

## 08.09.15 | Living in light of our Redemption | Ruth 2:21-23

I read the account of a missionary in West Africa who was trying to convey the meaning of the word redeem in the Bambara language. The missionary asked his African assistant to express it in his native tongue.

The assistant replied, "we say that **God took our heads out.**"

"But how does that explain redemption?" the perplexed missionary asked.

The man told him that many years ago some of his ancestors had been captured by slave-traders, chained together, and taken to the seacoast.

Each prisoner had a heavy iron collar around his neck. As the slaves passed through a village, a chief might notice a friend of his among the captives and offer to pay the slave-traders the ransom price in gold, ivory, silver, or brass.

The prisoner would be redeemed by the payment and his head would be taken out of the iron collar and unshackled.

**THEREFORE to have God take your head, is to be bought back, to be redeemed!**

**We've come to a pinnacle point in Ruth where the Lord's hesed (loving-kindness) has provided his go'el (redeemer).**

Last week we looked at those details in verses 19 & 20. After Naomi heard Ruth's account of the day, Naomi recognized that the Lord's kindness (*hesed*) had not departed, because Boaz was one of their redeemers.

We saw the Lord's *hesed* working in two ways,

- FIRST, The Lord's *hesed* peeled back the layers of Naomi's bitterness.
- SECOND, The Lord's *hesed* drew Ruth to the Lord's go'el.

We looked at the law, noting the three major responsibilities of a kinsmen redeemer. **Their role was to buy-back their kin from economic, social, or judicial crisis.**

We are reminded through the accounts of chapter 2 of the Lord's love for us, in that He loved and sent His own son to draw us to himself through His redemption on the cross.

**This morning we draw our attention to verses 20-23, where Ruth and Naomi accept Boaz's kindness, compassion, and generosity, living in the sufficiency and rewards of redemption.**

## READ 17-23

**Verse 20 is a huge surprise to us. Unknown to Ruth, as well as us the reader, Boaz is one of their redeemers! It shouldn't surprise us too much, because his actions on that day actually reflect the spirit of a redeemer.**

Most of our modern commentators miss this and wait until the sandal is thrown and leverite marriage consummated before addressing Boaz's redeeming work. However the first readers of Ruth would have looked back upon Boaz's actions within chapter 2 as part of his responsibilities as redeemer!

Boaz's actions begin to make sense to the reader! Boaz's kindness, compassion, and generosity was part of his redemption reflecting his position as **a redeemer.**

I ran out of time last week to show you **how** Boaz's actions throughout that day demonstrated this. This is an important aspect we can't miss.

As one of their redeemers, **Boaz was responsible to ensure economic, social, and judicial justice.** Throughout day 1, Boaz had done just that!

- **Economically**, he provided meal & sufficient grain for the immediate needs of Ruth and Naomi.
- **Socially**, he welcomed Ruth the Moabites onto his property. He treated her at best as a daughter, at worst as a hired servant.
- **Judicially** he protected Ruth from outsiders by positioning her beside his workers and then charging them not to mock or abuse her.

I'm not sure if Ruth puts this together, but the actions of Boaz, **well before Ruth or the reader realizes it, reveal HE WAS ALREADY REDEEMING HER!**

As we come to verses 21-23 of Ruth 2, they reveal the sufficiency and rewards of living in light of a redeemer.

The next surprise is that Boaz is more than sufficient to redeem them from poverty.

***21 And Ruth the Moabite said, "Besides, he said to me, 'You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'"***

**Ruth and Naomi were invited to**

**LIVE IN THE SUFFICIENCY OF THEIR REDEEMER**

Ruth introduces another astonishing fact, **Boaz wants her to come back and remain for the entire harvest!**

The author's reminder that Ruth is a Moabite may explain her use of, **Besides**. The **word is always used to introduce an addition truth that is more important than the previous**. She may not truly understand the significance of Boaz being a go'el or she may have her eyes on their immediate needs of gathering enough food. Boaz is that provider and that is what is most important, regardless his relationship to them.

Whatever the reason, the author reminds us that Ruth is foreigner, and there is new information to be learned that has been previously hidden from us in the chapter.

Boaz's words left no implication that his invitation had extended beyond that day however, he has demonstrated his care for these women and we should think it likely that Boaz would continue to be generous toward his relatives.

Ruth quote of Boaz again reveals his role as a redeemer.

He is there social and judicial protector.

