

The Glory of our Kinsman Redeemer Part 3

Book of Ruth

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I want to invite you to turn with me in your Bibles to Ruth 4. The title of the message today is "The Glory of our Redeemer Part 3." We began looking at this two weeks ago and we will conclude this message title, three part message basically, this morning, "The Glory of our Redeemer." What I suggested to you is that Boaz, one of the main characters in this story who is the redeemer, the kinsman redeemer who performs the function of the kinsman redeemer in this passage and delivers Ruth and Naomi from hopelessness, is actually a type of Christ, an anticipation of what the saving work of Jesus would be. I shared with you initially and just kind of briefly to remind you of the basis of this understanding of the Old Testament, the richness of how God is basically presenting to us in the pages of Scripture as his revelation, his progressive revelation is made known, he is presenting to us our great need of a Savior and the glory of the Savior to come. We used the image of a chalk drawing or one of those pastel drawings that you may have seen where they are drawing it in such a way as they're talking to you, that you can't really see what's happening; you don't really know where it's going until suddenly at the end it all comes together and you see this is what they've been drawing. That's what's happening in the Old Testament, every page of the Old Testament God is filling in more of the details and then it all comes to its perfect fulfillment when Christ comes, and we see that everything that has been drawn, everything that has been painted, everything that has happened in the history of God's Old Testament people, was in anticipation of the Savior to come. And we saw how that's true, this typology is clear in Hebrews, the passage Jess read earlier from Hebrews 2, but in Hebrews 3 and 4 and 11, you see this typology clearly laid out, that what God is teaching us in the Old Testament through his work with his people is that he's answering the question: how can sinners come to dwell in the presence of a holy God? How can sinful people whose sin separates them from God, how can they come to dwell in the presence of a holy God? How can we get to heaven? How can we be saved? That's the question that all of Scripture is trying to answer and God is laying the groundwork for that answer in the way that he deals with his people, Israel. He shows us that Canaan, the land of Canaan, is a type of heaven; that to dwell in the land of Canaan is to have the opportunity to dwell in the land of heaven.

I was sharing with someone just this week talking about this, a professing believer. We were talking about actually talking about getting old and coming death. He's a guy about my age and we were talking about the aches and pains that led to this discussion and I

was sharing with him about how God, one of the reasons he gives us these things is to make us look forward to heaven. This world is not our home. We're created for a perfect world and this world is not perfect and our bodies are not perfect, other people are not perfect, our relationships are not. Everything is marred by sin. And so we were talking about that and I mentioned this is the whole point of Hebrews and I was telling him about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and how in Hebrews the author says that they each had been promised the land, they had been promised Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey as their inheritance, their possession and yet Abraham lived his whole life and only owned one little small postage stamp of Canaan, not even worthy of that, one field with a cave in it where he buried his wife. Isaac lived in the land as a stranger in the land dwelling in tents and he still owned only that one small piece that was passed down from his father. Jacob, the same thing. And I was sharing that and the guy even asked, "Why is that?" I was going to get to that. I was so glad he said it right up front. "Why did God not give him the land?" And that's exactly the question the Lord is trying to get us to ask ourselves and the author of Hebrews answers it. The reason he didn't give Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the land is so that they could learn from this: God has given you an inheritance to dwell with him and yet it's not in this life.

That's what the author of Hebrews says. They walked with God living in tents, not possessing the land so that they would desire a better country, that is, a heavenly country; that they would set their hearts not on this world but on the true Canaan which is in heaven to be in God's presence. That's carried forth in Hebrews 3 and 4 where the author there talks about how we enter into God's presence, into Canaan, into the spiritual Canaan, into heaven, by faith. And this is the argument that he's drawing on, this Old Testament typology and so we pointed out that many places in the Old Testament, it's picturing Jesus in so many different ways: the king to come, the prophet to come, the priest to come. And here in this book, he's adding to that portrait. He's telling us that to dwell in God's land, we need a Redeemer who will deliver us from slavery, he will deliver us from having no place in the land because Naomi and Ruth have no place in the land. They have no inheritance. They've lost it. Their only hope is a kinsman redeemer to come and to pay the redemption price so that they can have a place in the land.

