

Apart but Together Worship 25th October – Ruth Chapter 4

Good morning and welcome to our service this morning where we continue, and conclude, our series on the Old Testament book of Ruth.

As we begin, we recognise that the Bible is central to our faith, and we believe it is God inspired to help us to understand more about God, his character, his love and his plan for us all. We begin our service then with our call to Worship from Isaiah 51 vs 11:

Call to worship:

Those whom you have rescued
will reach Jerusalem with gladness,
singing and shouting for joy.
They will be happy forever,
forever free from sorrow and grief.

This morning, we will be looking at Ruth chapter 4, and I am hoping to bring out what it means to be redeemed. Our first hymn introduces this concept in verse 3. It says:

And as he stands in victory
sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
for I am his and he is mine –
**bought with the precious
blood of Christ.**

Let's listen to In Christ Alone: [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Opening Prayer:

Dear Father,

We thank you for everyone gathered here now – here in the building, or with us online. Thank you that you know each of us by name and have caused us to walk with You. We say that we are dependant on You and our trust is in You completely. As we surrender ourselves in adoration we ask that You would come by Your Holy Spirit and inspire our hearts today. Come fill our lives with Your love, Fill our conversations with Your grace and truth, Fill this meeting with Your presence. We ask this for Your glory and praise.
Amen.

We say now together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father
Who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom
The power and the glory
For ever and ever
Amen

Reading

Our reading today is Ruth Chapter 4. If you remember from last week, we finished with Boaz promising to go and meet the guardian redeemer of Ruth and find out if he was willing to marry Ruth following the death of her husband. If not, he promised her he himself would marry her.

“Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat down there just as the guardian-redeemer he had mentioned came along. Boaz said, “Come over here, my friend, and sit down.” So he went over and sat down.

2 Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, “Sit here,” and they did so. 3 Then he said to the guardian-redeemer, “Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelek. 4 I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line.”

“I will redeem it,” he said.

5 Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the[c] dead man’s widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property.”

6 At this, the guardian-redeemer said, “Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it.”

7 (Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.)

8 So the guardian-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal.

9 Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelek, Kilion and Mahlon. 10 I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from his hometown. Today you are witnesses!"

11 Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. 12 Through the offspring the Lord gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. 14 The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! 15 He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth."

16 Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. 17 The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 This, then, is the family line of Perez:

Perez was the father of Hezron,

19 Hezron the father of Ram,

Ram the father of Amminadab,

20 Amminadab the father of Nahshon,

Nahshon the father of Salmon,[d]

21 Salmon the father of Boaz,

Boaz the father of Obed,

22 Obed the father of Jesse,

and Jesse the father of David.

There is lots we could look at in the chapter this morning. I would like to focus though on this term "guardian redeemer" – what it means for Ruth and what it means for us today.

So, what does this word REDEEM mean? It can mean different things in different situations.

Have you ever won anything? A voucher maybe – did you have to REDEEM the voucher ie. Exchange it for some other goods or services.

It can sometime mean to make someone or something less bad ie. He was an hour late, but he redeemed himself in her eyes by giving her a huge bunch of flowers.

We heard the term in our reading earlier “Guardian redeemer”. The guardian-redeemer is a male relative who, according to various laws of the Old Testament, had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need. The Hebrew word (go el) for guardian-redeemer is a legal term for one who has the obligation to redeem a relative in serious difficulty. The guardian who redeems or vindicates a relative is illustrated most clearly in the book of Ruth, where the guardian-redeemer is Boaz.

We will consider this further later.

Now, we will listen to our second hymn based on our call to worship earlier from Isaiah 51 v11. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Boaz the Redeemer – Ruth Chapter 4

So today we continue the story of Ruth. We will see that Ruth was not wanted by her closest guardian redeemer, but Boaz valued her. Boaz redeemed her. We will see that Boaz behaves in a way that reflects the characteristics of Christ, who values us so much he was willing to pay the highest price in order to redeem us.

In this chapter, we see Boaz demonstrating many good characteristics, but unfortunately we don't have time to cover them all.

So, I will be focussing on Boaz's most significant character trait as shown to us in this chapter.

If you were to read through chapter four looking for a key word, you would probably notice that a form of the word redeem is mentioned ten times. And the concept of redemption is mentioned several more times. This concept was introduced early in the Old Testament, let's read:

Deuteronomy 25:5-10 – “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. “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. “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.’“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,’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.’“In Israel his name shall be called, ‘The house of him whose sandal is removed.’”

God instituted what is often called Levirate marriage as a way to protect and take care of widows and also keep alive the deceased's name and inheritance. In the text, we see that a brother is the first one responsible in this. By the time of Ruth, the Jews had expanded that to members of the extended family. As we see in this passage, this was optional. A man could decide he didn't want to do this. Then what? In Ruth we see that then they went to the next in line.

Boaz was the second in line. He was not the only person able to do this by the law, but he was the only one willing to do it. When the first said, "I cannot redeem it," then Boaz happily agreed to. This passage is the culmination of a beautiful story of redemption.

