

REDEEMED
FOR REDEMPTION
RUTH 4



A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Redeemed for Redemption: Ruth 4
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Ruth 4: Introduction

Boaz proves to be the kinsman-redeemer Ruth and Naomi need, as he submits to the Law of God and calls on the elders of his community to do what is right and just.

The pictures of redemption that run throughout this beautiful little book all come into sharp focus in Ruth 4, pointing backwards to the promise of redemption and forwards to the coming of David and beyond.

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We hope you find this study of Ecclesiastes a challenging and stretching experience of journeying more deeply into the Word of God. Thank you for joining us.

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1 In the Gates

Opening Prayer: Psalm 119.5-8

Oh, that my ways were directed
To keep Your statutes!
Then I would not be ashamed,
When I look into all Your commandments.
I will praise You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.
I will keep Your statutes;
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

Pray Psalm 119.5-8

(Ode to Joy: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee)

Let my ways steadfastly keep to all the statutes of Your Word.
Then shall I, no shame enduring, fix my eyes on You, O Lord!
With an upright heart I praise You, in Your rules will I abide.
I will keep Your statutes wholly; keep me ever by Your side.

Read Ruth 4.1, 2

Preparation

1. Where did Boaz go to meet the near-kinsman of Naomi?
2. Besides himself and the kinsman, whom else did he gather?

Meditation

Boaz is a man of his word, as Naomi knew (3.18). Here he set the stage for the climactic events of the story. He had an interest that he wanted to pursue, but only by means of proper procedure. The not-so-subtle message we will gather from this chapter is that blessing and redemption are through obedience to the Law of God.

Boaz would present his case before the elders of the city (v. 2) – those whose experience and example fitted them to render judgments about what was right and good for their community – as they gathered in their customary place at the gates of the city. Gathering in the gates was both practical and symbolic. In the gates, “sunshine” provisions would ensure that all things were open to public scrutiny; such deliberations also provided an opportunity for teaching the community in the Law of God.

Further, in the gates, the elders symbolized their roles as protectors of the flock of God, guarding the goings in and out of the community. The outcome of Boaz’s interest was by no means a foregone conclusion, and he would only be content when the matter was resolved in a just manner. The near-relative, who was next in line to redeem Naomi and her property, was asked to be present (v. 1) so that his interests in the case would be properly represented.

We continue to admire Boaz. He is a great man, not just in material prosperity, but because he is a man under the Law of God and the proper authorities of his community. His is a greatness that comes from faith and obedience. When we remember that these events are unfolding during the time of the judges, when all around anarchy and pragmatism prevailed, it should encourage us that enclaves of grace and truth can flourish even in the worst of times.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Waiting. Being still. Doing sometimes happens best in not doing. Trusting. Sitting.

“Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there...” (vs. 1).

“Come aside, friend, and sit down here” (vs. 1).

“So he came aside and sat down” (vs. 1).

“And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, ‘Sit down here.’ So they sat down” (vs. 2).
As you can see, this activity involved a whole lot of sitting!

Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, seemed to have a sitting skill that pleased Jesus: “...a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.” This particular sitting riled Martha up so much that she complained to Jesus about it. “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me. And Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her’” (Lk. 10.38-42). Sitting. Listening. Learning from Jesus.

And again we meet Mary sitting. After their brother Lazarus died the sisters responded in their usual fashion. “Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.” Martha, in her haste, rushed to judgment and said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” Mary, on the other hand, when she more thoughtfully got up to go meet Jesus “fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” (John 11.20-32)

Waiting is a skill that does not come easily to us. We have to be told to “Be still...” (Ps.46.10) There is much wisdom to be sorted through as we learn, as Boaz did, to invite ourselves and others to sit in the gates, gaining guidance and instruction from the Word of God.

Reflection

1. What does all this “sitting” symbolize? Why was it necessary in Ruth 4?
2. What does it mean to “sit” under God’s Law? To “sit at the feet” of Jesus?
3. How can these two verses help you in praying for the elders and pastors of your church?

This matter depended on the laws given by Moses about inheritances, and doubtless the whole was settled in the regular and legal manner. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Ruth 4.1--8

Lord, Your Law is the way of justice and peace; help me to walk in it today as I...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 119.1-4

Pray that God will direct your steps this day, in everything you do, to obey His Law and all His Word.

