

Third Presbyterian Church
Midweek Bible Study
Study of RUTH
Lesson 3 – Redeemed

Ruth 4:1-17 (NIV)

¹ Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat there. When the kinsman-redeemer he had mentioned came along, Boaz said, "Come over here, my friend, and sit down." So he went over and sat down. ² Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, "Sit here," and they did so. ³ Then he said to the kinsman-redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our brother Elimelech. ⁴ I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line." "I will redeem it," he said. ⁵ Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, you acquire the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property." ⁶ At this, the kinsman-redeemer said, "Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it." ⁷ (Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.) ⁸ So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal. ⁹ Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰ I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from the town records. Today you are witnesses!" ¹¹ Then the elders and all those at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you have standing in Eph-ra-thah and be famous in Bethlehem. ¹² Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah." ¹³ So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went to her, and the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴ The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! ¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth." ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. ¹⁷ The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David

1. Discuss what you learned about a Kinsman-Redeemer from the sermon.
 - a. How is Jesus our Kinsman Redeemer
2. How are we like Ruth having nothing to offer to our Kinsman Redeemer?
 - a. Discuss how it's a problem when we come to the table of salvation and thinking we have something to offer/bargain with?
3. Jesus sees us, The REAL US without all of the superficial worldly things.
 - a. Why is it important for us to see the "real us" as well?
 - b. How do we get to the point where we come face to face with the real us?
4. What have you learned from this passage that could help you improve your relationship with a good friend or family member?
5. After I am redeemed/saved how do my expectations for God change?
 - a. How does God's expectations for me change?
6. The redemption story for Ruth (a foreigner who was in the lineage of Jesus) changed your view about others who have been deemed beyond saving or could never be redeemed?
7. How have you seen God at work in your own life recently?
8. In what specific ways could we demonstrate thanks to the Lord for His personal involvement in our lives?
9. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

(4:1-22) Introduction: marriage is one of the most beautiful experiences in life. At some point in their lives, most people desire marriage, an intimate relationship with the opposite sex that is permanent, lasting. There is a desire for the spiritual union and intimacy that marriage offers, for a deep sense of...

- rest and peace
- security and stability
- joint purpose and fulfillment
- joy and pleasure
- love and compassion
- assurance and confidence
- faithfulness and trustworthiness
- provision and care

All these are qualities for which the human soul longs. And to some degree, these qualities cannot be completely fulfilled apart from the intimacy of marriage. God has made us that way, putting within our very nature the need for a marriage partner. It is through marriage that the human race is preserved. And it is through a redeemed marriage—a marriage that has been rescued and saved and committed to God—that godly children are born. It is through redeemed marriages that the descendants of faith continue to march down through the ages of history. This is the wonderful event that takes place here in the present Scripture: the marriage of Ruth to Boaz.

Remember, Ruth had proposed to Boaz, seeking to marry him because he was a *kinsman-redeemer*. By law, the kinsman-redeemer was to protect both the name and property of all close relatives. He was to marry any childless widow in order to keep the family name alive, keep the family from dying out. And he was to redeem any property that had been mortgaged or sold off. All property was to be kept within the family. Ruth had sought marriage with Boaz, her kinsman-redeemer, because she and Naomi were in dire straits. They had been widowed, both husbands having died and having left them childless. They were poverty-stricken, living in a male-dominated world. There were few if any reasonable paying jobs for women. Moreover, Ruth was a foreigner, a stranger who was sometimes looked upon suspiciously as foreigners so often are. Ruth and Naomi had faced a bleak, hopeless future—UNTIL NOW! Boaz had accepted Ruth's proposal for marriage. But a problem or predicament existed. There was one closer relative, a man who had the rights of the kinsman-redeemer before Boaz. Even so, Boaz promised Ruth to take the matter immediately to court in order to settle the issue. This is the scene being covered by this chapter.

As this chapter is studied, note how the events cover the work of the kinsman-redeemer. But even more significant, note how the work of the kinsman-redeemer pictures the wonderful work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of the world. This is the subject of this great passage of Scripture: *Ruth Marries Boaz: A Picture of the Wonderful Day of Redemption, 4:1-22*.

1. Fact 1: The redeemer had to be a near kinsman (v.1-4).
2. Fact 2: The redeemer had to be willing to redeem the needy (v.4).
3. Fact 3: The redeemer had to have the resources to redeem the needy (v.5-6).
4. Fact 4: The redeemer had to legally transact redemption before witnesses (v.7-10).
5. Fact 5: The redeemer stirred people to pray because of His gracious act of redemption (v.11-12).
6. Fact 6: The redeemer fulfilled his word, his promise (v.13).
7. Fact 7: The redeemer provided redemption through the child (v.14-17).
8. Fact 8: The redeemer (the child) was to bear fruit, bless the entire world (v.17-22).

1. (4:1-4) Kinsman-Redeemer, Facts About— Redeemer, Facts About— Redemption, Marks of— Cities, Courts of— Courts, Legal— Legal Courts: first, the redeemer had to be a near kinsman, a very close relative, a member of the very same family or clan. This was an absolute essential in order to preserve the name of the family and to keep all property within the family. For this reason, Boaz had to seek out the other kinsman-redeemer. They had to settle the issue: Which one of them would marry Ruth and redeem the property of Naomi and Ruth?

Boaz went to the city gate, the place where court was held and legal matters settled (4:1). In the cities of that day, the gates were somewhat like city squares in small villages and towns. People gathered at the city gates because everyone—citizens and visitors alike—had to pass in and out to conduct business and other important matters. City gates became the place where city officials and businessmen gathered to conduct their affairs. Even civil court was held at the area surrounding city gates.

Boaz arrived at the city gate rather early, probably before daybreak, because of his excitement. Hopefully, he might be able to settle the issue rather quickly and marry Ruth himself. As soon as the other kinsman-redeemer came along, Boaz summoned him into court. Boaz then called ten city elders to serve as court officials and witnesses (4:2). Surprisingly, when he began to present the case before the court, he said nothing about Ruth. Rather, he switched the burden of the case to Naomi, stating that she had a piece of land that she needed to sell because she was poverty-stricken (4:3).

Does this mean that Naomi actually owned a piece of land that had remained in her family during the family's ten-year stay in Moab, that she was now forced to sell it because of her poverty? If so, it was the duty of the kinsman-redeemer to buy back (redeem) the land in order to keep it in the family. However, there is another possible interpretation: that Naomi did not actually own the land at this particular time; that it had been sold by her husband Elimelech before they left for Moab. But according to Israelite law, even now she retained the right of redemption, the right to buy back the land. However, being destitute, she lacked the funds. Thus, it was the responsibility of the kinsman-redeemer to repurchase the property. "It is the right of redemption that Naomi is 'selling.'"

Boaz informed the other kinsman-redeemer that one of them needed to buy the property (4:4). A decision needed to be made. The redemption of the property had to be carried out by a near relative, a kinsman-redeemer.

Thought 1. The law of Israel clearly stated that the redeemer had to be a near kinsman, a close relative, and a member of the family who was related by blood. This is a clear type of Jesus Christ. In order to redeem us, He had to become related to us. Just as we are born with flesh and blood, so He Himself had to come into the world as flesh and blood in order to redeem us.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15).

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS" (Luke 1:31).

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

2. (4:4) Redemption, Facts about— Redemption, Duty— Will, Duty: second, the redeemer had to be willing to redeem the needy. Ruth and Naomi desperately needed to be redeemed, rescued and saved from a life of poverty and hopelessness. They desperately needed someone who was *willing* to redeem them and their property. Boaz was willing, but was the other kinsman?

Boaz urged the kinsman to redeem the property. If he would not, then Boaz stated that he would. As soon as Boaz had made this statement, he heard the dreadful words he had hoped he would not hear. The kinsman agreed to redeem the property. His quick response suggests that he was eager to secure the land, feeling that it would be a good investment and perhaps increase his holdings and estate rather significantly. Of course, being a large property owner would enhance his reputation and position in Bethlehem as well as increase his profits each year.

Thought 1. Throughout Israel's history, willingness was an absolute essential for the needy to be redeemed. The kinsman-redeemer had to be willing to rescue his relative from trouble. So it is with our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ willingly went to the cross to die for us. He made the decision—determined, set His mind, resolved, purposed—to redeem us by dying for us. He willingly, voluntarily became our Redeemer.

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Hebrews 9:12-14).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28)

3. (4:5-6) Resources— Kinsman-Redeemer, Resources of: third, the redeemer had to have the resources to redeem the needy. As soon as the other kinsman agreed to redeem the property, Boaz reminded the kinsman of the legal condition. He had to marry the widow Ruth. And then Boaz added the reason: so that Ruth could have children and carry on her husband's name, keeping the land in the family.

Hearing this, the other kinsman-redeemer backed off. He would not be able to redeem the land and take on the added expense of another family and their future heirs. This time Boaz heard the news he longed to hear: the other kinsman told Boaz to redeem the land himself.

Thought 1. This kinsman-redeemer did not have the resources to redeem Ruth and Naomi. But this is not so with Christ. Jesus Christ has the resources, the power to redeem us, to rescue and save us.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly" (John 10:10).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

4. (4:7-9) Redemption, Surety of, a Legal Transaction— Law, Governing Redemption— Redemption, Duty, to Transact Legally— Boaz, Faithfulness of: fourth, the redeemer had to legally transact redemption before witnesses. This fact is now seen in the legal transaction that took place between Boaz and the other kinsman-redeemer:

1. In ancient history, the law for transferring or redeeming property was finalized by a dramatic symbol: a person removed one sandal and gave it to the other party (4:7). Throughout the Old Testament, to *walk*, to *set foot* on land meant that a person was taking possession and ownership of it (Genesis 13:17; Deuteronomy 11:24; Joshua 1:3). Thus, when an owner transferred his property to another person, the owner removed his sandal and gave it to the other party.

In the present case, when the other kinsman-redeemer refused to buy Naomi's property, he removed his sandal. He revoked his right to the property and gave Boaz the right to purchase it. Just imagine the scene, the

excitement and joy that flooded the heart of Boaz, the anticipation of being with Ruth that rushed through his body. But before he could allow his thoughts and emotions to run loose, he had to finalize the transaction.

2. Boaz called upon the witnesses to confirm the transaction of redemption (4:9-10). He turned to the ten elders and to the people standing around witnessing the scene, calling upon them to be witnesses to the legal transaction. He then itemized exactly what he was redeeming (purchasing):

⇒ He was redeeming all of Naomi's property, the property of her husband Elimelech and their two sons, Kilion and Mahlon (4:9).

⇒ He was redeeming Ruth, marrying her in order to carry on, keep alive the family name and family property (4:10).

Boaz then made a public declaration: the family name and property were not to die out with the deaths of Naomi and Ruth. The family name and property were not to disappear from the family records nor from the town records. "Today you are witnesses to this transaction of redemption."

Thought 1. In the early history of Israel, the redemption of people or property had to be legally transacted. If a kinsman-redeemer was to rescue or save some person, he had to obey the law, legally finalize the transaction. So it was with Christ. When He purchased our redemption upon the cross, it was a legal transaction. Christ fulfilled the law perfectly by hanging upon the cross, by securing our redemption. The death of Jesus Christ upon the cross was a legal transaction between God and man, the very way God chose to redeem us, to rescue and save us from sin and death.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matthew 5:17).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16-17).

5. (4:11-12) Redemption, Results— Prayer, Stirred by— Prayer, What to Pray for: fifth, the redeemer stirred people to pray because of his gracious act of redemption. Once Boaz had finished calling upon the elders and people to be witnesses, they joyfully responded, "We are witnesses." They then offered up a beautiful prayer and blessing upon Ruth and Boaz. Note the Scripture and outline:

1. The people prayed for Ruth: that she might be fruitful, bearing many children (4:11). Note exactly what they prayed: that she would be as fruitful as Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. These two dear women had been the *founding mothers* of Israel. Together they had borne eight sons who became the heads of eight of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 29:31-30:24; 35:18).

It was important for Jewish wives to bear children for two reasons: to build up the nation of Israel and to produce the line through whom God would send the Messiah to save the world. Later, it will be seen that this prayer was answered. Ruth would bear a son, a son who would become the grandfather of King David and be an ancestor of the Messiah Himself (see outline—'Ruth 4:17-22 and note—'Ruth 4:17-22 for more discussion).

2. The people prayed for Boaz, the redeemer: that he might be famous and honored in Bethlehem and throughout the surrounding area of Ephrathah (4:11). The people wanted him to be highly esteemed, to have standing and position throughout the community.

3. The people prayed for the future family of Boaz and Ruth: that all their descendants might be fruitful and be honored. The crowd did not just pray and wish the best for Boaz and Ruth; they wanted their descendants to have the very best in life. They wanted their family to be like that of Perez, who was one of the sons of Judah. Years before, Perez had settled in Bethlehem, which means that he was one of the famous ancestors of the city. Many of the citizens of Bethlehem would trace their roots back to him (1 Chronicles 2:5, 50-54; Ruth 4:18). Tamar, the mother of Perez, is listed in the genealogy of Christ (Matthew 1:3).

Thought 1. When Boaz redeemed Ruth, the people broke out in prayer for him, and Ruth, and their future family. So it is with Christ. It is because of His redemption that we are stirred to pray, giving thanks to Him for redeeming us. Moreover, we are stirred to seek His saving grace and blessings for others. Prayer is aroused within the hearts of all genuine believers because of our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians 6:18).

6. (4:13) Redemption, Accomplished— Promises, Fulfilled— Jesus Christ, Promises of, Fulfilled— Boaz, Faithfulness of: the redeemer fulfilled his word, his promise. Boaz did exactly what he had promised: he redeemed Ruth, married her.

Imagine Ruth waiting—anxiously, excitedly, nervously—to hear if Boaz had been able to secure the right from the other kinsman-redeemer to marry her. Her longing desire was to marry Boaz, not some strange, unknown kinsman-redeemer. At last, the moment for which she had longed arrived: her redeemer came for her. He was the very redeemer of her desires, the redeemer who could meet all the needs of her heart and life. Her redeemer was Boaz. No doubt, as he entered the room where Ruth was waiting to hear from him, he reached out and took her into his arms, sharing the wonderful news: he had accomplished her redemption. He then took her and she became his wife. Soon thereafter, the LORD enabled her to conceive and bear a son. Note that the child was a *special gift* from God, not just an ordinary child. The newborn baby was not just the product of sexual activity; he was a child of destiny. God was choosing the child for a very special purpose.

Thought 1. Boaz redeemed Ruth, fulfilled his word and promise to her. So it is with Christ, our Redeemer. The LORD will fulfill His Word to us, every promise He has made.

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Romans 4:20-21).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our LORD" (1 Corinthians 1:9).

"For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

7. (4:14-17) Redemption, Source— Ruth, Child of— Naomi, Redemption of— Obed, Son of Ruth and Boaz: seventh, the redeemer was given by the LORD Himself. The LORD provided redemption through the child born to Ruth and Boaz. This is clearly seen in the Scripture and outline.

1. The child was given by the LORD to be the kinsman-redeemer of Naomi (4:14). Note that this is the climax of this wonderful short story of unusual love between Ruth and Boaz. And the climax focuses not upon the parents, but upon the child born to the loving couple. The redemption provided by Boaz was to be *carried on* through the child. The redemption of Naomi and Ruth from poverty and hopelessness was not to end with their death. The child was to become the kinsman-redeemer of Naomi and the family, and he was to *pass on* the work of redemption through the descendants of the family.

As soon as the child was born, the women of the neighborhood gathered together with Naomi to celebrate the birth of this very special child. Their praise was lifted up not to Boaz and Ruth, but to the LORD Himself. For it was the LORD who had given the child to the family, given a kinsman-redeemer to Naomi and the future descendants of the family.

2. Note that the women offered up a *prophetic prayer*: they prayed for the child to become famous throughout all Israel. And the child did: through the life and ministry of the great king of Israel, David (4:22), and through the promised Messiah, the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ (4:17; Matthew 1:5-16).

3. The child was also to be a "restorer of life" to Naomi: he was to renew and sustain her in her old age (4:15). He was to reinvigorate her, give her a new outlook and perspective on life—more purpose, meaning, and significance in life.

4. The child was proof of Ruth's love for Naomi, a love that was proven better than having seven sons (4:15). Because of Ruth's great love for Naomi, Naomi was guaranteed that the child would be taught the duties of the kinsman-redeemer. Naomi could rest assured that the child would provide and take care of her throughout all her life. Seven sons could not do any more for her than what the love of Ruth was doing by providing this child for her, this kinsman-redeemer.

5. The child was to be nurtured, reared, and cared for by Naomi. In fact, the child was to be considered the very son of Naomi herself (4:16-17). When the child was finally handed to Naomi, she took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. Some commentators feel that this act was a legal ritual indicating that Naomi was adopting the child as her own son. However, most scholars feel that this was simply an act of love, not of law. Naomi was simply nourishing and caring for the child as a grandmother. Naomi had a son in the sense that she had a grandson.

Thought 1. Just as the LORD gave the child to be a kinsman-redeemer of Naomi, so the LORD has given the child Jesus to be the Redeemer of the world, the Messiah and Savior of all mankind.

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the LORD" (Luke 2:11).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16-17).

8. (4:17-22) Redemption, Results of— Genealogy, of Obed— David, Genealogy of— Faithfulness, Results— Commitment, Results— Boaz, Genealogy of: the redeemer (the child) was to bear fruit, bless the entire world. The most wonderful thing happened to Boaz and Ruth and their son, Obed: they were appointed by God to be a part of the chosen line of King David. This meant that they were the ancestors of the Promised Seed and Savior, the Messiah and Redeemer of the world.

The wonderful love story that began with Naomi facing crisis after crisis has now come full circle. The story has moved all the way from corruption, famine, distrust, unbelief, apostasy, and death—from compromise and hopelessness—to redemption. The family has been rescued and saved from a life of utter hopelessness and despair. God took the total commitment of Ruth and multiplied it mightily. He used her commitment to give birth to a very special child who became the grandfather of King David himself. God used Ruth's commitment to produce the *royal line* of the Promised Seed, the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ. Through His redemption, the Lord Jesus Christ bears fruit and blesses the entire world. His redemption saves all who believe, saves them from the hopelessness of sin and death and from the coming judgment.

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matthew 16:27).

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matthew 25:31-36).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14).

Thought 1. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. draws a very practical application from this genealogy:

The genealogy reminds us that God's hand guides us. David's God is our God too. He sent David's greatest son, Jesus, as our Savior. He drew us to personal faith in Christ. He still fully controls human history. We are still part of his larger plan—the salvation of the world. So we can rely on Him to guide our lives.

Thought 2. Leon Morris questions why the Book of Ruth ends with a genealogy. His question and discussion are worth noting:

Why does the book end with a genealogy? It is hard to say. In the Introduction we have noted and rejected the view that the whole was written to lead up to the genealogy, and thus to provide an ancestry for the great King David. It is too obviously an appendix, a mere addition to the main story, for this to be at all plausible. But a genealogy is, to say the least of it, a curious way to end a book. The author does not tell us why he has done this, and we are left to guess. But at any rate we can make this comment. Throughout the book in all its artless simplicity there runs the note that God is supreme. He watches over people like Naomi and Ruth and Boaz and directs their paths. God never forgets His saving purposes. The issue of the marriage of Boaz and Ruth was to lead in due course to the great King David, the man after God's own heart, the man in whom God's purpose was so signally worked out. These events in Moab and Bethlehem played their part in leading up to the birth of David. The Christian will think also of the genealogy at the beginning of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. He will reflect that God's hand is over all history. God works out His purpose, generation after generation. Limited as we are to one lifetime, each of us sees so little of what happens. A genealogy is a striking way of bringing before us the continuity of God's purpose through the ages. The process of history is not haphazard. There is a purpose in it all. And the purpose is the purpose of God.

Thought 3. In closing the Book of Ruth, Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. also gives an excellent summary that challenges us all:

But how wonderful that God put the Book of Ruth in our Bible! It reminds us that God uses all, not just some, of His people. He works through people who live faithfully for Him in daily life. All He wants from them is simple, down-to-earth faithfulness. He wants faithfulness in the way they do their jobs, love their families, help their neighbors, and serve their churches. He loves to see our faithfulness right on Main Street.

*For years, Admiral Hyman Rickover headed the Navy's nuclear power program. He personally interviewed every officer who applied to serve in it. In his book *Why Not the Best?* former President Jimmy Carter described his interview with Rickover:*

For two hours, the unsmiling admiral grilled Carter on military and nonmilitary subjects. At first confident, Carter soon began to sweat. He realized how little he actually knew. Then, Rickover asked Carter how high he ranked in his class at the Naval Academy. Thinking he could redeem himself, Carter said proudly, "Sir, I stood 59th in a class of 820!"

Instead of congratulations, the admiral coldly asked, "Did you do your best?" Carter knew there was no sense bluffing Rickover with a hearty, "Yes, sir!" Sheepishly he replied, "No, sir, I didn't always do my best."

For a long moment, the admiral stared at Carter. Then he turned his chair around to end the interview. Finally, he asked one last, unforgettable question: "Why not?"

That is the challenge which confronts all of us. Faced with this book's faithful ancestors, why not live faithfully ourselves? As the Book of Ruth teaches, when people are faithful, God uses them to do great things. By faithfulness in life's ordinary daily tasks, you sow the seeds of a great harvest for God's glory. Though just an ordinary Christian, God can use you! Why not?

Thought 4. In closing the Book of Ruth, Arthur Lewis says this:

The gracious act of Boaz to receive Ruth and provide for her is the first and finest example of the Hebrew meaning of "redeemer" in all the Scriptures. From the beautiful union of Ruth and Boaz comes a deeper understanding of the relationship between Christ and the church. Finally, as the fruit of that union, we have the king "after God's own heart," the shepherd of Israel. To David God promised a royal lineage that would never end, and in David's son, the Messiah, our LORD, all the promises of the Bible come true.

Thought 5. Warren W. Wiersbe closes the Book of Ruth with a very practical application for us all:

The Book of Ruth reminds us that God is at work in our world, seeking a bride and reaping a harvest; and we must find our place in His program of winning the lost. The events in the Book of Ruth occurred during the period of the Judges, a time not much different from our own day. If you focus only on the evils of our day, you'll become pessimistic and cynical; but, if you ask God what field He wants you to work in and faithfully serve Him, you'll experience His grace, love, and joy.

Judges is the book of "no king" (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). First Samuel is the book of "man's king," when God gave Saul to Israel because they asked for him. Things will get so bad in our world that the nations will one day cry out for a king to feed them and protect them. That king will appear; and we call him the Antichrist.

But 1 Samuel isn't the end of story, for 2 Samuel is the book of God's king! David did appear on the scene, and he did establish the kingdom in the name of the LORD. Likewise, when man's king has done his worst, God's King will appear, judge this evil world, put away ungodliness, and then establish His glorious kingdom.

Meanwhile, even though we must live in an evil time like the age of the Judges when there was no king in Israel, we can still seek first the kingdom of God and be loyal subjects of the King of kings (Matt. 6:33). The name Elimelech means "my God is king," but Elimelech didn't live up to his name, for he doubted God and disobeyed Him. Even though there is no king in Israel and all around us everything seems to be falling apart, there can be a King in our lives, reigning in our hearts.

It was Ruth's commitment that made the difference in her life and in the lives of the people she loved.

Have you put yourself at the feet of the LORD of the harvest? Until you do, God can never be to you all that He wants to be.

Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Judges, Ruth.