had spotted Ruth in his fields. He took care of Ruth and provided for her. Ruth came to Boaz on the threshing floor and asked him to take her for his wife. He wanted her and was determined to have her; but the law of God had to be honored.³

The Plentiful Ration

We will break tonight's verses into four sections. In verses 3:14-15, we see the plentiful ration—the plentiful ration.

Look at verses 14 and 15 again.

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city.

Ruth ... arises early in the morning while it is still dark. She does this '*before one could recognize another*'. In other words, the field workers will soon begin to stir, and they will start ... to make preparations for the work of the day. They may ... draw the wrong conclusions if they see Ruth.... This would ... be seen as inappropriate and scandalous, even though the activity there has truly been above board.⁴

Boaz realizes the danger of rumor and gossip. Nothing that he and Ruth have done is wrong, but he is concerned about how people might view it. The scene could develop into scandal, and Boaz wants to protect Ruth's good reputation.... Boaz makes a general comment: '*Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.*' This is perhaps an internal speech; he is speaking to his own heart to guard what he says and to protect Ruth from scandal. Or it may be that some of the workers are nearby, and perhaps Boaz is commanding them not to speak of what they have seen.⁵

³ Don Fortner, *Discovering Christ in Ruth: Christ Our Kinsman Redeemer* (Danville, KY: Don Fortner, 2007), 108.

⁴ John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 110.

⁵ John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 110–111.

Before he sends Ruth home, he gives her some grain. She carries it in her garment. The original word translated as “garment” there is a different word than the one used for her outer garment. Some versions translate it as a shawl. It had to be large enough to hold some grain, but small enough that Ruth could still manage to carry it when it was full of grain.

The text tells us that Boaz gave Ruth six measures of barley, but it doesn’t say what the unit of measure was. Several commentaries spend too much time trying to guess the unit of measure. Suffice it to say that the amount could have been anywhere from six handfuls of grain to eighty pounds or more.

Regardless of how much grain he sent, Boaz’s gift to Ruth would have been enough for Boaz to confirm his intentions. We’ll see from the next section that Naomi definitely understood the message conveyed by the grain gift.

The Positive Reassurance

In the next section of the lesson, we see the positive reassurance, the positive reassurance.

Boaz could have denied Ruth’s request and sent her home empty handed. Instead, he sent her home with a gift. That in itself is positive reassurance. If Ruth had any doubts about that, Naomi’s words to her provide positive reassurance of their own.

Look at verses 16 and 17.

¹⁶ And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, “How did you fare, my daughter?” Then she told her all that the man had done for her, ¹⁷ saying, “These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, ‘You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’” ¹⁸ She replied, “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today.”

If Ruth and Boaz had been deprived of sleep that night, no doubt the same was true of Naomi. The one who had concocted this scheme probably lay awake all night wondering how her daughter-in-law was faring.⁶

⁶ Daniel Isaac Block, *Judges, Ruth*, vol. 6, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 699.

Ruth gives [Naomi] an account of the proceedings, and then shows her the six measures of barley Boaz had given to her. The grain serves as a token and pledge, not only to Ruth, but to Naomi as well. It is a visible sign of his promise. Of course, it also [provides] food for a household in need.⁷

Ruth closes her account to Naomi by quoting Boaz. He had given the barley to Ruth, and then said to her that it would not be right for her to return to Naomi *'empty-handed'*. This is the same word that was used back in 1:21, where Naomi declares that the Lord has brought her back to Bethlehem *'empty'*.... No longer will she be *'empty'*, but Naomi now has Boaz's pledge that redemption will come this very day. The fullness of the grain pledge points to the fullness of Boaz's promise.⁸

Both women [are concerned about] whether or not the nearer kinsman will exercise the rights of a redeemer, buy the field, and marry Ruth.... Realizing that nothing is to be gained by fretfully pacing the floor, Naomi counsels Ruth to sit still and await the outcome of the events that will soon transpire at the city gate.⁹

Naomi understands the significance of the grain as a pledge, or token, of Boaz's word. She knows that he is a man of integrity, and that he will *'not rest'* until the matter is brought to its proper conclusion.... He will take care of the issue of redemption, even at a time when his business affairs are so demanding. The work at the threshing floor is urgent and pressing, but Boaz will first take care of the matter of Ruth. This demonstrates where his heart is.... Doing what is right for Ruth is more important than any business.¹⁰

We see a big difference in Naomi here. Fairly recently, she had been convinced that God was out to get her. Now she is willing to wait calmly and to trust God for the outcome.

⁷ John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 112.

⁸ John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 112.

⁹ "Preface," in *Ruth: A Story of God's Grace: An Expository Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 99.

¹⁰ John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 112–113.