Sing Psalm 119.1-4

(Ode to Joy: *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*) |

Blessed are they whose way is blameless, all who walk within God’s Law,

who, His testimonies keeping, seek Him, filled with joy and awe.
These are they who, no wrong doing, ever walk within God's ways.
Lord, Your precepts You command us; we would keep them all our days.

2 Here's the Deal

Opening Prayer: Psalm 119.12-14

Blessed *are* You, O LORD!

Teach me Your statutes.

With my lips I have declared

All the judgments of Your mouth.

I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,

As *much as* in all riches.

Sing Psalm 119.12-14

(Passion Chorale: [*O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*](#))

Be blessed, O God our Savior; teach us Your holy Word!

Our lips proclaim with favor the statutes of the Lord.

How great our joy, dear Jesus, to follow in Your ways.

What more than this could please us, or brighten all our days?

Read Ruth 4.3, 4

Preparation

1. Summarize the issue Boaz raised to the elders and the near-kinsman.
2. How did the kinsman initially respond?

Meditation

Boaz reasoned from Numbers 27.8-11. We don't know the exact relation between Elimelech and the near-kinsman. The statute of Numbers 27, which is an elaboration of the eighth commandment, guided Boaz in thinking through the proper prosecution of the situation. Boaz omitted nothing, though, as we shall see, he unfolded the case in stages. He presented the facts and the interpretation as best he understood them. It would remain for the elders to deliberate and approve whatever course of action might ensue.

It is instructive to consider that Boaz, a businessman with many responsibilities, would have been so well-versed in God's Law. We can also see in his argument that he is a man of grace. A lesser man might have been tempted to lead with what would turn out to be the deal-breaker – the Moabites. But Boaz wanted the redeemer to be able to think clearly about what he might gain or relinquish, without cluttering the case with details he would present at the proper time.

The Law of God is powerful to guide believers in the proper way of serving the Lord in our relationships, roles, and responsibilities. It cannot save; nevertheless, only obedience to the Law and the complete achievement of its righteousness and the satisfaction of its judgments against sin can bring us to salvation. This is what Jesus Christ accomplished on behalf of all who believe. Our story invites us to consider the redemptive power of God's Law at this point; however, it will do so in an even more breathtaking way in just a bit.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

There is a vast difference between property and human life.

Also between wise and unwise business deals.

And Boaz' business deal points this out carefully.

The near-kinsman was all about buying and owning more property but was not so keen on taking on the responsibilities of another person.

I appreciate this about him. His honesty. His integrity. His family.

And Boaz, for his part, was living as Jesus would later expound upon: “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (Matt. 10.16). He was careful with his speech: wise and harmless, yet effective.

He cared about Ruth as a person; he did not need the land as he was already very wealthy. So the way he presented this deal was important. And needed God’s wisdom.

We are given this same wisdom through God’s Word to use in our day-to-day dealings in the world, whether it pertains to people, property, or any other aspect of life.

Paul wrote to Timothy explaining that the Holy Scriptures are “able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3.15-17).

Boaz knew that following the Law of God to the letter was the way to life and peace.

Here’s the Deal. “When a man’s ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him” (Prov. 16.7).

Reflection

1. Boaz had to *interpret* the Law of God into his situation, since it didn’t match the Law exactly. What would you say are the keys to rightly interpreting God’s Law?

2. Why do you think Boaz didn’t mention Ruth at this point in the deliberation?

3. What can you do to bring more of the wisdom and love of God’s Law into your daily life (Ps. 1.1-3)?

Fair and open dealing in all matters of contract and trade, is what all must make conscience of, who would approve themselves true Israelites, without guile. Honesty will be found the best policy. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Ruth 4.1-8*

Lord, let Your Spirit guide me in understanding Your Law and all Your Word, and I will...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 119.12-17

Pray that God will direct your steps this day, in everything you do, to obey His Law and all His Word.

Sing Psalm 119.12-17

(Passion Chorale: [*O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*](#))

We contemplate Your precepts and cherish all Your ways,
delighting in Your statutes, rememb’ring all our days.

With wondrous bounty bless us, Your humble servants, Lord,
that we may live with Jesus and keep His holy Word.