So the Lord is filling in some of this picture of our coming Savior, that our Savior must be one who is a kinsman redeemer like Boaz and Boaz, so, is a type of Christ. As we look at Boaz, he's presented in this book as a type of Jesus and so as we look at him and we look at his characteristics, we see what the Messiah to come will be like. We started looking at this two weeks ago and laid out that basically there are seven characteristics of Boaz that are types of Jesus or characteristics which approximate in a small way the glory of the coming Messiah.

I shared with you, first of all, two weeks ago, that he would be a man of ability. He would be a man of means: a man of ability, a man of great wealth and power and ability to pay the price. He has the means. That was a man of ability. That was number 1.

Number 2 last time because we've got three points today and they're going to be 5, 6 and 7 so I've got to give you the first four otherwise you won't know why I'm saying 5, 6 and

7. He will be a man of ability, number 1. He'll be a man of action, number 2. We saw this last time. He will be a man of righteousness, number 3. And he'll be a man of wisdom. We see all of these things in Boaz's dealings. A man of ability, a man of action, a man of righteousness, a man of wisdom and today we come to the fifth characteristic. We'll look at 5, 6 and 7 and the fifth characteristic, our first main point, number 5 is: he will be a man of close relation. A man of close relation. One of the things that is emphasized in the book of Ruth is the close relationship of Boaz to them, the familial ties.

You see it, first of all, in chapter 2, verse 1, when the author introduces Boaz to the readers well before Naomi and Ruth meet him. In chapter 2, verse 1, "Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz." A kinsman. Before we do that, let me set the context better by reading the entire fourth chapter. I want to do that and then we'll move into the points. I jumped ahead. Let me read Ruth 4:1-18 and then we'll get back into those points, we'll come back to number 5 in just a moment.

Okay, Ruth 4:1,

1 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there, and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz spoke was passing by, so he said, "Turn aside, friend, sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. 2 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 closest relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. 4 So I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.'" And he said, "I will redeem it." 5 Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance." 6 The closest relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, because I would jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it." 7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and the exchange of land to confirm any matter: a man removed his sandal and gave it to another; and this was the manner of attestation in Israel. 8 So the closest relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." And he removed his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. 10 Moreover, I have acquired Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, to be my wife in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance, so that the name of the deceased will not be cut off from his brothers or from the court of his birth place; you are witnesses today." 11 All the people who were in the court, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman

who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel; and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem. 12 Moreover, may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which 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 enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. 14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel. 15 May he also be to you a restorer of life and a sustainer of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." 16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her lap, and became his nurse. 17 The neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi!" So they named him Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David. 18 Now these are the generations of Perez: to Perez was born Hezron, 19 and to Hezron was born Ram, and to Ram, Amminadab, 20 and to Amminadab was born Nahshon, and to Nahshon, Salmon, 21 and to Salmon was born Boaz, and to Boaz, Obed, 22 and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse, David.

Let's pray together.

Father, we thank you for your word and we pray that you now would grant us grace that the entrance of your word would give light and in your light we might see light. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

This wonderful story of how Naomi and Ruth, two widows, move from emptiness and hopelessness to fullness and blessing through the lovingkindness of God who is orchestrating the events that are happening. We've mentioned that the main character in the book really is Naomi; that she is the one that we identify with most naturally, that the original audience was supposed to identify with. She's the focus of chapter 1 and she here is the focus of chapter 4 at the end. It's to Naomi who has been born a son, the ladies proclaim, and they talk about the blessings upon her. So she's moved from emptiness and hopelessness to fullness and hope and joy and the way God does it is through the lovingkindness of a Moabite daughter-in-law and a man of Israel named Boaz, and God shows this great kindness to picture to us how we move from emptiness and hopelessness to fullness and joy and ultimately, as I said earlier, the type that we're to see in the book is Boaz as a type of Christ. He's the key. He's the one that holds the key to moving us from despair to true joy and to hope.