**The term "stay close" is a Hebrew colloquialism that would be similar to us saying "stick like glue."**

Ruth used the generic masculine term for harvesters translated by the ESV as young men. We shouldn't understand this to mean only the men but **all of Boaz's harvesters**.

We learn along with Naomi, Boaz has welcomed Ruth back to do exactly as she had done that day, with all the instructions, care, and protection extended from that day throughout the entire harvest!

**Boaz provided economically. You can see why Ruth would be so excited!** If she gleaned and gathered 5.5 gallons of grain every day throughout the harvest they would have more than enough food to last them until next year's harvest!

The harvest period for barley and wheat was six to seven weeks, from late April to early June. In verse 23 the author leaves us to assume that Ruth was able to harvest a comparable amount of food for the remainder of the harvest meaning that Ruth secured more than enough grain for the whole year.

If there were six weeks of harvest and Ruth worked six days, assuming they rested on the Sabbath, she would have worked a total 36 days.

Assuming Ruth averaged the same harvest everyday as her first day, **she would have harvested 72 weeks' worth of grain.** Even if she averaged less than the first day's, there would be more than enough for an entire year's worth of grain, plus extra to be bartered for oil, fruit, and other supplies.

**Boaz's redemption was more than sufficient to meet their needs. They could get out of poverty and live in the sufficiency of Boaz's redemption.**

The truth for us is just as Boaz' offer of redemption was more than sufficient to restore Ruth and Naomi from poverty,  
the redemption offered through Jesus Christ is more than sufficient to restore mankind from depravity.

**Live in the sufficiency of Christ our Redeemer!**

## **TURN TO HEBREWS 9**

The writer of Hebrews addressed this same concern as he taught on the supremacy of Christ's redeeming sacrifice.

***11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.***

***13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God***

The writer is comparing the high priest's sacrifice on the OT Day of Atonement, with Jesus'.

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would choose a spotless, perfect bull and kill it before the congregation. He would collect some of the blood in a bowl, and take it into the Holy of Holies. In the Holiest place, he would dip his fingers into the bowl and sprinkle the blood upon the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat, repeating this seven times. This sacrifice was to cover, or atone, for his sin and his family's sin.

He would then take one of two goats chosen by casting lots, kill it, collect its blood, return to the Holiest place, and repeat to make atonement for the sin of the people.

The blood of these animals worked as a means of covering, or atonement, so that God would not count their sin against them. These sacrifices also became a form of redemption. The life of an animal, through its blood, bought back a righteous standing before God.

The writers point is this, if animals were sufficient to redeem and atone, how much more sufficient is the blood of the perfect one, Jesus Christ!

**In fact, the author says the once for all time sacrifice of Jesus proves to be an eternally sufficient redemption!**

Whereas, the day of Atonement occurred every year, Jesus, our great high priest, who is pure and blameless, redeemed us with his blood in a once for all time sacrifice that is more than sufficient to overcome our sinfulness and depravity!

The emphasis is **HOW MUCH MORE ...**

That's how much more will the blood of Jesus redeem?, ... **TO ETERNITY!**

This is the difference between a credit card needing to be paid 1x a month and a fully funded debit card. The debit transaction doesn't need to be paid because there are sufficient funds for the purchase!

**Christ's redemption is eternally sufficient to appease the wrath of God! It is sufficient for all eternity!**

Based upon the sufficiency of Christ's eternal redemption the writer of Hebrews compels us to live in the light of that sufficiency which totally purifies us from our depravity.

**Dead works** is a direct reference to OT sacrifice. However, it implies anything we do to try to earn righteousness or standing before God.

**The authors point is, YOU CAN'T! Christ is the only sufficient payment.**

Christ is enough! He is enough for yesterday's sin, today's sin, and tomorrows.

Paul wrote, Christ has redeemed you from the curse of law! The curse of the law required perfection which no one could do, ... but Him.

**This impacts not only our salvation but our sanctification.** How we live daily, represents HIS redemption in our lives! The truth is, **you don't have to live everyday concerned have I done enough?** The answer is, no, you have NOT! But Christ did enough. That is ME-centered living.

Rather than worrying about ME, the author says I need to focus on serving the living God! The reminder of the gospel is brought to light by author, **that Christ died for my sin, AND he rose again the third day.**

We are bought back from having to work our way to heaven, which we can never do, so that we can in turn **focus on serving the living God.**

**Serving here is not within a church setting** by the way, **it's your life's setting.** It is a call to

- forsake a me-centered life for a Christ-centered life,
- A life of obedience to Jesus' commands to love the Lord with all you are
- A life committed to loving people as you love yourself.
- A life dedicated to discipling those around you.
- A life characterized by Jesus!