The Possible Redeemer

We have seen the plentiful ration and the positive reassurance. Now, it is time for us to meet the possible redeemer—the possible redeemer.

We meet the possible redeemer in the first four verses of chapter four. Listen to those verses again.

4 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. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down. ³ 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. ⁴ So I thought I would tell you of it and say, ‘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^[a] 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.”

In [ancient times, the gate] was the place where legal matters were decided by the elders of the city. Excavations at Iron Age sites in Israel have uncovered a number of gateways with built-in benches where the elders would sit in judgement (such as at Megiddo and Gezer). The elders met at the gate because it was the focus of great activity.... Traders with goods and news first came through the gate area; often the central square or piazza of the town would be situated right next to the gate.¹¹

Verse one gives us another subtle example of God’s providence. Shortly after Boaz sat down at the gate, the possible redeemer happened to come by. The ESV says that Boaz referred to the possible redeemer as “friend.” The literal translation of the Hebrew word is more vague than that.

This word in Hebrew is quite vague, and it literally means ‘whoever’, or ‘such and such’, [or so and so. Perhaps the omission of the relative’s name is] a mark of shame. He has not done his duty with regard to redemption, and so he brings disrepute on his own name.¹²

¹¹ John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 118.

¹² John Currid, *From Bitter to Sweet*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England; Grand Rapids, MI: EP Books, 2012), 118.

[Boaz's other opening words signify] that he has something of a legal nature to discuss with him. He courteously asks his kinsman to take a seat and then impanels ten trustworthy elders of the city.¹³

Once Boaz had his [relative] seated in front of a panel of witnesses, the elders of the people, he immediately broached the subject of their kinswoman Naomi and her future.... [We could paraphrase Boaz's words] like this:

"Naomi has a field. She needs to sell it to raise money to live on. If there were a kinsman redeemer, however, he could buy that field and keep it in the family. Of course, the buyer would ultimately get to add the property to his own inheritance, provided that there are no children involved. You are first in line.... Are you interested?"¹⁴

No doubt Boaz wished personally to marry Ruth. She appealed to him. The qualities of her character matched his own. He, therefore, faced a tension between his personal desires and his familial duty. How was this tension to be resolved? Certainly not by ignoring the rights of others or having a clandestine relationship. The tension was resolved by doing the right thing in the right way.¹⁵

Boaz's dealings with the kinsman illustrate [a quote from Richard Watson].... "A good man will have everything done with perfect openness and honor and will stand by the result whether it meets his hopes or disappoints them."¹⁶

At first, the [situation] takes an apparent turn for the worst! Emphatically, the kinsman-redeemer says, 'I will redeem it' (*verse 4*). This was highly predictable. [Because] it is unlikely that Naomi will have a child, purchase of the land would increase the kinsman-redeemer's real estate. Few able to do so would have passed up the opportunity now being offered!¹⁷

¹³ "Preface," in *Ruth: A Story of God's Grace: An Expositional Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 100–101.

¹⁴ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 181–182.

¹⁵ "Preface," in *Ruth: A Story of God's Grace: An Expositional Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 104.

¹⁶ "Preface," in *Ruth: A Story of God's Grace: An Expositional Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 103.

¹⁷ Stephen Dray, *Judges and Ruth*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1997), 153.

The Practical Relative

Boaz is not quite finished discussing the matter with his relative, though. In the last section we will cover to night, the possible redeemer turns into the practical relative—the practical relative. Look at verses five and six again.

⁵ Then Boaz said, “The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth^[b] the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.” ⁶ 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.”

Boaz’s integrity kept his task in perspective and his desires in their place. As a result, his emotions did not obstruct his reason. He could make the basic issues known to his kinsman; and then because he was able to control the pace as well as the content of the meeting, he could advise his relative of a responsibility that accompanied the purchase of the land, namely, marriage to Ruth.¹⁸

Consider why the relative changed his mind after he realizing that he would have to marry Ruth. We touched on it earlier.

[Naomi] was a widow, her sons were dead, and she was beyond childbearing years. To purchase the field from her would then mean that the land would become the property of the kinsman without any fear of it being bought back (i.e., redeemed) by any of Naomi’s descendants. This kinsman, therefore, could add to his present possessions with no legal way of Naomi ever recovering the land.¹⁹

[With Ruth in the picture, buying the land], this is a far less attractive proposition [to the practical relative].... The man would be required to marry Ruth, and the income derived from the land would not go directly to [his] estate. Moreover, his own estate possibly would have to be divided with Ruth’s children.²⁰

¹⁸ “Preface,” in *Ruth: A Story of God’s Grace: An Expository Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 104.

¹⁹ “Preface,” in *Ruth: A Story of God’s Grace: An Expository Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 101.

²⁰ Stephen Dray, *Judges and Ruth*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1997), 153.