Now, we mentioned he's a man of ability, he's a man of action, righteousness and wisdom. We talked about that in previous weeks and now we come, he's a man of close relation. The Redeemer to come must be a man of close relation to us. In chapter 2, verse 1, Naomi had said, "he's a kinsman. He is one who is known to our family." He is twice in chapter 2, it's emphasized he's of the family of Elimelech, verse 1 of chapter 2, Boaz, "a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech." And then chapter 2, verse 3, we're

reminded after he says, "she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech." That repetition. We noted it at the time. Emphatic. Don't miss this, he's of the family of Elimelech. In chapter 2, verse 20, after Naomi hears the report, sees Ruth bring in the grain from her time at Boaz's field and she finally gets around to telling her the name of the man with whom she gleaned, "The name of the man in whose field I gleaned today is Boaz." Naomi then says, "the man is our relative. He is one of our closest relatives." And when she introduces the word "closest relative" here, the key word in the entire book comes into the spotlight.

The closest relative. We mentioned this word is translated different ways in different Bible versions. The ESV translates that word "redeemer." He's one of our redeemers. The NASB and the King James focus on relationship because this Hebrew word is a complex word, it's really got two primary foci of meaning, two basic areas of meaning that flow out of one word. One part of that meaning is relationship and the other part is responsibility. The responsibility is seen in the word "redeeming," to pay the redemption price. Relationship is seen in that sense of close relative. And so I really like the way the NIV translates this particular word best throughout the book, it translates it "kinsman redeemer" almost every time the noun occurs. Kinsman redeemer, both are there, the kinsman and the redeemer and so the NIV gets it right in this area, although I still think the NASB is a superior translation even in the book of Ruth.

Let me just explain that real quickly since I said it. Twenty-two times the word either the noun or verb are used in this book, the noun "kinsman redeemer," the verb translated "redeem." Okay? Twenty-two times when you add them all up it occurs in Ruth. Twenty-one times the NASB and the King James translate those words, only 16 the NIV. The NIV leaves out a lot of times, they take out extra "redeems" in verses and I just really don't like that because the emphasis when God says the word four times in a verse, he wants it to sound like that, to be repetitive. Like in chapter 3, verse 13, in the NASB you read it as it is in the Hebrew, "Remain this night," this is when Boaz is talking to Ruth after she's made herself known to him by lying at his feet, uncovering his feet, he says, "Remain this night, and when morning comes, if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you." You hear that redeem, redeem, redeem, redeem. The NIV cuts it down to two. They do something like, "If he will redeem you, then let him do it." And they're just trying to make it sound better in English and I appreciate that but to me if it sounded the way it did in Hebrew, what's wrong with us making it sound like that too? Where the Hebrew, they just enjoyed repetition more than we do? I don't think so. So anyway, that's my balanced position. They got it right on kinsman redeemer, though. That's how it should be, the noun should be translated "kinsman redeemer." Okay, sorry for that digression.

The key point is Boaz had to redeem, he had to be a close relative and so this word "kinsman redeemer" and "redeemed" 22 times, the greatest concentration of this particular word in all of the Old Testament, occurring really 22 times in 36 verses, this is the main concept of the book. It's about our kinsman who will redeem us. So what's happening? Ruth and Naomi have lost their place in God's land. Their inheritance is in jeopardy. They don't have it anymore and to not have their place in God's land and what

God is doing typologically is showing us, I mean, to have your name and your inheritance in heaven is the one thing that matters. Remember when the disciples came back from their mission when Jesus sent out the 70 and they said, "Even the demons obey us"? And he says, "Don't rejoice that the demons obey you, rejoice that your names are written in the Book of Life." Rejoice that you are going to have an eternal place in heaven. That's what you rejoice in. That's all that matters. So Ruth and Naomi are in danger, they've lost theirs typologically. They've lost their place in Canaan which God is using to typify what it means to lose your place in heaven. What do they need to regain their place? What do they need to have a place? They need a redeemer, someone to pay the price to buy back their field, to buy back their property, to pay the exorbitant price, to lay it down and pay it so that they then can have their place in the land.

