

RUTH 2:20

INTRODUCTION

I want to approach the book of Ruth in a slightly different way in that I want us to look at the theme of redemption particularly looking at Boaz as a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ our Redeemer and looking at Ruth as a picture of our being redeemed. This is a legitimate way of handling this little book for the term that is used of Kinsman redeemer (2v20) is the word 'goel.'

This is a term that is used of God in Exodus 6:6 where God is described as the one who would redeem (goel) Israel out of the hands of the Egyptians he will bring them out of slavery by redemption. The law concerning the goel was a reflection of God himself. As God redeems his people so the Kinsman redeemer or goel was to redeem his relatives when they got into trouble. Within the Old Testament the purpose of the 'goel' is threefold.

a) According to Leviticus 25:25-28 the goel is to redeem the property or land of a family member who has become poor and has had to sell his possessions. By redeeming the land and property the 'goel' was restoring the land back to its original owner and therefore keeping the family's inheritance intact. God had given his people this land, this was God's gift to them therefore they were not to allow it to fall into the hands of pagans.

b) According to Leviticus 25:47-48 the 'goel' if he can financially afford it could redeem relatives whose poverty has forced them into slavery or would unless they were redeemed by the goel.

c) The third purpose of the 'goel' which is not useful for our purposes in this sermon is that according to Numbers 35:12, 19-27 the 'goel' had a duty to avenge the killing of a relative by tracking down and executing the killer.

Immediately I hope you can see how Boaz as Kinsman redeemer is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and how Ruth is a picture of us who need to be redeemed.

1. CHRIST AS THE KINSMAN REDEEMER OR GOEL.

a) **He was able to redeem.** Right at the beginning of chapter 2:1 we have a statement that shows that Boaz is able to redeem because he was from the clan of Boaz and he was a man of standing, which, meant he had the financial backing to redeem. Although when we get to chapter three next time we will see that he was not the nearest relative he became the one able to redeem because the Kinsman redeemer who should have redeemed Ruth refused to do so. But for now let us just notice that he is able to redeem Ruth. When we take this principle and place it alongside the Lord Jesus what we find is that Jesus is able to redeem us. He was the only one capable of redeeming his people. He was God the Son and thereby and therefore was the only one who could act as mediator between God and mankind.

He being God was perfect, he had no sin and therefore he was able to offer a perfect sacrifice for sin. He had the power to redeem us because he was not dependant upon men doing their part he had a plan and had the power to carry out that plan for the redemption of his people. I could go on but I hope you can see how Jesus Christ was able to act as our 'goel' in order that we could be redeemed. This ought to raise within us praise and thanksgiving that Jesus was able to redeem us.

There was no one else able to do it no one else with all the qualifications and ability and power to redeem sinners. We could not do it ourselves although if we are honest most of us tried but failed.

The church could not redeem us although some churches think they can but they fail to do so. No priest Vicar or Minister could redeem us from our sin although some might well think otherwise. No! Only Jesus God's beloved Son could come into our world in order to redeem us He was the only one who fitted the bill who had all the necessary qualifications and if you are redeemed then you have much to praise him for and much to rejoice in. Our response should be one of love to Him and a willingness to submit to him as our Lord and Saviour.

b) He was willing to redeem us. As I said Boaz was not the nearest relative there was another man who could act as Kinsman Redeemer but he refused to do so, so Boaz stepped in, he was willing to do what the other 'goel' refused to do. When we relate this to the Lord Jesus Christ then we see that he willingly came into this world in order to redeem us.

Philippians 2:5-11 spells out for us the willingness he showed that he willingly did not consider "equality with God something to be held on to but he made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even death on a cross." What a willing Saviour we have. Just imagine for one minute if the Lord Jesus was not willing to redeem us. Just imagine that he was like this 'goel' in the book of Ruth who would not redeem.

What would happen? No one else could step in and redeem in the way Boaz did because as we have just seen no one else was able to do it, there is no other redeemer. We would have been left in our sins we would have had no hope and our destiny would be hell with no way out. We want to be thankful that our Saviour the Lord Jesus not only was able to save us but he was willing to save us as well. He was willing to suffer the pain and the distress of the cross so that we could be redeemed.

He was willing to be made sin for us to act as our Substitute so that we can go free. What a difference that willing Saviour has made to us if we are saved.

We are forgiven and justified in the sight of God. We now have an eternal hope no longer is hell our destiny but heaven is our home. No longer do we live in this world for ourselves and the gratifying of our sinful nature but now we live to please our God and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are not a Christian, if as yet you are not redeemed then let me point you to a willing Saviour who promised that if we come to him he will give us rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28).

He is able to save you and he is willing to save you, will you then come to Him?

c) He paid the cost to redeem - For Boaz redeeming Ruth cost him considerably. There was of course the financial cost involved for Boaz was not only taking Ruth and land into his family but he was of course taking on responsibility for Naomi as well. The closest kinsman redeemer would not redeem the property of Ruth because it might endanger his own estate (4:6). But Boaz was prepared to pay that cost to take that risk in order that he might redeem.

In a far greater way the Lord Jesus paid a high price in order to redeem us. Just think of it for a minute first of all being God and creator of this universe he willingly came into this world and took on human flesh. The creator identified with his creation by becoming one with those he created.

He placed himself in a vulnerable position in the womb of Mary and then in the household of Mary and Joseph where he was totally dependant upon his earthly parents. Then he faced the trials of human life, he got tired he developed like any other human child he felt pain and knew distress. He faced temptation and various trials yet without sin. He knew hostility, ridicule and rejection.

