

## Ruth 4:1-10

### Announcements:

- Closing on properties: - be in prayer (selling = 2nd and buying = 9th + lease backs...) - **tenants!**
- The Feast of Purim/Fast of Esther (3 day fast)! (Xerxes, Haman, annihilation..., Mordecai, Esther, groggers, gifts of food, donating to the poor, costumes, Hamantashen...**you there? (Megillah Reading!)**)
- US/Israeli attacks on Iran (in light of **Purim/annihilation of Jews**)
  - **Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (supreme leader) = haman hanging...**
  - Proverbs 11:10 - "When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices; **when the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy.**"
  - Ezekiel 33:11 - "As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, **I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.** Turn! Turn from your evil ways...!"
- Wars, AI, reports of aliens, infiltration of Islam, (how should we approach it?)
- Shooting in Austin last night... special message in 3 wks.
- **PRAY at Selah Night tonight...**

Please open to **Ruth Chapter 4** (Need a bible? ...)

- Last time: **Nail biter / cliff hanger...** (**Midnight Matrimony**: Naomi, threshing, feet, Boaz, wait.)
- This time: Boaz reflects the **kindness (chesed) of God** towards Ruth/Naomi. **Decision time...**

### Message Title: Righteous Redeemer

- **City Council** (verses 1-2)
- **Phony Baloney** (verses 3-6)
- **Seal the Deal** (verses 7-10)

We won't finish the book of Ruth today...

- We will next week and end with communion...
- **Context reminder**: Naomi/Ruth from Moab to Bethlehem. **Tragedy, Poverty, Uncertainty...**
- Ruth probably **could not have imagined** the coming blessings... (steps of faith/obedience)
- The book opened with the **burden of a funeral** but ends with the  **blessing of a family...**

**Let's take a journey back to the city gate of Bethlehem in roughly 1,200 BC...**

### City Council (verses 1-2)

V. 1 - Boaz went up **to the gate** and sat down there...

- **City gates were a big deal** in that society: merchants, travelers, protection, disputes...
- **Gate (Sha'ar)** = "entrance of a city, marketplace, public meeting place, court, council"
- Picture a: coffee shop, community center, stock exchange, and courtroom all in one...
- A place where **village elders would make big decisions**: (one Torah example...)
- Duet 21:18-19 - "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and **bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city.**" (**kids watch out!** same thing for a woman's virginity in Duet. 22)

- **The gate** was also a place where **reputation/character** mattered...
- Proverbs 31:23 - "**Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.**"
- Boaz here **taking his seat among the elders**. This is **deliberate and intentional**. Nothing is **hidden in the dark**, no **shady backrooms deals**.
- **Public and official**. Remember: **Gibbor chayil**
- **This is wisdom...** (take notes, friends...)

V. 1 - **Behold, the close relative (redeemer) of whom Boaz had spoken (ch. 3) came by...**

- **"Behold" (Hinneh)** = **pay attention...**, can you believe it? Check this out! God is smiling :)
- Look who **happened** to "**come by**" (**text him?** **coincidence?** i.e. **chance chanced upon...**)
- **Are you and I looking for these? Do we miss them by not walking in the Spirit?**
- And this **isn't any old joe** walking by, He's **exactly the guy** Boaz wants to meet with. **Redeemer!**
- **Ga'al (verb)** = "**to act as or do the part of a kinsman redeemer (goel (noun))**" (dozen+ in ch 4)
- **Redemption saturated!** -This is the **DNA of the bible**. Who God is, **our Redeemer! (Exodus)**
- **And God has called His people to be walking redeemers** too...