3 Deal-Breaker

Opening Prayer: Psalm 119.174-176

I long for Your salvation, O LORD,
And Your law *is* my delight.
Let my soul live, and it shall praise You;
And let Your judgments help me.
I have gone astray like a lost sheep;
Seek Your servant,
For I do not forget Your commandments.

Sing Psalm 119.174-176

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

For Your saving grace we plead, Lord, and Your Law is our delight.
We to live and praise You need, Lord, all Your help by day and night.
Straying sheep, we do not heed, Lord; come and seek us by Your might!

Read Ruth 4.5, 6

Preparation

1. What went along with the land in this situation?
2. How did the near-kinsman respond?

Meditation

We do not know with certainty what the hindrance was for the near-kinsman. Perhaps he was already married or betrothed. He was concerned that, by marrying Ruth, he would “ruin” his own inheritance. He was under no obligation of the Law to fulfill this duty, since he was obviously only a near relative and not a brother to the deceased, and living in his house. The *letter* of the Law was not at issue here. Boaz and the near-kinsman were seeking to follow the *spirit* of the Law in resolving this matter.

At any rate, he did not seem too troubled by the forfeiture of his right of redemption, and there was nothing duplicitous or underhanded in Boaz’s approach. It only remained for some symbolic gesture to seal the agreement, and for the elders to render their judgment as to its propriety.

Here is a snapshot of how communities are meant to flourish under the gracious Law of God. Even though the Law is holy and righteous and good, and Jesus commended it unequivocally (Rom. 7.12; Matt. 5.17-19), we do not teach it with any consistency; it hardly factors into our work of disciple-making; it does not guide us in matters of church discipline; and I rather suspect we would not know how to discern the spirit of it in settling disputes between members that might otherwise end up in a secular court (1 Cor. 6.1-8).

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

The near-kinsman was deliberate and decisive in his response. Twice he said, “I cannot” do it (v. 6). Although this transaction was not evil; it was neither right nor good for the near-kinsman. For him, it would have been wrong. “Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on” (Prov. 4.14, 15). He could not go there. And he did not. Good for him! He walked the “worthy walk” that Paul commended (Eph. 4.1, 2).

The healed leper we read about in Mark 1.40-45 did what he thought was good – verbally witnessing everywhere about Jesus; but it was not what Jesus had instructed him to do. Jesus said, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” But the leper did what he thought was good instead of what Jesus commanded him: “However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter...” And what happened next? “...so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places...” The leper’s “good” marginalized Jesus’ ministry and hurt people that Jesus could have been helping.

Sometimes things that *seem* good aren’t good for us or for our families or our churches. Helping widows and witnessing are good things. But only if they are in full accord with the will and word of God. Only things that follow God’s Law and all His Word are good.

Something might look right and good for you. But look carefully: Is there is a deal-breaker that can render something good *not* good, and even evil?

Reflection

1. What do we mean by the “letter and the spirit” of the Law? What do we learn from Boaz about determining the true sense of God’s Law?
2. Bearing witness for Jesus is good. But when is it done in a way that might *not* be good?
3. How can you know when something that looks good might be a deal-breaker?

When the close relative discovered that he was expected to marry Ruth, he declined his right of redemption because his own inheritance might be ruined. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible note on Ruth 4.6

Lord, You are my inheritance! Help me to draw on the grace and truth of Your Law today as I...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 119.171-173

Praise the Lord for His abundant goodness, His salvation, and His holy and righteous and good Law. Commit your day to following Him wherever He leads.

Sing Psalm 119.171-173

(Regent Square: [*Angels from the Realms of Glory*](#))

With our lips we praise You, Jesus, for You teach us, full and free.
Now Your Word will ever please us; Your commandments true shall be.
Let Your hand come forth to ease us; ee Your Word choose gratefully!

4 Shake on It

Opening Prayer: Psalm 133.1, 3

Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*
For brethren to dwell together in unity!
It is like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.

Sing Psalm 133.1, 3

(Tryggare Kan Ingen Vara: [*Children of the Heavenly Father*](#))

Behold, how sweet, how pleasant, when the brethren dwell together.
All in unity abiding find God's blessing there presiding.