What a moment before had seemed to be a “can’t miss” real estate deal—taking care of an old lady in return for the long-term payoff of a field—had suddenly become an investment nightmare. If there were to be a child from the relationship with Ruth, the redeemer would lose the field and there would be no benefit to his own children and estate to compensate for the costs involved in taking care of Naomi and Ruth. In other words, Mr. So-and-So was interested in ministry to the poor only if there was a payoff for himself and his family.²¹

The irony is that by seeking to protect his future legacy in this way, [the practical relative] ended up leaving himself nameless, missing out on having a share in the biggest legacy of all: a place in God’s plan of salvation. Boaz took a different and more sacrificial approach, embracing the opportunity to leave a legacy for someone else.²²

By looking at the situation from a practical perspective, Ian Duguid says that the practical relative missed out on “God’s new math.”

Part of the message of the Book of Ruth is that God’s kingdom operates on ... a “new math” in which the way to fullness runs through emptiness. Mr. So-and-So didn’t do that kind of math, so the numbers didn’t add up for him. He clung to what he had and ... lost something far greater, something he never even dreamed of. By contrast, Naomi earlier lost all of the things she had been clinging on to, all of her earthly “fullness.” Yet even this loss was part of God’s gracious plan for her good. If she had not first lost everything, we would never have known about her, and she would never have come to appreciate Ruth’s true worth, or to grow in her own understanding of the Lord. She had to lose her two sons to appreciate the one who was better than seven sons (Ruth 4:15). The crucible of suffering, painful though it was for her, was necessary for her spiritual growth and her place in God’s plan.²³

²¹ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 182.

²² Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 182.

²³ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 183–184.

Tragedies alone never convert sinners (Rev. 9:20; 16:9–11. The old proverb is true. “Any refuge built in the storm will die in the calm.” Acts of providential judgment do not produce repentance. A good scare will make a man seek a refuge; but it will not change his heart. Though these things are used of God to convert his elect, it is only when they are accompanied by the grace of God and only a saving revelation of Christ in the heart that they change the heart and produce repentance (Zech. 12:10).²⁴

However, God does use providential tragedies, judgments, and dangers to bring chosen sinners to Christ (Psa. 107:1–43)... This fact is beautifully and clearly illustrated in the case of Ruth. Ruth, the chosen object of mercy, a Moabitess, must be saved. Therefore, God sent famine to Bethlehem-Judah. Elimelech went down to Moab. Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth were all widowed. All this [brought] Ruth, the chosen object of mercy, to the place appointed of God for her to obtain mercy.²⁵

In the passages we have studied during the last two lessons, we have seen more and more evidence of how Ruth has put her faith in God. She has not the only one who has revealed her faith, though.

Naomi, Ruth and Boaz all revealed their active faith in what God has said in his Word; they all acted with unselfish, generous, costly kindness. Naomi took the initiative for Ruth’s benefit, not her own. Ruth submitted to Naomi and asked Boaz for protection for Naomi’s benefit and for the sake of her deceased husband. Boaz committed himself to acting for Ruth and Naomi’s benefit. Each of them therefore points us to the Lord Jesus and the greatest act of unselfish, costly, generous kindness—his redeeming death on the cross.²⁶

Earlier, we talked about how the practical relative failed to understand God’s new math. Boaz was different.

²⁴ Don Fortner, *Discovering Christ in Ruth: Christ Our Kinsman Redeemer* (Danville, KY: Don Fortner, 2007), 107.

²⁵ Don Fortner, *Discovering Christ in Ruth: Christ Our Kinsman Redeemer* (Danville, KY: Don Fortner, 2007), 107.

²⁶ Jonathan Prime, *Opening up Ruth*, *Opening Up Commentary* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2007), 75.

Boaz ...was an “A” student at the new math. He had an open heart for the poor. We saw that [in chapter two], in his generous behavior to Ruth when she was just another unknown poor person gleaned in his field. There was nothing calculating about his generosity to her then—just the grace of a generous and cheerful giver. Likewise, Boaz was not marrying Ruth now for what he could get out of the deal. In terms of the financial and social equations, it was always likely to be a losing prospect for him to marry a Moabitess. Entering a relationship so that she could have a son to inherit the property he had just put out good money to buy could never make good fiscal sense. But then, the Lord’s wisdom operates [differently than] the wisdom of the world.²⁷

Conclusion

The kind of practical righteousness Boaz demonstrated is ... often [lacking] in Christian circles. We often lack patience, are selfish, and play “political games” in order to get what we want. Our thoughts and desires are centered on ourselves. We find it easy to excuse our actions. We blame our hang-ups on our parents, our materialism on the economy, and our ... desire for certain things on social trends.... We secretly excuse our conduct by comparing ourselves with other people. We conclude, “Well, I’m not so bad after all.”²⁸

Only as we open our hearts to the searching light of Holy Scripture and compare our conduct with what is revealed in God’s Word do we realize how ... self-centered, and ungodly we may have become.²⁹

[In contrast, Boaz had a] Godward orientation. He lived out his life—faced the effects of a lengthy famine, achieved a reputation for his ability to lead Bethlehem’s band of militia, had a positive influence on his workers, took the initiative when necessary, and conducted himself honorably in a variety of circumstances—conscious all the while that God’s eye was on him.³⁰

²⁷ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 184.

