

# ORDINARY FAITHFULNESS

## GOD FINISHES WHAT HER STARTS

### RUTH 4

#### ***God Works Through Righteous Action***

***Ruth 4 NKJV*** <sup>1</sup> Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." So he came aside and sat down. <sup>2</sup> And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. <sup>3</sup> Then he said to the close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. <sup>4</sup> And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.' " And he said, "I will redeem it." <sup>5</sup> Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance." <sup>6</sup> And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

- Near the end of Ruth 3, Boaz made a promise to Ruth that he would do all he could to be her kinsman redeemer and marry Ruth
- There is a problem with the closer kinsman, but Boaz is committed to resolving the issue, but also to be a man of his word, he's a leader
- The next day Boaz goes to the city gate waiting for the other close relative to come by
- The city gate was a combination of city hall and courtroom
- The judicial matters were handled by the elders because they had earned the confidence and respect of the people
- Everything was handled literally and figuratively out in the open
- Boaz saw the other close relative come by and called to him and said I need to talk to you
- Boaz invites the other close relative to sit down so they can talk
- Ruth and Naomi are not at the city gate, but their future was still being decided
- Faith sometimes looks like waiting while God works through others
- Boaz tells the other close relative that Naomi is selling land that belonged to our relative Elimelech
- The land could never be permanently sold, and every 50 years the land had to be returned to the original owner in the year of Jubilee
- So, God made a provision for land that was sold that it might be bought back by the kinsman-redeemer
- Boaz tells the other close relative, if you want to redeem the land, then redeem it and he has the elders present as his witnesses
- The other relative says, yes, I will redeem it, I'll buy the land
- But Boaz says something the other close relative was probably not expecting, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, it also requires that you marry Ruth, the Moabite widow"

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- Under the law of the kinsman-redeemer, the kinsman-redeemer not only has to redeem the land, He must also acquire wife of the dead relative to keep the family name going as an inheritance for future generations
- What Boaz was saying, the land and Ruth are a “package deal”
- Boaz was a wise man by framing the duty of the kinsman-redeemer in two parts; redeeming the land and taking Ruth as his wife
- The closer relative was not just buying land but adding a whole family to his family and then dividing up everything equally among them all.
- The other close relative said, “I can’t redeem it for myself because it will ruin my own inheritance”
- Dividing his existing inheritance with future children was probably more than he wanted to deal with
- The other close relative told Boaz he could redeem the land because he couldn’t do it
- Boaz took responsibility and it worked in his favor
- He didn’t wait, procrastinate or delay, he stepped into position

#### ***God Redeems What Others Reject***

***<sup>7</sup> Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel. <sup>8</sup> Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." So he took off his sandal. <sup>9</sup> And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. <sup>10</sup> Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day."***

- In ancient history, the redeeming or transfer of property was finalized in a very dramatic way; one person would remove their sandal and give to the other party
- The close relative took off his sandal and gave it to Boaz and said, “buy it for yourself”
- It meant, “I give up my right to walk on this land, you now have that right.”
- Boaz now has the authority to gain the land, the right to redeem, the responsibility to marry Ruth
- Can you imagine the joy in Boaz’s heart when he was allowed to buy the land which also means he gets to marry Ruth
- Boaz then called elders and the crowd gathered to be witnesses to confirm the transaction of redemption
- Boaz gave the elders and the crowd an itemized list of what he was purchasing
- Boaz said publicly that the family name and property would not die out at the deaths of Naomi and Ruth
- Boaz said publicly, I have acquired Ruth to be my wife, he made good on his promise to be her kinsman-redeemer
- Boaz’s love for Ruth was public, a love that he wanted publicly witnessed and affirmed

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- In ancient Israel, the redemption of people of property to be handled legally
- If a kinsman-redeemer was to rescue or save someone, they had to obey the law; they had to legally finalize the transaction

#### ***God Restores More Than What We lost***

***<sup>11</sup> And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. <sup>12</sup> May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the Lord will give you from this young woman." <sup>13</sup> So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. <sup>14</sup> Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel! <sup>15</sup> And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him." <sup>16</sup> Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him. <sup>17</sup> Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.***

- All the people and the elders who were at the gate said, "We are witnesses"
- The elders and the crowd were so moved that they prayed for Ruth and Boaz:
  - They prayed Ruth would be fruitful like Rachel and Leah
  - They prayed that Boaz would be famous and honored in Bethlehem
  - They prayed for the future family of Boaz and Ruth; they prayed their future family would be like the ancestors of Perez; the son of Tamr and Judah
- Boaz took Ruth to be his wife and they had a son
- When the women of Bethlehem heard that Ruth had a son, they went to Naomi and said, "the Lord has not left you without a redeemer"
- It was Naomi who decided to return to Bethlehem that started this great work of God
- Despite all her tragedies and struggles, Naomi never let go of God
- The women said, "there is a son born to Naomi"
- In that culture the child *continues* the family line of Naomi's deceased husband and sons
- The women were also saying Naomi is full again, her restoration is complete
- Now God has filled Naomi again!
- The women named the baby Obed, which means *servant, one who serves, worshipper*
- God has provided someone to sustain and care for Naomi, continue the family line, and to carry the legacy forward
- Obed served Naomi, his family line, and God's larger plan
- Obed became the father of Jesse, and the grandfather of king David, and David had a descendant named Jesus
- God works out his purpose, generation after generation

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#### ***God Connects Your Story to a Greater Purpose***

***<sup>18</sup> Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron; <sup>19</sup> Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; <sup>20</sup> Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; <sup>21</sup> Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; <sup>22</sup> Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.***

- The book of Ruth ends with a genealogy: Perez to Hezron to Ram to Amminadab to Nahshon to Salmon to Boaz to Obed to Jesse to David
- Ruth is in that genealogy
- Ruth, the Moabite woman, becomes the great-grandmother of King David
- And ultimately, she is in the lineage of Jesus Christ
- Not every season of your life will feel dramatic or visible.
- But God is still working in the “in-between” seasons
- “Just because nothing exciting is happening... doesn’t mean nothing important is happening!”
- Ruth did not know:
  - Her ordinary faithfulness would impact generations
  - Her obedience would shape history
  - Her story would point to Christ
- Your life is connected to something bigger
- But Ruth 4 shows us that she was part of a royal and messianic plan
- Your story is not isolated, it is connected.
- What you’re doing now has generational impact
- God is writing a bigger story than you can see
- Your faithfulness today impacts tomorrow
- What you do today matters
- Somebody is going to *live the results* of your decisions
- God is asking us to be like:
  - Ruth: Will you trust God even when you don’t see the outcome?
  - Boaz: Will you do what’s right even when it costs you?
  - Naomi: Will you believe God can restore your life again?