Read Ruth 4.7-12

Preparation

1. How did Boaz and the near-kinsman seal their agreement?
2. How did the elders and people respond?

Meditation

This curious manner of sealing the deal (v. 7) is reminiscent of Deuteronomy 25.5-10. Here, however, it has lost all hint of scandal or stigma and seems merely to have become a way of one man showing publicly his intention to transfer a trust or privilege to another, according to the Law of God. Sort of like saying, "Let's shake on it."

In his summation (vv. 8, 9), Boaz tied the story back to its beginnings and recapped what had just transpired. He put all the facts out in the open so that the judges of the city and the people could be certain that everything had been done decently and in order, and there would be no gossip or second-guessing on anyone's part. Boaz clearly declared his intention of raising up children to the deceased Mahlon's name and making sure that his rightful inheritance passed to them.

The words of the people and the elders are at once confirmation, blessing, exhortation, and prophecy. We can imagine that there must have been some deliberation on the part of the elders concerning Boaz's situation and his interpretation and use of the Law of God. But not much. The solidity of his thinking appears to have been almost immediately apparent. The entire community united its voice to affirm Boaz's actions; further, they invoked the blessing of God on him and Ruth, thus formally indicating their acceptance of the Moabitess as a full-fledged member of the community.

The people exhorted Boaz to build on the good work he had done to this point and live worthily and for renown among his people. There is no place for "resting on our laurels" when it comes to the pursuit of good works. We have a sense that the story had reached a climactic moment, and the people of Bethlehem were already looking ahead to the next stage of the unfolding of God's redemptive work among them. We will look at the prophetic portion of this text at the end of our study.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

“Now this *was the custom* in former times in Israel...” (vs.7).

This statement lets us know that the passage was written by someone several generations into the future. Someone who knew that David would come from this union; and Ruth and Boaz would be his great-grandparents. The story is rendered fondly by its unknown author and all the characters are remembered heroically for following the Law of God.

Will our generation of believers be remembered as well?

Will we be known for following God’s Law heroically?

Will we be found worthy of the blessings of God?

Or will we be judged righteously for our disobedience?

Like Jacob, do we wrestle with God and refuse to let Him go and until He blesses us? (Gen.32.26)

“When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” (Lk.18.8)

Let us take off our sandal, shake hands, turn over our rights and follow Jesus. Let us make good on our decision to be obedient children of God so that our generation will be remembered for our precise obedience, and we will hear from the Lord, “Well done, good and faithful servant...” (Matt. 25.21 ,23).

Reflection

1. Meditate on Psalm 45.17. What kind of legacy should believers want to leave for the future?
2. Why do we need one another to help us in understanding and obeying the Word of God?
3. Why must Christians not be content to “rest on our laurels”?

The removal of a sandal was part of a legal transaction in ancient Israel (Deut. 25:8–10). It would parallel the modern custom of concluding a transaction by signing a document or handing over a set of keys. By handing over his shoe, the close relative was symbolically handing over his right to walk on the land that was being sold. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible note on Ruth 4.7, 8

You have saved me for good works, Lord; help me today to...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 133.2, 3

Pray that the Lord will use you today to spread His peace to the people around you.

Sing Psalm 133.2, 3

(Tryggare Kan Ingen Vara: [*Children of the Heavenly Father*](#))

Like the precious oil of blessing flowing down on Aaron’s vestment,
God’s anointing rests forever where His people dwell together.

Like the dew of Hermon’s fountain falling down on Zion’s mountain,
so the blessing of the Savior dwells where unity finds favor.

5 The Father of David

Opening Prayer: Psalm 132.11, 12

The LORD has sworn *in* truth to David;
He will not turn from it:
“I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.
If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.”

Sing Psalm 132.11, 12

(Finlandia: *Be Still My Soul*)

Remember, Lord, the oath You swore to David;
do not turn back, do not deny Your Word:
“One of your sons, with your throne I will favor,
and He shall keep My cov’nant evermore,
and walk within My testimonies ever,
thus He shall ever rule as Israel’s Lord.”

Read Ruth 4.13-17

Preparation

1. What did the women wish for Naomi at the birth of Obed?
2. What did they wish for the child?

Meditation

These events might seem anti-climactic in our story; however, they point us toward the real meaning and purpose of the book of Ruth, both within its immediate and contemporary setting, and in the larger scope of the redemptive plan of God.