Remember from chapter 3, this redeemer has the **first right of refusal...**

V. 1 - Boaz said, "**Come aside, friend, sit down here**" ...and he sat down.

- **Friend**, here, is **not actually friend (not: homie, or bro...)**, It's a **Hebrew Idiom**:
- **Friend (p'loni almoni)** = "**a certain someone; such-and-such; so-and-so**" (**phony baloney!**)
  - "**what's his name**" - ...for good reason: **No name = shame/dishonor**
- **It's not that Boaz didn't know his name, it's that the narrator didn't consider his name worthy.**
- **Luke 16:19-20** - "**There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate...**" (Lazarus to Abraham's bosom, but **unnamed man tormented in hades**)
- And this is **a book where names have enormous meaning**: Elimelech (God is my King), Naomi (pleasant), Mara (bitter), Boaz (strength), Ruth (friendship), Bethlehem (house of bread)
- By **not mentioning** his name, **that's a statement in itself...**

Back to the scene...

V. 2 - [Boaz] took **ten men of the elders of the city**, and... they sat down.

- **Possible significance** to **ten elders** (known as a "**minyan**") - **Not explicit** in the Bible...
  - **Codified in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 2a, Megillah 23b)** for **a quorum**...
  - **Places of worship (synagogues)** or **town decisions** to be official (**communal entity**)
  - Reasoning: **Numbers 14 = Ten Spies** + **Genesis 18 = Abraham intercedes for Sodom**.
- **THEY (ALL) sat down** = signals **readiness to conduct official business**. **Court in session**.

**Jesus** was also **tried by a group of his own countrymen** and **crucified PUBLICLY outside the city gate**.

- **Col 2:14-15. CSB** - "**He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it away by nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; he triumphed over them in him.**" (Boaz will too...)

Back to our text...

**Phony Baloney (verses 3-6)**

**Mr no name** was given the opportunity: transport back in time to that old gate...

V. 3 - [Boaz] said to the (redeemer), "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, **sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.**"

- Again, Boaz calls him the **Goel/Redeemer**, and now we get some new info about some land.
- Naome has a **piece of property** that *has already sold / in the process of selling (good as done)*
- She likely had to **due to poverty**, *not ideal*. (Israel's land was to **remain in each family's clan**)
- **Back to the days of Joshua** when *divided among the tribes* of Israel (**not permanently sold**)
- **Leviticus 25:23, NLT** - "**The land must never be sold on a permanent basis, for the land belongs to me...**" (that's clear... - here's an example...)
- **1 Kings 21:1-3, NLT** - "Now there was a man named Naboth, who owned a vineyard in Jezreel beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. One day Ahab said to Naboth, 'Since your vineyard is so convenient to my palace, I would like to buy it to use as a vegetable garden. I will give you a better vineyard in exchange, or if you prefer, I will pay you for it.' But Naboth replied, '**The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance that was passed down by my ancestors.**'" (even though was offered better land, this was a **God-given inheritance...**)
- *In our immediate text*, we're dealing with a piece of **land which belonged to Elimelech**
- The problem: **no more legal heirs** to pass it on to...
- **MR. so-and-so** has **first dibs** at it...

V. 4 - "I thought to inform you, '**Buy (ga'al) it back** in the *presence of the elders* of my people."

- **Thought to inform you** - "*I will uncover your ear*" (**LXX: apokalupto** = "remove the lid off...")
- This guy **may not have known** he was the first Goel.
  - Boaz "*could have gotten away with it*"
- **But now, everyone is being called to obey the commandments of God...**
- **Leviticus 25:25, NLT** - "**If one of your fellow Israelites falls into poverty and is forced to sell some family land, then a close relative should buy it back for him...**" - **Torah time. You?**

V. 4 - "If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you."

- Boaz: full of **honesty, openness, integrity**. Would **not take advantage** of *Ruth, nor his neighbor*.
- **better to live with disappointment than with a guilty conscience. Amen!**