Boaz is a figure in the Old Testament whom clearly portrays some aspect of Christ and His relationship to us. The aspect that Boaz portrays is **Christ as our redeemer**.

I would like to spend a few minutes considering this further. How can we draw parallels here to our relationship to Christ?

- There is only one redeemer. They could not both redeem Ruth. The first in line and then Boaz, second in line, could not both redeem her – only one of them come do it. Boaz stepped up to save Ruth. In parallel, Jesus is the only one who is qualified to redeem us. He is the only one who can save us.
- Redemption is an act of grace – Boaz was not required to redeem Ruth. He chose to. Jesus' sacrifice for us a willing choice.
- Redemption is public – Boaz redeemed Ruth publicly in the sight of all. Jesus redeemed us publicly on the cross.
- Redemption is an act of love – Boaz clearly loved Ruth. He cared for her. He wanted the best for her. Being a Moabite, she was not someone that most men would have chosen to love, but Boaz did. Jesus too loved us while we were still sinners.
- Redemption comes with a price – The redeemer must give something up. Money was required to purchase the field. But it also required giving up one's own rights. The relative was not willing to redeem Ruth because he was not willing to give up his rights. He wanted to pass his own land down to his children who had his own name. Boaz was willing to pay this price. And Jesus was willing to pay a far greater price for us, His own blood.
- Redemption is priceless – Redemption cannot be paid for. Ruth had no money to offer. She was a peasant. She could never pay Boaz back. We too can never pay Christ back for His redemption of us. It is completely unearned and undeserved.
- Redemption is irreversible – At the end of the passage the other relative removed his sandal and gave it to Boaz. The deal had been made. There was no going back. The decision was final. Once Jesus saves us, we are saved. Once He brings us into His family, He will not toss us out again.
- Redemption must be accepted – Ruth had to be willing to accept Boaz. In this story, Ruth asks Boaz to redeem her. If Ruth did not want him, then it would not

have happened. So although Boaz does all the work and pays the price himself, it is still a two-way road. Both sides had to agree. Ruth had to say “yes.” Jesus’ redemption of us is the same. He pays the price. He does all the work. But you must still be willing to say, “yes.” Have you already said “yes” to Jesus? If not, I hope that today will be the day that you say “yes” to Him.

What is the result for Boaz? Look at verses 11-12. Boaz receives a great blessing from all the people who witness this. They bless him with a great family and a great house. The blessing came true. We see in the closing genealogy that Boaz was the great-grandfather of David. And that means that all the kings of Judah were descended from Boaz and Jesus himself was too.

Therefore, Boaz was remembered. He did indeed become famous just like they said in verse 12. Boaz did not do this out of selfish motivations. He was selfless. From the very beginning he treated Ruth and Naomi with compassion. He selflessly gave what he had. And in the end God gave him much more blessings than he ever had before. What an amazing demonstration of God's plan for the world in action through Ruth and Boaz.

I want to remember Naomi here too..

The picture in these verses in Chapter 4 is quite different from back in chapter 1. In chapter 1 she and her family left Israel, the Promised Land, for Moab. She came back empty. In verse 20 of chapter one she says, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has afflicted me.”

In chapter 1 she is bitter and resentful and tells the people to call her “Mara,” which means bitter. We saw in previous weeks that Naomi would be blessed for returning to her source in the Lord. Here in chapter four we see this coming true. She is not empty and bitter. Her cup is full. She is blessed by the Lord. Her neighbours once again call her “Naomi,” which means “pleasant.” Back in chapter one she says, “Don’t call me pleasant! I am bitter.” This time she doesn’t correct them because her bitterness is gone.

Application

In God’s presence there is fullness of joy. At His right hand are pleasures forevermore. Are you like Mara or Naomi right now? Perhaps you find that are not very satisfied. Maybe you don’t feel content. You feel that your life is empty and you lack joy. Each day may be a struggle with feelings of bitterness or resentment. If that is the case, I encourage you to consider your relationship with the Lord. Maybe like Mara, you have left the good things He has prepared for you and gone off on your own. But don’t stay there. Today you have a chance to come back to the Lord. You can come empty handed. God will accept you and fill you and give you His joy. If you came to church today feeling empty, then I hope you will go away full.

John 1:17 – Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.

So what about Ruth??

Ruth was redeemed. Here is a girl who grew up in a culture of idol worshipers. Her culture and her family were clouded in darkness. It seemed that the chances of her knowing the true God were very small. Fast forward a few years. Now she is a follower of God. He accepted her and this is symbolized in the fact that Boaz accepted her. She was no longer an outsider. She was married to one of the most respectable men in the city.

Next, she received one amazing blessing and one amazing compliment. In verse 11 the people ask the Lord to bless her as Rachel and Leah, two of the matriarchs of Israel. A foreign woman was elevated to a very high status as one of the important family members of the house of Israel, just like we too are elevated to a high status when God adopts us as His children.

And in verse 15 she is given an amazing compliment. The people say she is better than seven sons! If she wasn't already sparkling on her wedding day, or when she gave birth to a son, surely she must have sparkled when she heard this!

Next Notice who gets the top praise for this. In verse 14 the people say, "Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer." They recognize that this amazing story we have been studying is made possible because of the Lord.

Application: When everything seems to be going well, and you receive what you long for, do not forget to give thanks to God. He is the one who makes it all possible.

So we have looked at Boaz, Ruth and Naomi, what about the other person in our passage today. Jesus. He is not mentioned by name, but few passages in the Old Testament point to Jesus as clearly as this one does. We have already seen that Boaz shows us the characteristics of Christ. Boaz redeemed Ruth. It cost him financially. He gave up something to get her. But he loved her. The price was worth it to him.

Boaz valued Ruth when others didn't. In the New Testament a place called Gehenna is translated as hell 12 times. Jesus used this place as a representation of the eternal lake of fire which face those who don't believe in him. What was Gehenna? Gehenna was actually Jerusalem's garbage burner. A fire burned there continually to burn up all the rubbish the city produced. Jesus redeemed us from this rubbish pit. He viewed us as a treasure worth dying for.

Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrated His own love for us in this, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

And Ephesians 1:7 says, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace."

Jesus paid a price far greater than Boaz did. He did not have to. Just as Boaz could have legally said, "no, I am not going to redeem you" Jesus could have done the same.

Our sin was our problem, not His. But He loved me. He loved you. He loved you so much that He left all the comforts of heaven and came down to this world to become your guardian redeemer. Then He sacrificed His life by dying on the cross for your sins. He did this willingly and freely.

The word redemption means “the action of gaining or regaining possession of something in exchange for payment, the clearing of a debt.”

Jesus paid the ultimate price for you. How will you respond?

In closing today, I would like to share three ways we should respond to Jesus’ offer of redemption.

1. If you are here today and you have not yet accepted Jesus’ offer to redeem you, then please don’t wait. It is a free gift. You must simply come to Jesus in prayer. Confess your sins to Him. Tell Him that you are willing to receive His free offer of forgiveness. If you have any questions at all about this or would like to talk more then please see me after the service and I will be happy to talk with you.
2. If you already received Jesus’ offer of redemption, then are you satisfied? Are you sparkling? Do you realize how blessed you are? God has filled your life with good gifts – love, hope, respect and peace. You have much to be thankful for. Do you agree? Then tell God that. Resolve right now to be like Naomi, pleasant. Not Mara.
3. The greatest thing that has ever been done for you is Jesus redeeming you with His own life. He brought you from far away into His own family. This is good news! What should you do with good news? You should spread it. Have you told anyone lately about Jesus’ offer of redemption? Imagine if each one of us resolved to this week tell at least one person about what Jesus has done for them. That would be lots of people in our community hearing the good news. What are we waiting for? Let’s share the good news.

Amen

And now we come to our Intercessory prayer

Intercessory Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father

We pray now for your church, here in Hornsea and across the world. Help us to be a church that WORSHIPS GOD....to declare your praise.....to lift up the name of Jesus.....to focus on you Lord God, and to listen to what you have to say.

We have seen how you had a plan for Ruth, and Boaz, and how you also have a plan for us.

Heavenly Father

We, your church, seek to be a community of people loving each other, accepting one another, serving one another, and encouraging one another. Help us to live in harmony with one another and submit to one another.

Help us to be the church that cares for one another, and for those in our community – just like Boaz did as guardian redeemer. We pray this will bring glory to you O God and your kingdom will grow as people are drawn to it.

Thank you for your church, and that we can share together, fellowship together, worship together and pray together – whether face to face, online or via the phone.

We pause now, to bring before you those in our congregation or in our hearts – asking for your grace, love and comfort in each situation.

And finally, Lord God, help us to be a church eager to share the Good news of Jesus. We have the good news to share you love us and sent Jesus to die for our sins so that we can become your children, both now and for all eternity.

Help us to be bold, confident and joyful as with that news as we spread it to our families, our friends, our neighbours, the people of this town, the nation and all over the world.

Lord God, we do this not for ourselves, but for you and for your glory

In Jesus name, Amen

As we close, we have been reminded that Jesus offers us redemption, freely and willingly. Our final hymn reminds us of that great love, where Jesus who paid our ransom, shed for us his precious blood. Let's listen to this version of Here is love, vast as the ocean

Closing Hymn: Here is love, vast as the ocean

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Blessing

We have gathered here today, Lord God as your people to offer you our sacrifice of prayer and worship.

We have fed on your Word, been refreshed through your living water, and felt the encircling of your Spirit around our church and around our individual lives.

May we continue to know your presence and power in all our activities, meetings and

conversations, as we seek to worship you, grow your kingdom and share the good news.

For your praise and glory

Now and evermore, Amen