What must that person be like? That's what we're seeing. He must be a man of close relationship. Only the near kinsman could buy back the land and redeem the name and the place. He had to be a near relative. Usually, we see in Deuteronomy 25:5 and Leviticus 25:25, in fact, turn back to Leviticus 25. We'll go back to both those passages. This is where we see this law laid down in God's Torah, in the first five books of the Bible. Leviticus 25:25, "If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman," same word here that we're seeing in Ruth, "is to come and buy back what his relative has sold," and the word "buy back" is the word "redeem." Now actually, "fellow countryman and relative" could both be better translated "brother" there. It really says in Hebrews, "If a brother of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his brother has sold." And of course, they use the word "brother" in a way that's different than how we use it. We really speak of brother usually, as Christians we sometimes speak of one another as brother and sister, right? But generally in society, we don't speak of our cousin as our brother or our uncle as our brother or somebody that's in our family, distant family, or even in our country as a brother, but that's how they used that phrase. Brother could mean the wider family. So the point is, though, that it must be someone who is related to you, someone who is closely related to you has to buy back your property.

Then in Deuteronomy 25, the law of Levirate marriage, we see the same thing. "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." Do you see that, name blotted out from Israel? Your name must not be blotted out of the Book of Life. This is what he's teaching us. He's using the real history of Israel to teach us, to give us pictures of what salvation is.

So to be redeemed, we don't just need someone who has ability, who is a man of action and righteousness and wisdom, we need someone who is a close relative. This is why Jesus had to be made like us in every way. The passage that Jess read earlier from Hebrews 2:14, "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood," Hebrews 2:14, listen to this, "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the

power of death, that is, the devil." Verse 17, "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God." For us to be saved, God the Son was going to do it but for God the Son to save us, though he has all power, though he can do anything he wants to do, he cannot violate his own law and the only way that he could save sinful man was to leave heaven and become a man. He had to enter into our flesh and the wonder is, he was willing to do it. This is a mystery that the Scriptures just marvel at. Galatians 4:4-5, listen to how God came down to be a part of us. "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law," why? Why was he born of a woman and born under the law? "So that He might redeem those who were under the Law." He had to be made under the law, born of a woman, so that he might pay the redemption price which is his blood. He had to be a close relative and this is one of the great encouragements to us is that we have a high priest, a Savior, who has come all the way down, experienced everything that we could ever experience and he has saved us.

Now, this leads us to the next attribute which is very closely related to that one we just talked about. He must be a man of close relation, number 6: he must be a man of true chesed. I'm going to use the Hebrew word. It's c-h-e-s-e-d. Though it does not occur nearly as many times as the word "kinsman redeemer" and "redeem" in Ruth, it's also a key word in this book because it's the underlying concept that we see being lived out before us. Chesed normally translated in your Bible either by the phrase in King James and NASB "lovingkindness," God's lovingkindness is his chesed. The ESV translates it "steadfast love." And here, again, I think the better translation is lovingkindness. Steadfast love is part of it but I think that's actually not exactly as close to the true meaning of the word. The idea of the word is, essentially chesed is shown by someone who's in a greater position who has means to alleviate suffering and who sees someone in suffering in a pitiful estate and whose heart is moved with compassion and action and love toward that person, and that love and action and compassion is given freely. There is no sense of constraint to give it. So it's really grace and mercy and love all put together in one. It's a person seeing someone in need and then moving with compassion to alleviate the suffering. This is an attribute of God.

It's emphasized so wonderfully in that one of the high points of the Old Testament, Exodus 34:6, when Moses had asked the Lord to see his glory. Moses had already seen God's glory. I remember when I first was reading that when I was young, reading that, "Wow, what do you mean, show me your glory? You've already seen the Lord do incredible things that I wish I had seen but you saw so much, Moses. You saw the Lord deliver the people from Egypt with all of those amazing plagues. You saw the Lord lead your people through the Red Sea. You saw God's presence in the form of visibly his Shekinah glory in the presence of a pillar of fire which dwelt above the tabernacle. You've seen all these things but you want to see more of God's glory." And the Lord loved that that he wanted to see more of his glory and he said, "I will show you my glory," and he put him in the cleft of the rock and he said, "You can't see me direct full on, you can only see the back parts of my glory." And so he saw the Lord but what he saw was really what he heard because the Lord is proclaiming his name as he passes by as Moses is there in the cleft of the rock and this is what Moses hears. Moses says, "What

