

## RUTH - Wk 4

### “Trusting God to Save Us”

11/21/21

#### Ruth 4

### Introduction + Recap

Tim. Pastor. **\*ADVENT GUIDE\***. **Ruth 4**. **Pray**.

**Antz.** In 1998, DreamWorks Pictures released its very first animated film, a movie called *Antz*. The movie is based in one colony of ants, and centers around one particular worker ant named Z. I'll spare you all of the details of the plot but the summary version is that Z is a non-conformist ant who doesn't want to fulfill his role in the colony but wants to break free from the mold, he falls in love with the princess of the ant colony and spends the whole movie trying to discover who he truly is inside while making her fall in love with him. It's all very *'follow your heart'* and *'be your own person'* nonsense.

But what's fascinating about the movie, and I just went back and watched the final scene again this week, is that you spend an hour and a half totally engrossed in this story. Will Z get Princess Bala to fall in with him? Will General Mandible (the bad guy) take over the colony and overthrow the queen?

You are pulled into the specifics of what is taking place, but then as the story resolves, and ends like every good animated film with this beautiful happy ever after, the camera slowly starts to zoom out from the ant hill, and as it slowly gets further and further away, you realize that this incredible story has all been taking place in a tiny ant hill, in the middle of central park, in the middle of New York City.

**And you realize as the viewer, that while this story was exciting and while it kept you on the edge of your seat, and while it mattered greatly, it was one small piece of something much, much larger.**

And that's what we're going to see today as the story of Ruth comes to a close. As a resolution is reached for Boaz, Ruth, and Naomi, the final scene of Ruth zooms out, and we're going to see a much, much larger story that is being written.

The story of Ruth is just a small (beautiful, significant, helpful) but small part of something much, much larger that God is doing.

And so I want to finish this specific story of Ruth by walking through chapter 4 together, and then I want to spend the rest of our time today zooming out to see the larger story that is being written.

As we've been walking through the book of Ruth, all series long we've been asking in various ways the same question →

#### **Will we trust God?**

- Will we trust God when we suffer?
- Will we trust God when we prosper?
- Will we trust God in the middle?

This week, our final question → **Will we trust God to save us?**

### Recap of Ruth 1-3

**Ruth 4.** Real quick let me remind you of what has happened so far.

**Ruth 1** - Elimelech + Naomi → Moab. Death. Suffering. Naomi + Ruth → Bethlehem.

**Ruth 2** - Ruth → Grain fields. Boaz + Ruth = generosity. God is faithful, and starts providing.

**Ruth 3** - Ruth → Boaz middle of the night.

**The whole story is leading up to this moment of tension - will Boaz be Ruth's Kinsman Redeemer.**

If you remember from last week a **Kinsman Redeemer was a male relative who had the privilege or responsibility to act for a family member who was in trouble, danger, or need.**

If someone in your immediate or extended family fell into need, a Kinsman Redeemer was expected to volunteer to help - to become that person's redeemer or deliver, to provide for them in that need, even at great cost to themselves.

That's what Boaz wants to be for Ruth, that's what Ruth wants Boaz to be for her. But, as we found out at the end of chapter 3, there is another man who is more closely related who according to the law of God gets first dibs on being the redeemer.

That's where we pick up chapter 4....

#### Walkthrough of Ruth 4

**1 Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down.**

So immediately following the heels of chapter 3 Boaz does what he promised Ruth. He handles it right away. He's eager to make sure this situation is taken care of and Ruth and Naomi have a redeemer. So he goes to the gate and waits for the other man who is a closer redeemer option than he is.

"Friend" - Mr so and so.

The Gate in the ancient Near East was the place where you went to conduct legal affairs and business transactions. It was also the easiest place to find someone in the city, because it was one way in and one way out. So Boaz goes there, waits, the man arrives and he invites him to come sit down and have a chat.

**2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down.**

Boaz gathers some elders, some of the men who had oversight and ruling over the city. Don't think church elders, but more like ruling or governing officials to preside over this case.

**3 Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 4 So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you."**

This land that Naomi owned was probably a part of her leftover property that belonged to Elimelech when they still lived in Bethlehem. Presumably due to the desperate situation of her and Ruth, she was going to need to sell it in order to provide for themselves in the years to come.

