

8 Reasons Jesus Is Our Ultimate Redeemer

So Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer of whom he had spoken passed by, and Boaz said, "Come over, friend, and sit here." So he went over and sat down. Then Boaz took ten men from among the elders of the town and said, "Sit here." So they sat down. He said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, must sell the plot of land belonging to our brother Elimelek. I thought I should inform you and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you want to redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not redeem it, tell me so that I know, for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I am next after you.' " So he said, "I will redeem it." Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the deceased, to perpetuate the name of the deceased through his inheritance." The redeemer replied, "I am not able to redeem it for myself lest I ruin my own inheritance. Take my redemption rights for yourself, for I cannot do it." (Ruth 4:1-6)

For many people, reading the Bible can be, quite frankly, a bit disappointing. They see God speaking to people, but they've never heard His voice. They see angels delivering messages, but all they get is bills in the mail. They see God perform miracles in the pages of Scripture, but not in the problems of their lives.

For these people, Ruth can be a very encouraging book. In it, God never speaks, no angels show up, and no miracles occur. The entire book is painfully ordinary—people burying their loved ones, moving to another city, struggling to make ends meet, and having a complex romantic relationship.

In this latest scene, Boaz wants to marry Ruth and also take care of her mother-in-law, Naomi. But to do so, he needs to bump a relative out of the first position of legal right to redeem the women and their property.

So Boaz arrives at the city gate, which was the central place where business was transacted, legal matters were settled, and social relationships were established. Echoing the “chance” arrival of Ruth in the field of Boaz (2:3), here the providential hand of God is once again revealed as the very man with whom Boaz needed to negotiate the redeeming of Ruth just “happened” to walk past shortly after Boaz arrived at the gate.

By law, when land was put up for sale during this time, it was preferable for it to be purchased by a near relative to keep it in the family (Leviticus 25:25–30; Jeremiah 32:6–12). The other man was a nearer relative than Boaz and therefore had first position to purchase the land. So Boaz pressed the man to make a decision that very moment, revealing that if the man were unwilling or unable, he would be glad to do so, as he was also a relative and therefore able to redeem, if permitted.

Rather than accepting an answer he didn’t want or breaking the law to get his way, Boaz chose to shrewdly negotiate and turn the conversation in his favor with both wisdom and clever bargaining, through which the providential hand of God could work for good. Yes, God can work through shrewd business dealings, which is why Jesus told us to “be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

Influenced by Boaz’s shrewdness, the unnamed man realized that he couldn’t afford to buy the land and care for the two widows and children that he would bear through Ruth. So, the man passed on the opportunity to redeem Ruth and in so doing permitted Boaz to assume first position and do so himself! It just goes to show that one man’s problem is another man’s princess.

Those present responded to the speech of Boaz by asking God's blessing on Ruth, Boaz, and the child that everyone trusted God to provide. Indeed, Boaz shines forth here as a strong, bold, wise, and shrewd redeemer. He was able to do so because he had walked with personal integrity and professional ingenuity for many years, which made it possible for him to act quickly.

Jesus comes as our great redeemer who Boaz in many ways resembles:

- Like Boaz was related to Ruth and Naomi, so Jesus as God became a man to relate to us.
- Like the women couldn't save themselves, so we too can't save ourselves.
- Like Boaz who wasn't obligated to save the women, so Jesus wasn't obligated to save us.
- Like Boaz who redeemed the women, so Jesus redeems us.
- Like Boaz who satisfied the demands of the law, so Jesus lived without sin to satisfy the demands of God's law.
- Like Boaz paid a personal price to redeem them, Jesus paid the ultimate personal price to redeem us.
- Like Boaz who loved Ruth as his bride, Jesus loves His church as His bride.
- Like Boaz who shared his land and home with the women, so Jesus has prepared an eternal home in His kingdom for us.

What has Jesus redeemed you from? {eoa}

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