are you truly like? What is the essence of your character? What is your being?" And this is what he hears as the Lord passes by, "The LORD, the LORD," that is his name, his covenant name, Yahweh, Yahweh, sometimes pronounced Jehovah. "Yahweh, Yahweh, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness," abounding in chesed. And that's the one word of all the words that you find that passage that's repeated. He says, "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me but showing mercy to thousands who love Me."

So God, his chesed is at the essence of who he is, his lovingkindness. When he sees need, when he sees brokenness, his heart is moved with compassion, his heart is moved with mercy and love toward those in need. So in the book of Ruth, we see this word in each chapter of the first three chapters in a prominent way but it really undergirds all that's happening. First of all, we see it in chapter 1, verse 8, when Naomi asked the Lord to deal kindly with her daughters-in-law, "deal kindly" in chapter 1, verse 8, is the verb form of the word "chesed." "May the LORD show lovingkindness with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me." Then chapter 2, verse 20, when Naomi exclaims after she realizes that Ruth has received this incredible blessing from a man named Boaz who she knows is their close relative, she says this, "May he be blessed of the LORD who has not withdrawn his lovingkindness to the living and to the dead." She realizes that God is still showing his lovingkindness to the living and the dead. Then chapter 3, verse 10, Boaz, on the lips of Boaz in talking about Ruth's actions when Ruth comes to him, lies at his feet basically proposing marriage, remember, he says to her, verse 10, "May you be blessed of the LORD, my daughter. You have shown your last kindness," your last chesed, "to be better than the first by not going after young men, whether poor or rich."

We talked about the fact that he saw what she was doing as an act of chesed toward Naomi. Her first act had been to leave the land of her father, the land of her birth, her father and her mother, and to go with Naomi back to Israel and to Bethlehem. That was an incredible act of chesed. She looked a woman who was in a miserable state, Ruth had a much better chance of making it in life by going back to Moab as a young woman and marrying another man but she forgot that and she went with her mother-in-law out of a desire to show kindness because God had worked in her life in a saving way. He says, "That kindness was great but this kindness is even greater because now you've not only come and stayed here, you chose not to marry a younger man here and take care of your mother-in-law, you've chosen to go after an older man who is a kinsman redeemer who can raise up the name of your dead husband and that's got to thrill your mother-in-law's heart. You have shown this chesed."

So what basically is happening, God is showing his lovingkindness to Naomi through Ruth. That's what's happening. The Lord shows his lovingkindness to us so often through other people. I feel like I wish God would show me he loves me. I wish I could feel him wrap his arms around me. So often the times that you feel that, really feel that, are in connection with other believers who are loving you and caring for you. True chesed.

That's what Boaz is also demonstrating. We see it in chapter 2 and chapter 3 and chapter 4 because Ruth's is toward Naomi, Boaz's is toward Ruth and Naomi. Ruth comes to him in chapter 2, she's helpless. There she is in his garden wanting to gather just the leftovers and he makes amazing provision for her. He sees her in her need and he goes to her in compassion. She's scared, hopeless, timid. He goes up to her and he says, "Listen, young lady, don't go anywhere else. You stay in my field and you glean. You don't need to worry about provision anymore. You can stay with my maids and you can glean." How that must have ministered to her heart. And she falls down before him and says, "Why have I found favor in your sight?" And he says, "I heard about what you did for your mother-in-law."

And he goes on to say, "Listen, I want you to stay here with my maids and I've already told my servants not to touch you, not to bother you. They're going to make allowance for you. You are going to be home here." She's amazed by that, overwhelmed by that. Then at dinnertime, remember, they're all sitting down at lunchtime, I mean. The workers are having lunch and she's too scared to even get close and Boaz calls her up from the back where she's lingering on the outskirts and brings her up and sits her down right in front and he serves her. He feeds her roasted grain, so much that she has leftovers to take home to her mother-in-law. And then, remember, he makes sure that the workers, he says, "Don't bother her. Not only don't bother her, you guys make sure you drop grain intentionally for her." Incredible provision for her. The kindness of Boaz toward a woman in need, a woman who needs redemption, a woman who needs hope. Look at the heart of Christ.