Now in this time, particular pieces of land mattered much more than they do to us today. This was **God-given family land**. This was a part of what the clan of Elimelech would have been given when the promised land was distributed by

God to His people. When God brought His people to the promised land of Canaan, He had them distribute out the land by tribe, then by clan, then by family so that each family would be provided for through owning a particular piece of property.

In order to ensure that this property stayed in the family, if someone was in a desperate situation where they had to sell the land to provide for themselves, one of the roles of a ***kinsman redeemer*** (**Lev 25:25**) was to purchase the land in order to hold it temporarily and eventually give it back when the person was ready, that way it stayed in the family. It was meant to be a law of love, not a means to financial gain.

But this offer that Boaz brings up to Mr. So-and-So is pretty enticing, because Naomi doesn't have any family members or heirs who have a right to the land. So presumably, he could rent the land for a little bit, and then when Naomi dies there would be no one to claim it so it would become his.

**A good summary of what Boaz is saying:** "Naomi has a field, she needs to sell it to raise money to live on. If there were a kinsman redeemer, however, he could buy that field and keep it in the family. Of course, in this situation there are no kids or grandkids to take back the land as an inheritance, so you'll actually get to keep it. So it's basically really cheap land and you are first in line...are you interested?"

**And he said, "I will redeem it."**

This guy is smart. He's like - basically free land? Of course. BUT, there's a catch....

**5 Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance."**

Oh by the way, one more thing....This piece of land comes with a widow named Ruth. You would have to marry her too, and then fulfill another role of a ***kinsman redeemer*** (**Deut 25:5**) which would be to father a child so that her husband's lineage could continue.

Which means the deal isn't so sweet. Because if he marries Ruth and they have a child, that child would be considered under Levitical law as being an heir to Naomi and her deceased son Mahlon, which means they would inherit the land, so no more promise of land, plus now the responsibility of a wife and a family.

**Redeeming Ruth is not so straightforward. There is a price to pay. The question is who will pay it?**

**6 Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."**

Doesn't seem so lucrative anymore. At first, the deal was to take care of an old lady and in return get a field. Easy "yes". But if it comes with Ruth involved, and then a child, that means he wouldn't actually get to inherit the field. No benefit to his own children and estate to compensate for all the costs of taking care of Naomi and Ruth. Not a smart investment anymore in Mr. So-and-So's mind.

"I don't want it, Boaz. It's all you man. Go for it."

**7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel.**

It's like an ancient version of a contract. Here's my shoe. I don't know, it worked for them...

**8 So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” he drew off his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. 10 Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day.”**

Boaz looks at the elders and just wants to confirm that everyone is on the same page.

“You guys saw what I did right? I’m stepping up and taking full *Kinsman Redeemer* ownership. I’m taking the land that belongs to Naomi, yes. But I’m also taking full responsibility for Ruth. I’m going to marry her. I’m going to give her a child and I’m going to continue the lineage of Mahlon.”

Boaz is stepping fully in. More than just a benefactor, he will be the redeemer. He will be the answer to all of the prayers of Ruth and Naomi. He will step in and provide. He will step in and redeem. He will care for them.

**11 Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, “We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, 12 and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman.”**

These verses are incredible.

At this point, a crowd has gathered. Someone is considering becoming a redeemer for Ruth, this Moabite? It’s creating quite the stir. But once they see the sacrifice Boaz is willing to make they recognize how big of a deal this is and they bless it.

In fact, there is a three-fold blessing happening here. The crowd pronounces a blessing over Ruth, Boaz, and their family. This blessing has profound implications for us as we get ready to zoom out from the story in just a second.

### **1. Ruth - They pray that Ruth would be like Rachel and Leah.**

If you’re not familiar with the story of the Israelites, Rachel and Leah were the two wives of Jacob. They were and are considered the matriarch’s of Israel. It is their 12 sons that are the heads of the 12 tribes of Israel. They hold an incredible place of honor in the story of God’s people. And this is what the elders and the people of Bethlehem are asking the Lord to do for Ruth.