He knew humiliation and of course he knew the physical pain of crucifixion but worse than that he knew the mental pain and spiritual pain of being made a sin offering for us and as a result knowing the rejection of his Father as he cried out my God my God why have you forsaken me.

No one has paid such a high price yet Jesus willingly paid that price for that price was the cost of redemption for sinners like us.

Does this not demonstrate to us the tremendous love that God has for us, that he willingly sent his only Son and that Jesus his Son willing came and paid the price in order that we could be redeemed. Again if you are an unbeliever can you not see the high price that was paid for redemption, will you not come in repentance and faith to this Saviour and seek his grace for salvation?

2. WE ARE IN NEED OF A KINSMAN REDEEMER

As we move on to consider Ruth as a picture of us who are in great need of a Kinsman Redeemer let us notice:

a) **She was born in great need of a Redeemer** - Ruth was born in Moab and brought up with Moabite parents. Her god was 'chemosh' the child sacrificing God and from the moment she was born she was in need of a redeemer otherwise she would continue to be a worshipper of a false god and of course incurring the wrath of God. In the same way every one of us is born with a need for a redeemer. We are not born Christians even if we were born into a Christian family.

God is not naturally our God we invent our own gods and worship them. We are born in sin and we are born alienated from God. Left to ourselves then we would continue in our godless ways satisfying our own godless nature. Giving full vent to our sinful nature; living life without God and without hope. That is how Ruth would have strayed except for the providence of God, which ordered events so that she would eventually meet and marry one of Elimelech's sons.

In doing so she came into contact with God's grace, as it was evident in the lives of this one Israelite family. Eventually through tragedy and heartache she comes to place her faith in the one true God and experienced God's grace in salvation (1:16-17).

She was born in need of a redeemer and eventually found one. That is your story if you are a true believer this evening. You were born in sin in the sense that you were born with a sinful nature, which was bent against God. In time you sinned and continued to do so living life without God and without any thought of God Then through circumstances, or tragedy or heartache or through some other means you came into contact with the grace of God in the gospel and came to repent and believe the good news.

In doing so you left behind your former life, and your former gods and you are now clinging to Jesus as your Redeemer. Isn't that wonderful, isn't God wonderful to provide for us a Redeemer through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's praise him, love him and serve him with all our heart.

b) **Ruth found grace when she went looking for it.** Let me explain what I mean by this. Ruth discovered the law of the land permitted her to glean in the field and then she hoped that when she went to put this law into practice that she would find favour or grace in someone's field (2:2). Ruth was aware of her need she was not too proud to admit that she was poor and that the law favoured her. Once she realised her need she went to look for grace knowing that some farmer showing her grace was her only hope of survival.

She went searching for grace and she found it in her Kinsman Redeemer Boaz.

In a very similar way we find the grace of God in our 'goel' the Lord Jesus once we start looking for it (Isaiah 55:6) For that to happen we must first of all realise our need. We are sinners who cannot help ourselves and therefore we must find one who can. To do that means that we must be

prepared to humble ourselves for no proud person senses his need, even though it might be obvious. There once was a poor lady who refused all offers of help from her family and neighbours because she was too proud to admit she was poor. Eventually she starved to death.

The first step to finding grace in our Saviour is to be prepared to admit that we need a Saviour. Once we admit that and begin to seek the Saviour then we will find grace in the Saviour the Lord Jesus. The most amazing thing is that once we find the grace of God we discover that we did not even seek for it on our own initial but it was in fact the Lord drawing us to himself. How about you are you seeking salvation yet or are you still too proud to admit your need? Do you still believe that you can be saved your way that you do not need a 'goel'? If we have found the grace of God in Christ then cast your mind back to the way that you came to know Christ. Do you remember seeking him or so we thought at the time and then do you remember that time when you became aware of the grace of God in salvation through Jesus Christ?

Do you remember the zeal that you had for the Lord at that time? Do you remember the joy that you had and the tremendous sense of awe that you a sinner have been saved by Jesus Christ? Do you remember the times you were almost overcome with that wonderful truth? Have you lost some of that joy, praise and sense of wonder over the years. Perhaps now you have been a Christian for a long time and you are no longer moved in the way we once were, then, ask the Lord to give you a fresh sense of his grace in salvation today.

But perhaps you are seeking salvation then let me assure you that as you seek the Lord He is seeking you (Luke 19:10). He is working his providence out and you can be assured that those who seek with a true heart will indeed find their "goel" who will redeem you. I appeal to you once again come to this Saviour and find his grace that is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

c) Ruth a foreigner is brought into God's family. Ruth from Moab comes into the family of God she marries a member of God's people and is brought into the line of David, which of course is the family line of Jesus. Ruth a Gentile is brought into the family tree of Jesus a Jew. This is the same with us. We were foreigners to God, and through our 'goel' we are brought into the family of God.

A family that consists of Jews and Gentiles; God has made the two groups one family (Ephesians 2:11-22). Therefore we are no longer foreigners and strangers to God but we are fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household. We are one with the prophets and apostles and with all God's people down through the ages. Today we are one as a church; we are related to one another even though we come from different cultural backgrounds and countries.

The one who does this for us is our 'goel' our redeemer so rejoice in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the gospel that points us to Jesus as our 'goel'. Then rejoice that we are no longer strangers to God and his people but are now members of the household of God.

Finally let us live as if we belong to God, let us treat one another as brothers and sisters should and let us bring praise to our Saviour the Lord Jesus and let us see his name magnified and glorified in this church and in this community

Amen