Then in chapter 3 where she, remember we talked about this, this is a little bit on the border of sound plan of action where Naomi concocts a scheme for Ruth to propose marriage; tells her to go down at night to the threshing floor, all the associations in that culture with the threshing floor and immorality, and lie down at his feet, don't make yourself known to him until he's asleep and after he's had plenty to eat and drink, then lay at his feet, uncover his feet, basically proposing marriage and saying, "I'm willing right now to become your wife, right now to consummate our marriage." Boaz wakes up, sees her, rather than be appalled at what she's done, she's not really sinned but, like I said, it's on the borderline, he's kind to her. He says to her, that's when he commends her. Once he wakes up, remember he wakes up and he doesn't recognize her, "Who are you?" because he can't see her, it's dark. "I'm Ruth your maid. Spread your covering over your maid for you are a close relative." This is when he says, "May you be blessed of the LORD. This kindness is greater than your first." How she must have been worried, nervous about, "How is this man going to receive me? What is he going to think of me?" And look at the welcoming heart of the redeemer. His chesed. He sees her in need and his heart says, "Oh, I commend you for seeking me like this."

"My daughter," verse 11, "do not fear. I will do for you whatever you ask, for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of excellence." But he also does what's right, "I'm a close relative but there's one closer than I so lie at my feet until morning." They don't consummate anything. "Lie at my feet until morning," and before it's basically light, he gets up, they get up and he sends her away with 60 pounds of grain so she won't

go home empty-handed. Then he tells those around him, "Do not speak of this woman coming to the threshing floor," he protects her reputation and then he sets out right away to redeem her. This is the heart of the Messiah.

Now, one thing that was interesting we saw, as you read through the flow of action, you know, you're wanting this romance to happen and to be fulfilled and why did the Lord allow there to be another relative in the way? It's always good to ask a question like that. Why was there a relative closer? Because God is sovereign over everything. It's not like he's planning his action and then something happens and he says, "Oh, wow, I didn't think about that. Okay, I'm glad, but, Boaz, you've got to make sure you work this out appropriately." No, he planned there to be a relative in the way and that relative then would reject the opportunity to redeem once he knew about Ruth the Moabitess.

Why is that? I think the Lord did that to make Boaz, his chesed, stand out by contrast because the man who rejects Ruth was being pretty reasonable. We talked about this. Remember, he basically was probably bringing a second wife into his home, all the complications of that. There was the reasonability of not accepting the Levirate marriage and yet Boaz's grace and kindness stands out all the more by letting that happen right in front of him so that we don't miss it. For Boaz to do what he did was extraordinary. That's what the author wants us to see. For Jesus to do what he has done for us is extraordinary. There is no reason that he should save us. There is no reason that he should redeem us. There is no reason that he should want to pay the price for us.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 5 makes this kind of statement by showing the glory of God's love and Christ's love by contrast. He says this in chapter 5, verse 7, "For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die." Basically he's saying, "Look, we don't want to die for other people. It's not natural in us, but perhaps for a good man someone might even dare to die. But God demonstrates his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Our Savior is a Savior of lovingkindness and tenderness.

Isaiah 42:3, the Lord prophesying the Messiah to come said, "A bruised reed He will not break And a smoking flax He will not extinguish." He is gentle and loving to those who humble themselves before him. If you won't humble yourselves before him, you will know his fury; you will receive his wrath. But if you will humble yourself and seek him, he will never turn away the most filthy sinner who comes to him humbly and broken.