***That she would have a prominent place in the story of God’s people.***

### **2. Boaz - They pray that he would be renowned in Bethlehem.**

That Boaz would become well-known for his kindness, compassion, integrity, faithfulness, and sacrifice in this story. That, idk hypothetically, more than 3000 years later a small church in a city and country that does not exist yet would preach about his faithfulness and sacrifice for Ruth.

### **3. Household - House would be like the house of Perez.**

There’s way more in the story of Perez and Tamar that we’ll get into in the Midweek Podcast, but what matters for us here is that Perez has a renowned lineage in this place. His family line matters greatly to this particular town of Bethlehem. And that’s what they are praying would be true of Boaz and Ruth’s family → ***That their family line and descendants would***

**impact Bethlehem greatly.** (That's called foreshadowing). Again, make note of that it's going to make a ton of sense in a minute.

**13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son.**

This is only the second time in the whole book where the Lord is shown on the forefront of the action. The rest of the time He's more depicted as behind the scenes making things happen. The two greatest needs in the book of Ruth are food and fertility. And God shows up in 1:6 and brings food and in 4:13 and brings a baby.

**14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." 16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse.**

The redemption doesn't stop with Ruth. What a wonderful ending and conclusion to the story.

This story begins with Naomi, traveling to Moab. Suffering so greatly. Losing her husband and her two sons. Returning to Bethlehem, feeling like she's an enemy of the Lord. All she has is (in her words) a nothing of a daughter in law. She renames herself as "Mara" - "Bitter". Stuck. Suffering, Distraught. Left without hope.

But God has not abandoned her. And this doesn't negate her suffering or replace what she has lost. No one can bring back her husband or her two sons, but God has still been gracious to her.

- She has lost her two sons, but God has given her Ruth, who has become more to her than seven sons.
- Her arms were empty, without a family line, without grandchildren, but now in her lap lies a child, a promise of hope, a promise that she will be taken care of in the future.
- She came back with nothing, and now holds in her arms the promise of redemption.

**God has been faithful. God has saved and redeemed Naomi.**

**Pause here for just a moment.**

**I have loved getting to work through Ruth together. I hope you have been encouraged as you see the faithfulness of God in this story.**

- Bringing Ruth and Naomi together.
- Bringing them back to Bethlehem.
- Bringing a harvest and ending the famine.
- Bringing Ruth to Boaz's field.
- Leading Boaz to want to redeem Ruth.
- Working out all of the logistics, bringing them together, giving them a child.

All of the ways God has brought physical provision to these people. God has been faithful to Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi. And there is so much there for us to be encouraged by and filled with hope from.

We could hypothetically stop here and be encouraged once again by the faithfulness of God → God has saved Ruth and Naomi. He has cared for them, redeemed them, provided for their needs.

**Genealogy → Jesus**

**But the greater story is in the zoom out.** The bigger beauty is pulling back from Ruth and seeing the incredible faithfulness of God in the larger story He is writing. There's something even more magnificent and encouraging and necessary at play here.

Look at verse 17 and how the book of Ruth ends....

**17 And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. 18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, 19 Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, 20 Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, 21 Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, 22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.**

What a beautiful ending to Ruth....a genealogy! Just how this literary classic should end, a list of names....Turn over to **Matthew 1**.

This exact genealogy is actually written twice in the Scriptures - Ruth 4 and Matthew 1.

We'll start in verse 3 again with Perez:

**3 Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, 4 and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of David the king.**

We know this part. But don't stop there....keep going:

**And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, 7 and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, 8 and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, 9 and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, 10 and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, 11 and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.**

**12 And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, 13 and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, 14 and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, 15 and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, 16 and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.**

**The book of Ruth is about the faithfulness of God.**

To provide for these two widows? Yes. Absolutely. He cares for them, provides for them, blesses them.

But it's about an even bigger story of faithfulness. God provides for Ruth because ultimately He's providing for mankind. So He gives Ruth a redeemer and a son, to continue the line of Abraham and through the line of Ruth, comes David and through the line of David comes the greatest Son to ever be born → **Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World.**

**This is a story about God's faithfulness, not just to Ruth and Naomi, but to us.**

**Ruth is a story about God's faithfulness to us.**

**God sends an unlikely woman named Ruth a son in Bethlehem so that 1200 years later He could send another unlikely woman a son in Bethlehem - Jesus Christ.**

**He is the ultimate answer to our question - will we and can we trust God?**

**Can we trust God to save us?** The overwhelming response is yes! Look at Ruth 4! Look at Matthew 1! Look at the great lengths God goes through to accomplish His purposes, to send our Savior.

