

The Cost and Crowning Joy of Redemption

Ruth 4



Background

Kristen Chen's painting "Treasure" is an apt visual metaphor for *hesed* ("unfailing love for the helpless")—the major theme in the book of Ruth. She writes, "This piece is about the love of God revealed in everyday moments: a reunion with a sister and lifelong best friend, a wedding, a daughter's birthday, a friend helping me in my need, and the ongoing conversation woven through the decades about this great love that is a mystery and flows in us, through us, to be poured out, a fountain. This is that embrace." In the final chapter we witness how Ruth's courageous acts of *hesed* love propel Boaz to new levels of incalculable risk and joy of covenanted relationship that culminates in a "redemption" that outlasts history!

Sermon Text: Ruth 4 (ESV)

1 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 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 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."

7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. 8 So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. 10 Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You

are witnesses this day.” 11 Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, “We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, 12 and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman.”

13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. 14 Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.” 16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. 17 And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, 19 Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, 20 Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, 21 Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, 22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you the most?

2. Sermon questions

- a. Redemption is the theme of chapters 3 and 4. “Redemption is the crowning joy of hesed love.” Can you name a time in your life when you were rescued or redeemed (might be your faith journey or might be in some other experience)?
- b. Hesed love impacts what we live for each day, as Brian said - “The goal of life becomes not financial security, but to give security to those who have none.” Respond to this statement.
- c. Where in your life have you been impacted by hesed love (either shown it or been shown it)?
- d. Brian compared Naomi to Job because she “found God’s hesed love through suffering.” Where in your life have you found God’s hesed love through suffering?
- e. The courageous spirit of Ruth is found throughout Scripture, especially in the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30) and in the hemorrhaging woman (Mark 5:25-34). Where in your life do you want to be courageous like Ruth?