He was a friend of tax collectors. In his entourage he had not only the 12 but other male and female disciples. One of the interesting things to note as you read the Gospels is how many women there were around Jesus following him. It was something that was extraordinary for that day. The Jewish people had no regard for women appropriately and Jesus is showing them, "You guys have been missing this also." Everywhere you look, I mean, it was them who were at the cross, remember, commented on in John's Gospel and the other Gospels. It was they who were at the tomb early on Sunday morning. And who were those women? Well, one of them was Mary Magdalene, a prostitute, a woman who

had been demon possessed. He is a friend of sinners. You can come to him no matter how filthy you are. If you come to him humbly, he will receive you.

That wonderful hymn,

"Jesus! what a Friend for sinners!
Jesus! Lover of my soul;
Friends may fail me, foes assail me,
He, my Savior, makes me whole.

"Jesus! what a Help in sorrow!
While the billows over me roll,
Even when my heart is breaking,
He, my Comfort, helps my soul.

"Jesus! I do now receive Him,
More than all in Him I find.
He hath granted me forgiveness,
I am His, and He is mine.

"Hallelujah! what a Savior!
Hallelujah! what a Friend!
Saving, helping, keeping, loving,
He is with me to the end."

So he must be a close relation, he must be a man of true chesed and, finally, he must be a man of an enduring name. Number 7: he must be a man of enduring name. Interesting, Boaz's name, we talked about the fact that his name itself either means "strength" or "swiftness." There is debate about where the etymology of it comes. Either one, a stand-out in contrast to Mahlon, Ruth's husband, which means "weakness." Boaz was a man of strength and a man of swift action and his character, a man of means and wealth, a man who can deliver out of the troubles of Ruth and Naomi's lives. He's a man who had decisive impact and his name endured because of his great work. His name endured because of his enduring work. What happens is he marries this woman and as soon as he redeems her there in the courts of the people, we hear the people pronouncing blessings upon him that are going to be fulfilled in his life.

Now, he won't see it, he would die without ever knowing what was going to happen but they say to him, "We are witnesses," verse 11, "May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah." That's a big blessing. "May the woman who is coming into your home be like Rachel and Leah put together." With their handmaids, 12 sons. All of Israel came from Rachel and Leah. "Both of whom built the house of Israel; and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem." May your name become famous basically means, "May people in Bethlehem always be calling your name, talking about Boaz, Boaz, Boaz."

Then verse 12, "may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which the LORD will give you by this young woman." May your house be established. One thing that's interesting about this is that we see at the end, of course, that Boaz is the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, Jesse the father of David. God in this seemingly insignificant circumstance, you think about in the big picture, how important was it that these two widows were over here in need? I mean, they're walking by and nobody is noticing that. Who cares. And yet God used their circumstance to protect the line of Christ. If this didn't happen, Jesus is not born. Obed is the grandfather of David so Boaz will be the great grandfather of King David. His great action, his chesed, his love, his taking the initiative at the moment using his means to save Ruth and Naomi, their place in the land, would give him an enduring name because of the great work.

I mentioned to you a while back, you may not remember this, that the temple had two main pillars that supported all the weight of the temple. Who was the temple built by? Solomon, the son of David. Solomon named both of those pillars, one of those pillars he named Boaz. He knew that his great great grandfather had done a great work in Israel, had built the house of David. This man doing what he was supposed to do, God used in an incredible enduring way.

Then somebody asked a question last week that I've been thinking about even before they asked it that I want to share with you. The question was this: we see that what Boaz did was he took Ruth to be his wife as it says in chapter 4, verse 5, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance. In chapter 4, verse 10, it's repeated when he says, "I have acquired Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, to be my wife in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance." He's going to raise up the name of Mahlon on the inheritance. The question was this: why is Boaz's name in the genealogy of the name of Christ and not Mahlon's? That's a good question because Boaz's heart and intent was to raise up the name of Mahlon. That's what he's doing and yet in the genealogy here and also in Matthew 1:5 when we read the genealogy of Christ, there is no mention of Mahlon. There is mention of Boaz. Salmon, Boaz, Obed, just as it is here, Jesse, David, all the way down to Jesus.