**because ...**

**Christ's redemption is more than sufficient to overcome you depravity!**

So imagine at this point in the story of Ruth, if Ruth would say, "No, I'm going to try a different field tomorrow! Let's see if I can do better?"

WHAT!!! ARE YOU CRAZY RUTH!! Boaz has provided everything you need and more! Just show-up, work diligently, and enjoy the rewards of being redeemed!

Friends, **every time you live in a way that says Jesus isn't enough, you live contrary to the sufficiency of Jesus' redemption.**

- When you add your ideologies, preferences, works, standards, service, ministry **for all practical purposes you are leaving Jesus' field and trusting in something or someone that is INSUFFICIENT in redemption!**

**Christ is sufficient! STAY THERE, SERVE THERE, GROW THERE, WORK THERE, LIVE THERE!**

Naomi echoes this sentiment in verse 22, adding some motherly advice to encouraging Ruth to live the rewards of redemption.

### **LIVE IN REWARDS OF REDEMPTION!**

The author reminds us once again that Ruth is Naomi's daughter-in-law. **Don't overlook this observation** of the author!

Ruth is called **the Moabite** in 21, and the **daughter-in-law** in 22 by the author emphasizing her outcaste status. However, neither Boaz nor Naomi views her as one. Boaz and Naomi treat and view Ruth as **daughter**. Naomi in verse 22 calls her that affectionate term, **my daughter**. Based upon this affectionate relationship, Naomi gives Ruth motherly advice.

***"It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women"***

Naomi specifies **what would be best for Ruth**. Yes, she should **go out**, but with Boaz's female servants. The term, **go out**, implies more than working in the field. It includes traveling to and from, and remaining with them. Essentially Naomi advises Ruth to get acquainted with Boaz's servants so that she can travel to and from the fields with his servants.

Naomi's instruction includes a simple **change in the gender with the servants**. Ruth should stay close Boaz's young female servants. By changing the masculine word Ruth used in v.21, to the feminine form, Naomi has advised Ruth on a **cultural ettiquacy**. She should not travel with the young men but the young women.

Further, Naomi was concerned about Ruth's **safety**.

***"lest in another field you be assaulted"***

I don't think we should see this as Naomi's concern against Boaz's male servants. This is Naomi's concern for Ruth going to the wrong field.

Ruth would not know where all of Boaz's fields were located. Remember, these were large open spaces owned by the entire clan. They had no fences dividing the property lines, only a rock. If Ruth came and went with Boaz's female servants she would be protected from wandering into a field where she might be verbally or physically assaulted by other land owners and their workers.

### **Naomi's advice would ensure**

- Ruth got to the field safely,

- Ruth remained within proper Jewish etiquette of an unmarried women
- Ruth arrived at the proper location within the correct field,
- and finally Ruth arrived home safely within the group of young women.

This was common sense instruction.

When I was growing up there were between 2-4 boys my age that all played on the same Babe Ruth baseball team in my neighborhood. All of the ball fields were across town and in the summers we often played our games during the day. This was ages 12-16. My parents worked so we would ride our bikes to the games and the instructions we very similar to the ones Naomi gave Ruth.

- Go with your friends to proper field, don't go alone.
- Stay with your friends, and don't meet up with older boys, or pick on younger boys.
- When you ride home the same principles apply.

This promoted our safety even within a small town because they loved and cared for me.

Similarly, Naomi cared and loved Ruth protecting her as if she were her own child. Further they encouraged her to take full advantage of Boaz's redemption, to live in the rewards of redemption.

As a result of Boaz's provision and Naomi's practical instruction, verse 23 says Ruth kept close to the Boaz's women. She came and went with them gleaning and gathering alongside them.

The author mentions this occurred during both the barley and wheat harvest. **Again, this period was about six to seven weeks, from late April to early June.** Further, the author leaves us to assume that Ruth was able to harvest a comparable amount of food for the remainder of the harvest meaning that Ruth secured enough grain for the whole year. This was necessary as Ruth was not only working for herself but for Naomi, because she lived with Naomi.

Boaz's redeeming provision was not only more than sufficient to meet the needs of Ruth & Naomi, but when Ruth jumped in at the opportunity, she was rewarded for it.