V. 4 - [Mr. such and such] said, "**I will redeem it.**"

- **He has the right. Boaz may have been bummed**, there's *more to the story*
- One thing you and I have to *factor into context* is how **land sales/leasing** worked back then.
- **Leviticus 25:27-28, NLT** - "**The price of the land will be discounted according to the number of years until the next Year of Jubilee ...in the jubilee year, the land must be returned to the original owners so they can return to their family land...**" (keep in tribe = **essentially a lease...**)
- **Not explicit**, a **potential caveat**: if there are *no heirs to inherit*, possibly keep for yourself...
- **Long story short: so far so good. A smokin deal! Easy money kinda thing (add to estate)**
  - But there's **always a catch** isn't there? Did you **read the fine print?** (**Scot Calvin**)
- **I will redeem it** - "**I**" is **emphatic in the Hebrew** = "**I, I myself** will redeem it". (excited)

But, **wait there's more...** some strings attached...

V. 5 - "You must **also buy it from (you will acquire) Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead**"

- **Ru-roh!** There's the fine print...
- The **property and the princess are a package deal!**
- **Like playing a trump card.** Boaz was a little crafty here in negotiations...
- A lesson for us: **Count the Cost.** It's easy to say yes to things till there is a price to pay or an inconvenience. It's one thing to go to church on Sunday, but what about...? (praying, giving, serving, sharing...)

**Phony baloney** wants the **blessing but not the responsibility...** (the **puppy**, but not the vet bills :)

V. 5 - "To **perpetuate (raise up / carry on) the name of the dead** through his inheritance."

- Let me remind you AGAIN, this is **straight from Torah (God's Law)...**
- Deut 25:5-6, NET - "...the dead man's wife must not remarry someone outside the family. Instead, her late husband's brother must go to her, marry her, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law. Then the first son she bears **will continue the name of the dead brother, thus preventing his name from being blotted out of Israel.**" - **not just the name**, but the ...
- **Inheritance (Nahala)** (*nakh-al-aw'*) = "possession, portion, share, heritage, estate"
- This guy would be required to pay top dollar and then have to give it away to Ruth's heir...
  - The first born son would **legally be Machlon's son**, carrying Elimelechs' heritage...
- Would **Senior No Name** think only in dollars/strictly business? Or, in **obedience to God!** **You?**

V. 6 - The (redeemer) said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, **lest I ruin my own inheritance (Nahala).**"

- This is getting too complicated. Kinda a headache, it's gonna mess up my portfolio...
- **Ruin (Shachat)** = "spoil, ruin, destroy, pervert, corrupt, jeopardize, wipe out." (strong language)
- Genesis 6:11-12 - "Now the earth was **corrupt (shachat)** in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was **corrupt (shachat)**; for all flesh had **corrupted (shachat)** their way upon the earth." (same in Genesis 13:10 for Sodom)
- Possibly this man **already has a wife and his own children** to consider (off the hook a little?)
- **"I cannot redeem it, because I have a wife already; and it is not fit for me to bring another into my house, lest brawling and contention arise in it; and lest I hurt my own inheritance. Do thou redeem it, for thou has no wife; which hinders me from redeeming it."** (Targum: Ruth 4:6)
- **Don't know if that's true or not**, but this man is **no longer able to commit to the deal...**
- He can't care for his own estate plus **Ruth and Naomi's needs** as well... (**Moabite issue?**)

**This guy backs out of the deal...**

V. 6 - "You **redeem my right of redemption** for yourself, for **I cannot redeem it.**"

- You make your own interpretation, I think this is **what Boaz wanted all along** (hiding a smile)
- **I cannot.** The flesh, the law, is not able, but the **grace of Christ is able!** With God, all things...

**The contrast** with **p'loni almoni and Boaz (man of strength)** points us to **Christ who paid it all.**

- Philippians 2:5-8, NIV - "Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God **something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness; being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.**"
- The **phony baloney's of this world** will let us down (even us), but **NOT OUR LORD CHRIST!**

**Back to our text**, Boaz commits, **even when it is inconvenient...** (like a foster parent stepping in)

## Seal the Deal (verses 7-10)

**Boaz, the righteous redeemer** steps up and steps forward with an official legal process...

V. 7 - The custom in former times in Israel...

- An unusual exchange (for us), but not for Israel. They've been doing it since **"former times"**
- concerning redeeming/exchanging (legally binding)

You and I are used to 95 signatures on 18 documents (going through it right now as a church!)