Naomi’s bitterness was completely forgotten by the birth of the child. They named him Obed, which derives from the Hebrew word for “worship” and means “a worshiper.” Naomi’s act of taking the child into her lap creates a most effective bridge from the events of chapter 1, and the entire period of the judges, to the next generation and beyond. God has been faithful to His covenant to bless His people and provide redemption for them through their rebellion, suffering, and return to faith.

We may note some elements of *inclusio* here as the story of Ruth comes to its end, returning the story in some ways to its beginning, but providing a satisfying wrap-up and conclusion. The sadness of chapter 1 is replaced by joy in chapter 4. Loneliness is overcome by community. Loss by newness. Desolation by promise. Bitterness and judgment by rejoicing and blessing. In chapter 1 Naomi blessed her women; here the women of her neighborhood bless her. The Lord seemed ominous and distant in chapter 1; here He was a Presence for joy and celebration. In chapter 1 God’s people turned from the worship of God to serve themselves; here all are worshipers of the God of the covenant. The writer has brought Ruth’s story to a joyous, forward-looking conclusion.

It only remains for us to ask, Why was this book written? And when?

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

The elders offered a blessing to Boaz upon the completion of the deal: “The LORD make...you prosper...and be famous in Bethlehem” (vs. 11).

A nice blessing indeed, but not exactly cosmic in nature. Very here and now.

The women, on the other hand, said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel!” (vs. 14). Their blessing was more there and then.

The women enlarged the blessing to first include God, and then to imagine that the fame of this child would spread past Bethlehem to encompass all of Israel.

And we know that the true blessing was more far-reaching than either group visualized – Jesus, the Savior of the world. Famously famous.

Jesus, like the elders and the women, offered His blessing and guidance to the disciples and us in the same outward moving way; encompassing both the here and now and there and then when He said: “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1.8).

Outward bound blessings coming from the elders and women to Boaz, Ruth and Naomi, to Obed, Jesse and David, through Jesus to us.

“Showers of blessing” (Ezek.34.26).

Reflection

1. What does it mean for us to live both in the “here and now” as well as in the “there and then”?
2. What have you learned from Ruth about the power of God’s grace?
3. God intends His blessings to go through us in outwardly expanding ways. Explain.

The women praised God for His provision for Naomi. They offered a blessing for the child, asking that his fame be extended throughout Israel and that he would comfort Naomi and nourish her in her old age. Naomi’s emptiness had been replaced with fullness through the birth of this boy. Sons were considered a great reward, so for the women to state that Ruth is better to Naomi than seven sons was considerable praise for Ruth. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible note on Ruth 4.14, 15

You have saved me for good works, Lord; help me today to...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 132.13-18

Thank God for His faithfulness, salvation, and abundant provision. Rejoice in being called as one of His priests to serve others with the salvation of Jesus Christ. Pray about opportunities to do so today.

Sing Psalm 132.13-18

(Finlandia: Be Still My Soul)

God dwells among us, and He will forever,
to meet our needs and clothe us with His grace.

He has to us sent Jesus Christ, our Savior,
and made us His eternal resting-place.

His foes are banished from His Presence ever,
but we shall reign with Him before His face.

6 These Are the Generations

Pray Psalm 69.13-15

But as for me, my prayer *is* to You,
O LORD, *in* the acceptable time;
O God, in the multitude of Your mercy,
Hear me in the truth of Your salvation.
Deliver me out of the mire,
And let me not sink;
Let me be delivered from those who hate me,
And out of the deep waters.
Let not the floodwater overflow me,
Nor let the deep swallow me up;
And let not the pit shut its mouth on me.

Sing Psalm 69.13-15

(Greensleeves: [*What Child Is This?*](#))

O Lord, we make our prayer to You; receive our words, O Savior!
Let lovingkindness see us through, and answer us with favor!
Lord, lift us above the mire; deliv'rance is our one desire!
Let not the floods conspire to swallow us forever!

Read Ruth 4.18-22

Preparation

1. What's different about the form of these verses from the rest of Ruth?
2. Where does this genealogy begin? Where does it end?

Meditation

Imagine that you are at a poetry reading, and the poet has been narrating a lengthy, well-crafted story, that glides from episode to episode with the clearest, cleanest, and loveliest of poetic devices, building the narrative as it goes. Then, right at the end, the poet breaks into Chaucerian English as a kind of envoi to his story: “Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote/the drogthe of Marche hath perced to the roote...” or something like that, leaving the audience delighted, but scratching their heads. The writer of the book of Ruth is doing something like this in these verses.