I think one of the things that's happening here is God is showing us again a typological way that Boaz pictures Jesus. What is Boaz doing when he performs the role of Levirate marriage? He's taking a woman and he's choosing to marry her, to have a son, to raise up the name. One of the reasons that the other guy doesn't do it is because there's nothing in it for him. To be the redeemer, you're paying out money that's blessing someone else, not you, and you're raising up the name of someone, not your name. Aren't you in a way becoming of no reputation? "It's not my name I'm trying to lift up," Boaz is saying. "I'm not trying to lift up my name, I'm lifting up the name of this brother who needs his name lifted up." He made himself of no reputation to raise up the name of his brother and when you do that, God remembers that and God raises up your name and in that way he's a tiny shadow of one who would come who would make himself of no reputation, who would not be worried about his name.

Turn with me to Philippians 2:5, a familiar passage, "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." The King James translates, "emptied himself" as "made himself of no reputation." The idea is that Jesus is fully God, he deserves honor and worship, he deserves his name to be revered and yet he laid his glory aside, he emptied himself of dignity and honor and prerogatives as God. He didn't cease to be God but he ceased to use his power. He laid aside his prerogatives to use his power for his own ends and to be concerned about his own name. He was despised and rejected. Men considered him forsaken of God. He did this so that he could lift up the name of those he was redeeming.

It's interesting too, the name Obed, do you know what the name Obed means in Hebrew? They named the child of Boaz, Obed. And the other ladies do, it's interesting the way it's listed. It's like, hey, what happened? Boaz and Ruth paused a little bit after the birth and the ladies slapped a name on him. Obed, there it is. Better be quick out of the gate with your name. Obed means "servant or slave." The child that gave such joy to Naomi, the ladies basically said, "God has given you a servant to minister to you in your old age, a servant who will establish your place in the land, will care for you, will look after you, will serve you." And so Boaz and Obed are a type of Christ.

Jesus emptied himself of all honor and dignity, majesty, takes upon himself the form of a slave, made as a man, and then goes even to the point of death, even the death of the cross. He lowers himself and lowers himself and lowers himself. That's what Paul sees, this great descent, the humiliation of the Messiah. Going all the way down to become man in the first place, in the likeness of sinful flesh, is a humiliation but then to live as a slave. What did Jesus say? "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve." He came to be a servant. Remember him on the last night before his crucifixion stooping down to wash his disciples' feet. This is the character of the Messiah that would come. He would be a servant. He would make himself of no reputation.

Galatians 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.'" The redemption price required that he become a slave and follow God all the way to death and to becoming cursed for us. And the wonder of it is, he did it. He freely gave his life.

And so the Apostle Paul after saying that says, because he did this, how did God view Christ? When he humiliated himself and went all the way down, made himself of no reputation, what did God do? Philippians 2:9, "For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

He humiliated himself, humbled himself, and God therefore highly exalted him and we see that even in a small way in the life of Boaz and in his son, Obed. We have to have a Savior. To be saved, we have to have someone who is a close relative of ours, who is willing to take on human flesh, who is a man of incredible compassion and mercy, and who is willing to lay aside his own reputation and lay down his name, but then in the end his name will endure forever. That is the Savior, Jesus Christ.

"Jesus! what a Friend for sinners!
Jesus! Lover of my soul;
Friends may fail me, foes assail me,
He, my Savior, makes me whole.

"Hallelujah! what a Savior!
Hallelujah! what a Friend!"

Let's pray together.

Father, we give you praise and glory for what you have done in Christ. Lord, we marvel at the humility and meekness of our great God and Savior. We thank you that as we see Jesus, we see you, Father, for he said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." And when we see Jesus meek and mild and tender, we see that the God of all glory is meek and mild and tender to those who humble themselves before him. Lord, we ask that you would grant grace that every one of us would humble ourselves before you, those that are already believers would continue to humble ourselves before you, to see our great need and to realize that we can always run to such a kind and compassionate and loving God who has done everything necessary to save us. We pray for those that are here that have not repented and placed their faith in Christ, that they would see that today is the day of salvation, that they need to call upon the name of the Lord now while there is time and receive the welcome of such a loving, tender-hearted King, for if we do not, his anger will flare and we'll experience his judgment. Lord, may everyone trust in him, our great Savior, Jesus. We pray in his name. Amen.