

# Redemption Secured

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## 1. Boaz Finds the Closer Redeemer

- a. Boaz goes to the gate and waits
  - i. the gate as center of affairs
- b. He finds the closer redeemer
  - i. "certain man" (trans. "friend" in most translations)
  - ii. nameless, but definite
- c. He calls him over to sit down and conduct a legal matter
  - i. "sit down" refers to sitting in legal or business matter: denotes official business

## 2. Boaz Calls Out the Closer Redeemer

- a. 10 elders sat to judge
  - i. As witnesses and to see that the customs were followed appropriately and legally
  - ii. 10 must have represented a quorum
- b. Boaz presents the case
  - i. You are the redeemer of Naomi's (Elimelech's) land
  - ii. Presents his duty to redeem the land
  - iii. Gives him the opportunity to redeem it legally and publicly
    1. Boaz also announced to him that he would redeem it if this man could not
      - Very gracious way out should the man be unable
      - Again showing Boaz's compassion, though he is shrewd
- c. The closer redeemer accepts
  - i. "Oh no!"
    1. Presumed reader would want Boaz to redeem Ruth
  - ii. This land would have then come into his family's inheritance and name, though still in the same clan as Elimelech

## 3. Boaz Springs the Trap and Obtains the Right to Redeem Ruth

- a. Boaz reveals that Ruth must also be taken as a wife and her offspring as inheritor of the land
  - i. "the Moabitess"
    1. Formal legality of name
    2. Showing her foreign background in order to dissuade the man from redeeming her?
  - ii. widow of Machlon
    1. Machlon the rightful heir to the land
    2. Brings back the levirate duty of redemption
  - iii. for the purpose of giving this child the land/inheritance of Elimelech
    1. Boaz here emphasizes that the land would return to the child born to Ruth and not remain in the family of the closer redeemer
    2. He is emphasizing the cost, so as to show that it is not attainable to the kinsman
- b. The closer redeemer cannot redeem it
  - i. He does not have the "power" to redeem it
  - ii. He would lose the purchase price
  - iii. He would lose his inheritance
    1. it would make him poor, like Naomi and may have to sell his own land
    2. Boaz most likely knew this man's financial condition
  - iv. Boaz was being gracious in allowing the man to make a well-intended attempt to redeem the land
    1. This man was not simply belittled or paraded as being unable to redeem Ruth
    2. Boaz made sure that everyone heard that he tried

3. At the same time, Boaz *really* wanted to redeem Ruth as *his* wife, so he played shrewdly to bring the costs to the forefront
- c. He gives the right to redeem to Boaz
  - i. legally and publicly
    1. The removal of the sandal to attest to giving up his right
    2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> party would then always have proof of such an exchange
    3. This was the testimony of the legality of the proceeding
      - “attestation” is literally “testimony” or “evidence” (Is 8:16,20)
      - To be without sandals was symbolic of humility
        - i. Giving up a right as here
        - ii. Standing before God on holy ground (Ex 3:5; Josh 5:15)
        - iii. Humility and weakness
          1. **2 Samuel 15:30** *But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered....*
          2. **Isaiah 20:2-4** *at that time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go, and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals from your feet," and he did so, walking naked and barefoot.<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, "As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush,<sup>14</sup> so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptian captives and the Cushite exiles...*
          3. **Ezekiel 24:23** *Your turbans shall be on your heads and your shoes on your feet; you shall not mourn or weep,..*
  - ii. Boaz called witness to testify that he is the Goel, the Redeemer
    1. Of Naomi’s land
    2. Of Ruth as his wife
      - Look at his joy!!
      - In order to give her son the land as his inheritance
      - To perpetuate the name of the dead (Elimelech’s family name)
        - i. Note the “all” used by Boaz
        - ii. He is redeeming everything for them!
    3. This would be Jesse’s land, where David tended sheep in his youth!

#### 4. False Redeemers Make Promises to Our Hearts

- a. In Scripture these are called idols
- b. Idols are anything that we depend upon for joy, happiness, fulfillment, and blessing
  - i. Immediate “redemption” from our situations of joylessness, boredom, or pain
  - ii. Idols are usually neutral or even good things in themselves
    1. In Scripture idols are powerless pieces of stone or wood with no inherent danger
      - a. Wood is good for burning and cooking, but not for trusting to you save you
      - b. Isaiah 44:15-23
    2. *epithumia* – lusts, inordinate desires, literally “over-desires”
      - a. Making good things ultimate things
      - b. Things that we *must* have
      - c. Word for idolatrous desires in the NT