²⁸ “Preface,” in *Ruth: A Story of God’s Grace: An Expositional Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 104.

²⁹ “Preface,” in *Ruth: A Story of God’s Grace: An Expositional Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 104.

³⁰ “Preface,” in *Ruth: A Story of God’s Grace: An Expositional Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 105.

The story of Ruth and Boaz is about character more than it is about love.

The commitment that Ruth and Boaz had to one another was built on their common character, which is always a much better foundation for a lasting relationship.... Theirs was a character match, not a love match: they were both people of substance.³¹

The Book of Ruth does have a real love story, though. We have been watching it unfold for several weeks. We will see it conclude next week.

The real love story is behind the scenes. It is the love of God for his straying sheep. It is the love that prevented him from simply ending the world when Adam and Eve first sinned. It is the love that chose and called Abraham and then persisted in pursuing his rebellious offspring. It is the love that would not let them go, in spite of their centuries-long history of rebellion and idolatry. This love causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall. In the lives of God's children, this love feeds us our daily food and clothes us. In his providence, his love may bring us godly friends [and family] to encourage us.... For all these good gifts of God's love, we should be truly thankful.³²

This love took its fullest shape in the coming of Jesus Christ. His love for us took him much further than a grain pile at midnight. It caused him to leave the glories of heaven and come down and live as an ordinary worker. It led him to come as a baby to Bethlehem, where he found no refuge. Unlike Ruth, there was no place of rest for Jesus in Bethlehem, no godly Boaz to protect him. Instead, he had to make do with a temporary place in a stable, before he was driven out, having to flee for his life even when he was a baby. And this love caused Jesus to abandon his eternal glory and become a servant, someone who was of no reputation, despised and rejected by men.³³

³¹ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 178.

³² Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 178.

³³ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 178.

[As we discussed earlier], this same love of God took Jesus all the way to the cross. There, ... he offered himself up for the sins of his people. There he was abandoned by God the Father, who turned aside his face because he would not and could not look upon his own Son, disfigured as he was by bearing our sin. Jesus didn't just risk his life; he gave it.... [He gave it because] this was the only way it could be done.... God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life (see John 3:16). [That is] God's covenant faithfulness to the undeserving.³⁴

For those of us who have acted more like the practical relative than a follower of God, God will forgive us of that, too, when we repent. We can be forgiven of those sins and any other sin because like Ruth, we have a kinsman-redeemer.

As good as Boaz was to Ruth, our redeemer is much better.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our one and only kinsman Redeemer. The Son of God has made himself our kinsman that he might be our Redeemer (2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 2:10–18). He took our human nature into union with his divine nature, so that he might redeem us from the curse of the law by the sacrifice of himself. Someone once said, "God could not suffer and man could not satisfy; but the God man has both suffered and satisfied." The Lord Jesus Christ, our kinsman Redeemer, has willingly done the kinsman's part for us. Christ is a willing Savior. He willingly became Jehovah's servant, because he loved us (Ex. 21:1–5).³⁵

He is an able Savior, too. (Heb. 7:25). He has done everything for us that the law of God required a kinsman to do. He paid our debt. He redeemed us from bondage. He married the desolate. He raised up children to the dead, a seed to serve him forever. The love of Christ for us far exceeds the love of any on this earth. "*We love him because he first loved us*" (1 John 4:19).³⁶

³⁴ Iain M. Duguid, *Esther and Ruth*, ed. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 178–179.

³⁵ Don Fortner, *Discovering Christ in Ruth: Christ Our Kinsman Redeemer* (Danville, KY: Don Fortner, 2007), 112.

³⁶ Don Fortner, *Discovering Christ in Ruth: Christ Our Kinsman Redeemer* (Danville, KY: Don Fortner, 2007), 112.

Hebrews 7:24 and 25 tell us this about our kinsman-redeemer.

²⁴ but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

In verse one of chapter four, Boaz interceded for Ruth once at the city gate. That intercession was important, but you can see that we have an even better intercessor. Our intercessor always lives to make intercession for us.

What should be our response to our redeemer. We heard it just a little while ago. You probably recognized 1 John 4:19.

¹⁹ We love him because he first loved us.

Next Week: Full Circle (Ruth 4:7-22)