



Seeking the Redeemer

Ruth 3:1-18

- Overview of kinsman-redeemer
 - o The concept of the **kinsman-redeemer** (*go'el* in Hebrew) is a key theme in the Old Testament, rooted in God's covenant with Israel and His care for the vulnerable. It refers to a male relative who has the obligation to rescue or protect a family member in need, particularly in situations involving property, lineage, or personal freedom.
 - o The kinsman-redeemer was a close male relative who acted on behalf of a family member to:
 - o **Redeem Property:** Recover land that a family member had sold or lost due to financial hardship (Leviticus 25:25-28).

- **Redeem People:** Buy back a family member who had been sold into slavery because of debt (Leviticus 25:47-49).
- **Avenge Blood:** Act as the “avenger of blood” to ensure justice for a murdered relative (Numbers 35:19-21).
- **Preserve Lineage:** Marry a widow (if no male heirs existed) to produce offspring and maintain the family’s inheritance (Deuteronomy 25:5-10).
- The kinsman-redeemer role was based on laws given to protect families and maintain the inheritance within Israel:
- **Leviticus 25:25-28:** The law of redemption for property ensures that family lands remain within the clan.
- **Deuteronomy 25:5-10:** The law of levirate marriage requires the brother of a deceased man to marry his widow and produce an heir to preserve the family line.

Main Point: We can approach our redeemer with the same bold faith as Ruth.

I. Faith and redemption

- a. Redemption is the act of saving, regaining or gaining possession of something. In many cases it is the clearing of a debt. A key question that has to be answered here is – what does it take to be redeemed?
- b. There was no social safety net for widows in the ancient world like we have today. If they didn’t have someone close to them to take care of them – there wasn’t much hope for them. They would be among some of the most poor and needy in society.

- c. The role of a kinsman-redeemer as described in the OT did provide a way for the most vulnerable in society to be cared for. It was a way of bringing a sense of justice to a difficult time and circumstance. However, it required the right prerequisites to line up properly.
 - i. The kinsman-redeemer was required to be a close relative. It couldn't be just anyone. There had to be family ties.
 - ii. He also had to be willing to take on the sacrifices necessary to care for the widow in need.
 - iii. He had to be able to meet those financial obligations. They had to be men of means with the resources required to do what the law required.
- d. All of this foreshadows what Christ did on our behalf.
- e. Jesus, as our ultimate Kinsman-Redeemer, provides us with restoration, security, and an eternal inheritance.

II. Faith and the future

- a. Ruth did not know what the future would hold. Things could go in a much better direction if Boaz would respond positively to being the kinsman-redeemer.
- b. But things could also go in a very different direction. It is highly possible that Ruth and Naomi could spend the rest of their lives starving and struggling from one day to the next.
- c. But here we see faith on full display. *If we know what will happen to us in the future, there would be no reason for faith to exist.*
- d. The very fact that we don't know what will happen tomorrow causes us to exercise faith and step out in faith.

- e.* Spiritual reminder that has very real implications on our lives.
 - i.* There are times when we face a fork in the road. There are even times when we can feel the gravity of the decision. It could be a decision that would impact the trajectory of your life and of generations to come.
 - ii.* The easiest things to do in the moment is to not step out in faith. But it will not be easier in the long run.
 - iii.* Not to act is to act.
- f.* When you step out in faith, you are putting your trust in the One who created the heavens and the earth. Even in moments when you think there is no one else that you could trust, you can always put your trust in the Lord.

III. Faith and the response of others

- a. What Naomi proposed for Ruth to do was a gamble. It was very forward to approach Boaz in this way, but it definitely would have caused him to see the severity of their situation.
- b. There was the chance that this situation would end in disaster. Boaz could outright reject her proposal. He could be offended by what she is asking. He could also misinterpret her motives or intentions.
- c. There is a great risk of other misinterpreting her intentions. For others to take advantage of situations like this was very commonplace in their context.
- d. When you step out in faith, it may be difficult for others to understand. You may even worry or wonder what people will think when you are led by God to step out in faith.

- e. The best place you can find yourself is in the center of God's will, regardless of what anyone else thinks about it.
 - i. There is wisdom in seeking good counsel from others, but at the end of the day there is a decision that has to be made and an act of faith that has to be followed through with. The people that you seek for advice or counsel may help to confirm or challenge what you may or may not feel led to do. However, it is up to us, as individuals, to respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- f. Romans 8:31 **What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect?**

IV. Faith and caring for others

- a. All of this was ultimately started with Ruth caring for the needs of her mother-in-law Naomi.
- b. At the beginning of this passage, we see the heart that Naomi has in turn for Ruth. They are caring for one another in their time of need.
- c. Boaz, of course, responds in a godly way to the request that is made. He is willing to do what is necessary to care for Ruth and their wellbeing.
- d. Generous people are not always the richest people. They're just people who care. And whatever God has blessed them with, they are willing to help and care for the needs of others.
- e. To be generous, you just have to pay attention to others and where they are.

- f. Ultimately, our generosity has limits to it. We are limited in resources like time and money. Our generosity can only go so far. But we are reminded of what motivates our generosity to begin with – we have been blessed by a good and gracious God.
- g. There are no limits to His generosity.
- h. Christians are some of the most generous people on earth. Practicing Christians are 40% more likely to give to charity than non-Christians. Regular church goers are 75% more likely to donate than non-attendees.
- i. Why is that? We have been beneficiaries of the good and benevolent gifts that God has given to us.
- j. Most importantly, He has given us salvation and redemption.