- iii. NOT necessarily a physical object
  - 1. Ezek 14:3, "Idols in their hearts"
  - 2. Reputation, Approval of people, Beauty
- iv. Set up *beside* God, or in addition to Him, not in complete exchange of Him
  - 1. Israel didn't leave Yahweh behind when they worshipped other gods in the OT
  - 2. They simply added other gods to Yahweh
  - 3. This God would not allow, "I am a jealous God"
  - 4. God never let them go!! Even as we are faithless, He never lets us go! Isn't He great?!
- c. False Redeemers mimic the one true Redeemer
  - v. Set up a system of law/righteousness
    - 1. Principles which one must obey that define whether or not a person is good, acceptable, and righteous
    - 2. There are laws that, if one fails, makes you a failure, a sinner, replete with coming judgment and makes you bad, unacceptable, and unrighteous
      - a. "If I put in the hours at work, I will get the raise, which will make me a good provider"
      - b. "If I raise my children well, they will always choose wisely, which will make me a good parent"
  - vi. Set up a system of sacrifice/performance
    - 1. Rituals that must be made
    - 2. Sacrifices that must be given to appease said idol
      - a. If sacrifices are made, you are acceptable
      - b. If sacrifices are not made, you are unacceptable
    - 3. EXAMPLE: Friendship righteousness
      - a. "If my friend is happy with me, or I am perceived to be a good friend, then I have friend righteousness and I am OK."
      - b. "If my friend is angry with me, or I am not perceived to be a good friend, then I do not have friend righteousness and I do not feel accepted."
        - i. So I get angry, because my friend has questioned my acceptability and friend righteousness
        - ii. Or, I get anxious and depressed because I failed my friend idol and it will not forgive me
        - iii. So I lie to my other friends to protect my power of friend righteousness
    - iv. Every sin comes from the root sin of idolatry in our hearts
      - 1. We think that we must have something to make us acceptable and righteous besides Jesus
      - 2. If we think that people must be happy with me, then we are trusting in men and not in God
        - a. **Luke 6:26** "Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.
        - b. **John 12:42-43** Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue;<sup>43</sup> for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

- c. **Galatians 1:10** For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.
- vii. False Redeemers make promises of redemption and joy
  - 1. Like the redeemer in Ruth, they promise, "I will redeem you", "I will provide what you need"
    - a. If you obey its law and perform its sacrifices, then it promises you joy, fulfillment, happiness, MEANING, freedom, security, rest, etc.
    - b. As long as you perform, you feel worth something
    - c. You have your *feelings* of redemption when you get your way
  - 2. But, they are powerless to redeem us
    - a. They are powerless, empty, nothings
      - i. **Isaiah 41:6-7** Everyone helps his neighbor and says to his brother, "Be strong!"<sup>7</sup> The craftsman strengthens the goldsmith, and he who smooths with the hammer him who strikes the anvil, saying of the soldering, "It is good"; and they strengthen it with nails so that it cannot be moved.
      - ii. **Isaiah 40:20** He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move.
      - iii. **Isaiah 41:22-24** Let them bring them, and tell us what is to happen. Tell us the former things, what they are, that we may consider them, that we may know their outcome; or declare to us the things to come.<sup>23</sup> Tell us what is to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; do good, or do harm, that we may be dismayed and terrified.<sup>1 24</sup> Behold, you are nothing, and your work is less than nothing; an abomination is he who chooses you.
      - iv. **Isaiah 46:1-4** Bel bows down; Nebo stoops; their idols are on beasts and livestock; these things you carry are borne as burdens on weary beasts.<sup>2</sup> They stoop; they bow down together; they cannot save the burden, but themselves go into captivity.<sup>3</sup> "Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from before your birth, carried from the womb;<sup>4</sup> even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.
    - b. Even when you "succeed" we never quite feel satisfied
      - i. We are always striving for the bigger and the better in order to find that elusive joy: bigger house, better job, better friends, easier life, etc.
      - ii. Joy slips right through our fingers with every achievement in this life, because we were not made to be satisfied with false redeemers
- 3. They do not LOVE you!
  - a. They will not forgive you, so if you fail to achieve what is "expected" then you feel joyless, empty, anxious, fearful, worthless, enslaved, exposed, and restless
  - b. They will not pay down your debt and so you have to do it through sacrifices or performance of greater and greater "tasks": enslavement
    - i. Contrasted with God:
    - ii. **Isaiah 43:4** Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life.

## 5. Jesus Rejoices to Save Us by Grace

- a. Idols are in contrast with God, who saves us by grace
  - i. Idols are manipulated and bargained with by performance and sacrifices
  - ii. They never operate by grace: you either perform and *feel* accepted, or you fail to perform are rejected
    - 1. sometimes you attain it, sometimes you don't, but the system is the same:
    - 2. works-righteousness, power, and control
    - 3. These false redeemers can never actually deliver on their promises
- b. Jesus rejoices to redeem His Bride by His grace
  - i. Hebrews 12:2 - "who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."
  - ii. Rom 5:8 - "but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
  - iii. Rev 1:5 - "and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To Him who loves us and freed us from our sins by His blood..."
    - 1. Jesus' love for us is what led Him to redeem us with His blood
    - 2. It is His performance and sacrifice that makes us righteous
    - 3. HE HAS DONE EVERYTHING FOR US!!!
  - iv. We lose our power and simply receive by faith the performance and sacrifice of Jesus: trust in His love and in His redemptive work
    - 1. "I am accepted in Jesus, so I obey"
    - 2. His glory and His righteousness in my salvation
    - 3. His reputation is my desire
- c. Your Redeemer delights in you!
  - i. **Micah 7:18** Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.
  - ii. **Jeremiah 32:37-41** Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. <sup>38</sup> And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. <sup>39</sup> I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. <sup>40</sup> I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. <sup>41</sup> I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.
  - iii. **Zephaniah 3:17** The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.
  - iv. **Isaiah 62:2-5** The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. <sup>3</sup> You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. <sup>4</sup> You shall no more be termed Forsaken,<sup>1</sup> and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,<sup>2</sup> but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,<sup>3</sup> and your land Married;<sup>4</sup> for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. <sup>5</sup> For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

## 6. What Do We Do About False Redeemers?

- a. Identify Them
  - i. Look at repeated, excessive, uncontrollable emotions and thoughts

1. If you are angry
  - “Is there something too important to me? Something that I am telling myself that I have to have? Do I feel like something is being blocked from me that I think is a necessity for my joy when it is not?”
2. If you are fearful or badly worried
  - “Is there something that is too important to me? Something that I am telling myself that I have to have? Am I scared because something is being threatened that I think is a necessity for my joy when it is not?”
3. If you are despondent or hating yourself:
  - “Is there something too important to me? Something that I am telling myself that I have to have to be acceptable? Am I despondent because I have lost or failed at something that I think is a necessity for my joy when it is not?”
- ii. Turn from trusting in them to bring you joy
- b. Look to the True Redeemer!!
  - i. Apply the Gospel to them
  - ii. Idols operate by performance and fear, anger, anxiety, and pride come from our performance, either because we have lived up to our idol/righteousness, or we have failed our idol/righteousness
  - iii. The gospel is the good news of grace!!!
    1. Jesus loves you more deeply than you can even imagine! Trust in His love! It is greater than yours
      - Sometimes we feel like Christ’s love is just like ours...and we fear
      - But Christ’s love is greater than ours, purer than ours, deeper than ours, stronger than ours
    2. Jesus has performed it all and given us His righteous and perfect record (passive righteousness)
      - 2 Corinthians 5:21 – He became sin for us that we would be made righteous
      - Colossians 2:10 – In him you have been made complete
    3. Jesus has given His life in exchange for ours (atonement), His death paid for our failures
    4. His life has been given to us in His Spirit
    5. We give up power, we cease performance-driven righteousness, we humbly receive His work for us

Idolatry is always the reason that we ever do or feel anything wrong. Why do we ever lie, or fail to love, or keep our promises, or live unselfishly? Of course, the broad answer is that we are “weak and sinful.” But, the particular answer is always that there is something else that we feel we must have other than Jesus Christ, something more important to our hearts than God, something that is enslaving us through inordinate desires. We don’t trust the great love of the Redeemer, so we look to other promise-makers, other redeemers that ultimately cannot satisfy and do not love us. That’s the amazing thing about Jesus: His love led Him to sacrifice Himself for us! False redeemers make us sacrifice for them and then never forgive our failures and never bring about our joy, but Jesus rejoices to do all the work Himself and all He receives is the glory that He is already due.

So the secret is to identify the False Redeemers in our hearts and then bring the full power of the great news of the love of Christ to bear on them. Jesus never gives up on His Bride. He has all the power necessary and He is the only one with such capability. He rejoices to save us! He will expose the powerlessness of our idols when we have set them up again in our faithlessness and unbelief. Then He will knock them down again, and as we apply the gospel of grace to our hearts, these idols will crumble piece by piece and you will feel again the overpowering joy of freedom in the True Redeemer, Jesus Christ.