God will do whatever it takes to send the true Redeemer, Jesus Christ, to save and redeem His people from their sins.

### One-Way of Salvation

**Church, here's what you have to understand....**

**Not only can we trust God to save us, not only should we trust God to save us, but we have to trust God to save us. That is the only way.**

Ruth and Naomi could not save themselves. They needed a redeemer to step in and save them at great cost to himself.

We are the same. We cannot save ourselves. The Scriptures are abundantly clear on this → we are not good people who need a life-line. We are not full of good intentions with a few mistakes here or there. We are not just in need of a little bit of help.

We are dead in our sins, drowning in the bottom of the ocean, separated from life with God now and forever, in desperate need of and without hope except for a Savior. One who will redeem us at great cost to Himself.

That's the whole point of Ruth - God preserves His promise to Abraham and preserves the line of David by which one day will come the true and ultimate Kinsman Redeemer.

#### **Jesus, God's Son (GOSPEL):**

- Enters into humanity.
- He takes on flesh. He who is fully God, also becomes fully man.
- Lives a perfect life that we cannot live. He does not sin. He does not disobey God. He does not rebel and go His own way. He does not take matters into His own hands.
- He submits Himself to the Father. Lives a perfect life.
- Is full of great love for us.
  
- And that love drives Him to the cross.
- Where he is beaten, mocked, and scorned.
- Where he suffers great physical agony, and also great spiritual agony.
- Because on that cross Jesus takes our sin upon Himself, He takes the full punishment and wrath of God for sin and sinners, He dies in our place.
  
- He is buried for 3 days. Everyone thinks the story is over.
- But 3 days later, the ground shakes, the stone rolls away, Jesus gets up from the grave, the tomb is now empty.
- He has defeated satan, sin, and death.
- He has made a way for us to know Him, to be forgiven of our sins, to be washed clean, to be made new.

Jesus in His resurrection declares what all of Scripture has been saying—→ “God is faithful and you can be saved.” But only through Him.

The Bible says **Romans 10:9 - If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

Not:

- If you do the right things, you will be saved.
- If you go to church, you will be saved.
- If you live as a good person, you will be saved.
- If your grandparents believe, you will be saved.
- If your parents believe, you will be saved.
- If you live in the Bible belt, you will be saved.
- If you vote the right way, you will be saved.

**If YOU confess with your mouth - Jesus is Lord - and believe in your heart that the resurrection is real and true and is the only way possible for you to be saved → THEN you will be saved.**

**That is the gospel.** That's what we celebrate. That's what we bank everything on. That's what we revolve our lives around. Jesus died in our place, and rose again.

**God is good. I am not. Jesus saves. Repent and trust in Him.**

**Will you trust God to save you?**

**Non-Christians:**

Will you surrender your life to Him? Will you believe and trust in Jesus? Everything and everywhere else you look for hope, meaning, purpose, peace, fulfillment - they won't give you what they promise. It won't last. It won't satisfy. They cannot wash you clean. They cannot answer your shame. They cannot solve your guilt. They cannot fix you or help you or **save you.**

Only Jesus can do that. Will you trust in Him? I'll be down front afterward, would love to talk to you more about that.

**Christians:**

Will you trust God to save you as well? Don't move past the gospel. This is the foundation of our church. This is the foundation of our lives. This is the Savior we hang our hats on. He is everything. The gospel is not the ABC it's the A to Z. Jesus is everything to us. The beginning and the end.

Don't believe the gospel starts you, then you get busy doing Christian life on your own. Go back to the faithfulness of God.

**God is good. I am not. Jesus saves. Repent and trust in Him.**

**Communion → That's what we celebrate every Sunday when we take communion together.**

- Prayer in the back.
- Communion for believers.
- Worship King Jesus.

**PRAY.**