**Again, can you imagine the offer of Boaz being refused by Ruth?**

**Can you imagine if Ruth said, “I like living in poverty, I like being a slave to my daily needs?”**

**We’d say, “Your CRAZY! Ruth!”**

The reward Boaz is offering is not only sufficient to care for immediate needs but it will lift them from poverty!

**That’s the purpose of Boaz’s generosity.**

**That’s the purpose of redemption!**

**Friends, Jesus’ redemption is sufficient to break the bonds of depravity and enable righteous behavior.**

Paul compels the early believers in Crete live in the rewards of Jesus redemption in the book of Titus, ... TURN TO TITUS 2!

- 1. redemption overcomes our bondage to sin, condemnation, the law, and this world!**
- 2. Redemption purifies to be holy, righteous, and fruitful**

There were a lot of problems within the church in Crete. We face many of the same problems within the church in America.

- There were legalist, antinominalist, (BIG WORD PASTOR! They taught you did not have to adhere to ANY rules or laws because grace covered it all), apathetic, lazy, fruitless people in the church, overzealous, self-promoting, me-centered Christians, fruit-bearing, God-fearing, Jesus loving Christians.

All of these people, believers and unbelievers alike, needed the truth about what daily life as a Christian should look like. Right in the middle of his letter, **Paul reminded Titus how to live every day in light of redemption.**

***Titus 2:14 Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us,  
to redeem us from all lawlessness  
and to purify for himself a people for his own possession  
who are zealous for good works.***

Paul reminds Titus of the cost of redemption. Jesus willfully gave himself as a ransom on the cross.

BUT He moves on to explain WHY HE DID IT? Why did Jesus have to die?

1. To redeem us, to buy us back from ... **ALL lawlessness!**

Other translations say wickedness, iniquity, and lawless deeds.

The word refers to everything and every way that is contrary God's will! This includes ...

- open, active sin and rebellion,
- any ideology we carry that says, my ways are superior to His ways.
- **willful violation** of God's law and God's will
- **ignorant violation** of God's will and God's law.

**It is seen through the open rebellion of the prodigal son,  
AND the self-righteousness of the son who stayed home.**

**Both are lawlessness!**

Why did Jesus have to die? To buy you back (redeem) from sin (depravity).

**The point of Jesus death is it is intended to buy you back  
from the power of ALL SIN.**

**ALL YOUR REBELLION, ALL YOUR SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

***“O death, where is your victory?  
O death, where is your sting?”***

***56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be  
to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.***

This means, Believer you are to live daily outside the bondage of sin! You've been set free!!! Jesus died, so you do not have to sin! Sin has no power over you, in Christ!

**Just as those slaves were set free from the iron collar of their slave owners,  
redemption sets the believer free from the iron collar of sin.**

**LIVING IN LIGHT OF REDEMPTION MEANS DAILY ABANDONING SINFUL  
BEHAVIOR.**

**Live everyday free of sin because you are redeemed! That's why Christ died!  
You are enabled to sin, ... LESS!**

- You don't have to give in to the lusts of the flesh, Jesus freed you!
- You don't have to give in to the pride of life, Jesus freed you

- You don't have to give in to lust of the eyes, Jesus freed you

Believer, live every day outside the bondage of sin, that's reward of living in light of redemption!

But, **living in light of redemption** doesn't end with buying us back from sin. There is a greater purpose than fire insurance, and removing bad behavior and attitudes. **Redemption also includes introducing believers back into a holy relationship with our creator.**

**Living redeemed is also about having righteous behavior.**

**Notice from lawlessness ... to purity.** (similar to Heb. 9)

**LIVING IN LIGHT OF REDEMPTION MEANS DAILY CHOOSING RIGHT BEHAVIOR.**

Paul's explains exactly what he means.

***and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.***

As redeemed, you are no longer yours, you have been bought with a price, the blood of Jesus, and **you are now HIS!** Your life is not your own, but you belong to Jesus!

I'm going to develop this familial relationship of redemption later in the series. I want to focus on the results. **The result is we are zealous for good works.**

Over and over the bible teaches ...

we are NOT saved BY our good works,

BUT we ARE save FOR good works! ... or right behavior.

We don't have dig too deep with this truth.

It means children ...

- Obey and honor your mom and dad.
- Respect you elders
- Tell the truth,
- treat others as you want to be treated

Adults, it means ...

- Love the Lord the with all you are
- