

Boaz Redeems Ruth and Naomi

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Boaz redeems Ruth and Naomi by seeking the right to do so from another redeemer
2. aim – to cause us to recognize the true redeemer, Jesus Christ, in the foreshadowing of Boaz
3. passage – Ruth 4:1-10

b. outline

1. Boaz Seeks to Redeem Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 4:1-2)
2. Boaz Contracts to Redeem Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 4:3-6)
3. Boaz Redeems Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 4:7-10)

c. opening

1. the **climactic nature** of this chapter
 - a. the 4th chapter of Ruth is the **entire reason** for the book
 1. it completes the story of Boaz redeeming Naomi and Ruth, finishing the storyline (**its climax**)
 2. it completes the picture of the **internal purpose** of the book, namely, the **child** of Ruth and Boaz
 - a. specifically, Obed, the grandfather of David – the genealogy of David, which is **why** the book was written (possibly by David?): to explain how he **ultimately** came to the throne of Israel
 - b. the 4th chapter of Ruth is the **eternal reason** for the book
 1. it is a story that **foreshadows** the coming messiah – the chapter **parallels** (in many ways) the coming of the Christ who would act as the **ultimate** redeemer
 2. **IOW:** the redemption by Boaz → marriage and a child → king David → the messiah that comes from his line (**i.e.** why Ruth is prominently mentioned in Jesus' genealogy in **Matthew 1**)
- c. **Ruth chapter 4 is why this book is included by the providential hand of God in Scripture – it helps us understand the coming of the Christ as foreordained by God in eternity past**
 1. **IOW:** it is included in Scripture not just for its **immediate** value (**i.e.** to those to whom it was originally written), but for its **eternal** value (**i.e.** to all generations discovering the intention of God in the Christ; as in all O.T. works, it **foreshadows the Christ**)

I. Boaz Seeks to Redeem Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 4:1-2)

Content

a. Boaz fulfills his promise (v. 1a)

1. **IOW:** the events of **4:1-12** occur *on the very next day* = the same day (**i.e.** after midnight) that Ruth rises “before dawn” (**note 3:14**)
 - a. intimated by the statement of Naomi in **3:18** (**i.e.** included by the author to make this point)
 - b. intimated by the *past tense* used in **4:1** (**i.e.** Boaz went to the city gate *while* Ruth went home)
2. which means that Boaz left the threshing floor *and went directly to the city gate*
3. **IOW:** Boaz took the promise he made *directly* to Ruth (**see 3:13b**) and *indirectly* to Naomi through the gift of “six measures” of barley (**see 3:15**) **seriously**
4. **foreshadowing: Boaz kept his promise, which is consistent with the promise of Christ**
 - a. certainly, that God always keeps his promise to save those who come to Christ in faith
 - b. but also, that Christ keeps his promise to the Father in the divine decree to redeem a people
 1. the Son promises the Father that he will robe himself in flesh, veiling his eternal majesty and glory with a human nature – when called to do so, he will enter a virgin’s womb as a man – see through human eyes, hear through ears, feel through hands, move with human feet
 2. the Son promises the Father that he will live in the human condition, experiencing all of the travails and temptations of being human, yet be unrecognized by his own – when called to do so, he will live under the very law that he himself embodies and establishes
 3. the Son promises the Father that he will give himself over to an instrument of execution, allowing himself to be beaten, have a crown of thorns pounded into his head, carry a cross to a place where he would be nailed to it – when called to do so, he will carry the weight of the wrath of God over the sin of those he came to save
 - c. **Boaz leaves behind his grain in the midst of threshing to accomplish what he had promised – Christ leaves his place of glory to enter his creation and fulfill his promise to the Father**

b. Boaz goes to the city gate (vv. 1b-2)

1. **note:** although Boaz *knows* who the “other” redeemer is, he *does not go to his house*
 - a. instead, he goes to the city gate and waits for the redeemer to arrive there (he apparently knows the redeemer will come to the gate)
 - b. **why:** because the “remedy” he is seeking is a *legal one*, and he goes to a legal place
 - c. **remember:** during the period of the Judges, Israel is *not* governed from a central location
 1. Moses had established a judicial “system” spread through the local clans when Jethro instructed him to delegate judicial authority (**see Exodus 18:13-27**)
 2. therefore, legal disputes (or contractual issues) were typically handled at a place like the “city gate” under the direction of the local “elders” (**Boaz seeks 10 of them**)
2. **foreshadowing: what Naomi and Ruth needed was a legal remedy, which is consistent with what Christ comes to accomplish for his own**
 - a. **note:** there is *direct* connection between one’s Christology and one’s view of the mission of the church – **i.e.** how you see the *purpose* of Jesus reflects what you believe Christians are to be/do
 1. **e.g.** liberal/liberation Christology sees Jesus as an “example” of loving the oppressed – therefore Christians are to “love others” as their primary purpose in the Christian faith
 - a. **IOW:** the primary connection to God is an *emotional one* (demonstrated by the *therapeutic* view of the church – “feeling good” about ourselves is the primary goal)
 2. **e.g.** biblical Christology sees Jesus as a **sacrifice** to overcome the *guilt* of a people in rebellion of God – therefore Christians are to love others by speaking truth to their sinful reality
 - a. that Jesus comes to satisfy *the law* on behalf of law-breakers – he comes to bring a *legal remedy* to their condemned condition (**i.e.** justification as a *forensic* declaration by God)
 - b. **Ruth and Naomi need more than just the love of Boaz; they need a legal remedy – Christ comes to satisfy much more than our need for “love”; he comes to solve our judicial need**