The *toledoth* structure of this coda (“generations” or “genealogy” as NKJV has it) was by David’s time an archaic and unused literary device. However, it was an important tool for linking the progress of God’s covenant in the book of Genesis. The writer employed it here to connect David’s birth with the covenant beginnings of Israel.

Further, Perez, where the lineage begins and whose name means “divided”, was the son of Tamar, a Canaanite woman. Anyone who knew the book of Genesis would have acknowledged her to be a legitimate daughter of the covenant. Thus, the writer anchored David to his roots in a Canaanite woman and the covenant promises of God. But why?

Could it be that this little book of Ruth was written during the seven-year civil war that followed the death of Saul and Jonathan? And could it be that the advocates of a Benjamite dynasty, claiming

Saul's lineage, were arguing against the legitimacy of David on the grounds that he had a Moabite in his pedigree? Was the book of Ruth a political tract to celebrate the grace of God, legitimize David's claim to the throne, and persuade the divided tribes to find unity and renewal in their proper, Judah-descended (Gen. 49.8-10) king? Was David to be recognized as the first "Shiloh" – a Hebrew contraction which means, "him whose it is" – the rightful heir of the kingdom of Israel, and the forerunner of the greater King to come?

I think this is very likely. The chaotic period of the book of Judges – where Ruth begins, when there was no king in Israel – resolves through the story of Ruth into the period of covenant renewal under David. The unspoken but quite apparent message is that the grace of God will return to His people through the tribe of Judah, via Boaz and Ruth, in the kingdom promised to David. And it points, through the device of genealogy, to the greater Son of David – the true Shiloh – Who was yet to come.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Many people today have accessed Ancestry.com to find out about their heritage. And if David had looked there, this is what he would have found. "Now this is the genealogy..." (vs.18)

Paul expands the possibility of the genealogy to us by saying: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3.28, 29). If.

The writer of the book of Hebrews teases out the possibility further by saying: "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God." Then the majestic *inclusio* that Christ is the Son over His own house, "whose house we are **if** we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end" (Hebrews 3.4, 6). If.

The confidence and the hope that we must hold to the end is that our ancestry happens not by birth but by belief and obedience: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn. 1.12, 13). Of God.

And here is our Ancestry.com assurance: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For *'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved'*" (Rom.10.12, 13). Secure.

Reflection

1. How do these verses support the continuity of God's covenant throughout Scripture?
2. How do the inclusion of Tamar and Ruth in these genealogies point to the time of the Gospel?
3. How do the genealogies of Scripture encourage us as members of God's covenant today?

The story concludes with David's genealogy, beginning with Perez, the son of Judah and Tamar. This genealogy could have been added to the book long after the original writing was complete, but more probably the book as a whole was composed at a later date than the events described. The genealogy of David is not really an appendix, but an essential element demonstrating the author's purpose—and the purpose of the Lord in the building of the family line of King David and the Messiah. The story of Boaz's redemption of a foreign woman points to Jesus' great redemption of all those who believe in Him. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible note on Ruth 4.18-22

Lord, thank You that my name is written in Your book of life, in the generations of Your sons and daughters. Help me to be faithful to that pedigree today as I...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 69.34-46

Praise the Lord for Jesus and His saving mercy! Thank Him for including you in the family of His people. Plead with Him to help you live as His child and heir today.

Sing Psalm 69.34-36

(Greensleeves: [*What Child Is This?*](#))

Let heav'n and earth now praise You, Lord, the seas and all their creatures,
for You will save us by Your Word and build Your City's features.

There we will with Jesus dwell and know His blessings full and well.

His glorious Name we'll tell to every man and creature!

7 Redemption Then and Now

Opening Prayer: Psalm 132.8-11

Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place,
You and the ark of Your strength.
Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy.
For Your servant David's sake,
Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed.

Sing Psalm 132.8-10

(Finlandia: [*Be Still My Soul*](#))

Arise, O Lord, come to Your resting place; Your holy Presence meet with us in might.
Clothe us with righteousness in Jesus' grace, and we will shout to Your divine delight!
For David's sake, turn not away Your face, but look upon us in Your holy light.