V. 7 - One man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel.

- This is an old school spit shake. **Pinky swear!**
  - (imagine: if how we sold the church? ha!)
- It's part of God's Law in this scenario
  - (though some of the nuances are different...)
  - May even be connected to why Ruth lay at Boaz' feet last week...
- Deut 25:7-10, NIV - "If a man does not want to marry his brother's wife, she shall go to the elders at the town gate and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to carry on his brother's name in Israel. He will not fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to me.' Then the elders of his town shall summon him and talk to him. If he persists in saying, 'I do not want to marry her,' his brother's widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, take off one of his sandals, spit in his face and say, 'This is what is done to the man who will not build up his brother's family line.' That man's line shall be known in Israel as The Family of the Unsandaled." (whoa! unique!)
- In our text, no spitting in the face was involved.
- Likely because the other man didn't know and was given the option, and another [Boaz] who is willing. (not a clear lack of honor)
- You see sandal/feet imagery throughout the Bible. Sometimes negative, sometimes reverent.
- Psalms 60:8, NIV - "Moab is my washbasin, on Edom I toss my sandal; over Philistia I shout in triumph."
- John 1:27, CSB - "He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I'm not worthy to untie."
- In our text, likely has to do with where your feet tread (back to Joshua's allotments...)
- Joshua 1:3 - "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses." - taking the sandal off = symbolically the right to "possess the land & walk on it."

V. 8 - Therefore the (redeemer) said to Boaz, **"Buy it for yourself."** So he took off his sandal...

- Oh man, Boaz took the sandal off, it's getting real!
- That's an old school docu-signature!

V. 9 - And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, **"You are witnesses this day..."**

- Here and again in verse 10 - this is a legally binding event at the city gate. Double confirmed

V. 9 - I have bought all that was Elimelech's

- This is full commitment to the total cost!

- Matthew 13:44-46 ESV - "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy **he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.** Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, **went and sold all that he had and bought it.**"
- This is **what Christ did for us!** This is what **He asks us to do for Him.** **Count the cost...**

### **Boaz purchased "the whole field..."**

V. 9 - And **all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's**

V. 10 - Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, **I have acquired as my wife**

- **He doesn't hide her backstory.** He **knows exactly** what he is getting into. **(so does Christ!)**
- **He doesn't whitewash her origins.** He **knows where she came from.** **(so does Christ!)**
- He claims her **in her pit of despair** with nothing to offer **(foreigner, widow, destitute) (US!)**
- And he **makes her His own**... *though she hasn't earned it...* **(so does Christ!) - Gal 3:28**

V. 10 - **To perpetuate (raise up / carry on) the name of the dead** through his inheritance... **(honor)**

- The plan of the enemy since day one: to wipe out, if he can, the **lineage to the Messiah...** *(lineage next week)*

V. 10 - The name... may not be cut off from **among his brethren and from his position at the gate.**

- **Because of Christ,** our names are not cut off. but instead **found in His book of Life!**

V. 10 - **"You are witnesses this day."**

- **Complete redemption:** **land + lineage. Property + Posterity**
  - **Fulness of restoration** to land/people... **(you and I too!)**
  - **A glorious inheritance!**

### **Closing:**

**What Boaz did for Elimilech, Jesus has done for His people.... But an even greater cost...**

- 1 Peter 1:18-19, CSB - "For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, **but with the precious blood of Christ,** like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb."

**Our response...?**

- 1 Cor. 6:19-20, ESV - "...you are not your own, **for you were bought with a price.** So glorify God in your body."

**Response? (Romans 10:9-10)** - Salvation itself has a public, declared commitment as well.

**PRAY**