II. Boaz Contracts to Redeem Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 4:3-6)

Content

a. Boaz instructs the redeemer (vv. 3-6)

1. Boaz recounts the legal situation before the alternate redeemer
 - a. **remember:** it is *highly unlikely* that the land is actually owned by Naomi – rather, she is the “rightful” owner (through the inheritance of her now-dead sons)
 - b. Boaz requests the alternate redeemer to purchase the land *in the presence of the elders*
 1. **i.e.** fulfill the legal realities of the transaction in order to restore Naomi to her rightful place
 - c. Boaz requests the *option* to redeem it himself *if* the other man will not (**v. 5**)
 1. **i.e.** submitting himself to the proper precedence and leaving the decision to the rightful man
2. the “other” redeemer initially agrees to the arrangement – so, Boaz reveals the “fine print” in the deal
 - a. the purchase of the land requires the redeemer to fulfill a **Levirate Marriage** arrangement
 1. **i.e.** because the field originally was bequeathed to Mahlon, the surviving widow is now connected to the land, and the redeemer must agree to marry her as part of the deal
 - b. the “other” redeemer withdraws from consideration – he “cannot redeem it” because:
 1. it would “*impair [his] own inheritance*” = his situation includes another inheritance (in some way)
 2. it could be that he was already married = he was already connected to a family
 - c. so, the “other” redeemer grants to Boaz the “*right of redemption*” – he *transfers* his first-right
3. **foreshadowing: what Ruth and Naomi needed was a named and actual redeemer; someone both willing and able to do this, which is precisely what Christ actually comes to be**
 - a. **note:** the “other” redeemer is never named – he remains utterly anonymous in the story
 1. true, many human beings do not seek any “redemption,” but most do *because we know there is a Creator and we all have an innate need to worship* (**see Romans 1:21-22**)
 2. the “other” redeemer represents the faceless, nameless host of “alternate” redeemers that we seek naturally (**e.g.** religious practice, morality, spirituality, alternate theologies, etc.)
 - b. **the “natural” case is for men to seek a redeemer that cannot save them – Christ comes as an explicitly named redeemer, able to actually accomplish the redemption of his people as one named by the Father to do so**
 1. **i.e.** men must call upon his name to be saved (**Romans 10:13**)

III. Boaz Redeems Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 4:7-10)

Content

a. Boaz completes the contract (vv. 7-10)

1. **note: v. 7** is an *insertion* by the author to explain a “*custom*” in Israel common *at that time*
 - a. it may no longer have been true at the time the book was written (**i.e.** around the time of David)
 - b. specifically, a contract was “*confirmed*” by the *dominate* party in giving his sandal to the other
 - c. **IOW:** similar to a handshake or signature today – an action confirming and sealing the deal
2. the “other” redeemer “*draws off his sandal*” to confirm the arrangement
 - a. he *forfeits* his right of first-refusal, transferring the right to redeem to Boaz
 - b. **i.e.** the sandal represents his “handing off” of the right to Boaz
3. **foreshadowing: Ruth and Naomi need a completed redemption; not just a “theoretical” one, which why Christ comes into the world and dies on a cross**
 - a. Boaz *explicitly* verifies this with the “*witnesses*” at the gate (including the elders; **vv. 9-10**)
 1. so everyone would recognize that *he* now possessed the right of redemption
 - a. the resurrection of Christ (witnessed by many) confirms his right of redemption
 2. so everyone would understand *why* he would purchase the land and redeem Naomi
 - a. the Spirit reveals *why* Christ has come to redeem a people (**Luke 24:46-49**)
“Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are *witnesses* of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you [the Spirit].”
 3. so everyone would see the *perpetual* nature of his actions (**i.e.** keeping the land in the family)
 - a. the message of Christ *through the church* continues the “perpetual” nature of his work – we proclaim the good news as the *continuing* action by God to save his people in this Christ
 - b. **Ruth and Naomi need a completed redemption, not one that they have to “finish” – Christ comes to fully accomplish the redemption of his people, so much so that he can declare from the cross “it is finished”**