Read Ruth 4, meditate on vv. 14, 15

Preparation

1. The word "close relative" in NKJV is actually "redeemer." Why is this important?
2. What do the women wish for Naomi?

Meditation

The book of Ruth is about redemption. Redemption involves a purchase and a transfer, and when it is accomplished on one's behalf by another, it shows us the true nature of grace.

How many different ways do we see redemption portrayed in the book of Ruth? Ruth is redeemed from her pagan world by her marriage to Mahlon. His vow purchased her from paganism and transferred her into the community of God's people. Naomi was redeemed by the Word of God and persistent love of Ruth. The news that God had visited and blessed her people back in Judah moved Naomi to return, and Ruth's accompanying love was a constant source of strength and grace. Both were purchased from Moab and transferred back to the people of God in the land of promise by the report of God's visitation there.

Ruth and Naomi were redeemed by Boaz through his kindness and generosity. He was the "kinsman redeemer" of this story. Yet he himself experienced a kind of purchase and transfer by being delivered into marriage through the grace shown him by Ruth.

The purchase of the field and the woman – Ruth – who was attached to it by her former marriage is the clearest act of redemption. Naomi, Ruth, and the heritage of Mahlon were purchased by Boaz and transferred into His possession according to the Law and the approval of God's appointed judges. With all these various acts of redemption going on, it's not surprising that the women of Bethlehem would wish for more of the same for Naomi – a "redeemer" to restore life and nourish Naomi and her family throughout their lives. Here the promise of a coming Redeemer for all the lost and straying people of God was put in the mouths of faithful women. They would not have understood the full significance of the blessing they bestowed. Their blessing would come not only in the child Obed, but in his grandson, David, and in David's greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who says we can't know beauty, hope, grace, truth, peace, restoration, and nourishment in a world which all around is doing whatever people want, and acknowledging no rule or law except themselves? If God chooses to visit us in such a time as this, what great work of redemption might He do? Dare we plead with Him for such a work, and prepare ourselves to receive it – like Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, and the people of Bethlehem – by returning to the Law and promises of God?

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Jesus Christ, the descendant of Boaz and Ruth, is the ultimate Restorer of life, and Nourisher of any age!

We, as the future generation of believers, are thankful for the adherence to the Law that all the parties in this story embraced. We, too, must embrace the Law as they did for the sake of the future generations that follow us.

Let us say with David about Jesus:

“He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.”

“You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup runs over.”

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life; and
I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” (Psalm 23.3,5,6)

Restored to life. Nourished to serve. Redeemed to obey.

“...you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy” (I Pet. 2.9, 10).

Reflection

1. How does the story of Ruth encourage and bless us today?
2. Why must grace and redemption go together? How does God use us as agents or channels of His grace?
3. Will you begin praying every day for God to do a great work of redemption and revival in our day?

*Here is the descent of David from Ruth. And the period came when Bethlehem-Judah displayed greater wonders than those in the history of Ruth, when the outcast babe of another forlorn female...appeared, controlling the counsels of the Roman master of the world, and drawing princes and wise men from the east, with treasures of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh to his feet. His name shall endure for ever, and all nations shall call Him blessed. In that Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Ruth 4.13-22**

Lord, You are my Nourisher and Restorer! Nourish and restore me today, Lord Jesus, and I will...

Closing Prayer: Psalm 132.13-18

Thank God for Jesus and His salvation. Pray that He will clothe you with His righteousness, be a lamp unto your feet, and cause you to flourish in His grace and truth today.

Sing Psalm 132.13-18

(Finlandia: [*Be Still My Soul*](#))

God dwells among us, and He will forever, to meet our needs and clothe us with His grace.
He has to us sent Jesus Christ, our Savior, and made us His eternal resting-place.
His foes are banished from His Presence ever, but we shall reign with Him before His face.

For Reflection or Discussion

1. Grace and redemption go hand in hand when the Law of God is honored and obeyed. Explain.
2. What “purchase” makes redemption possible now? What “transfer” does that redemption accomplish?
3. Is God able still to “visit” His people with grace, blessing, and bounty, as He did in the book of Ruth? What must we do to prepare for such a visitation?
4. What do you learn from each of the three main characters in this book: Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz?
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from our study of Ruth? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

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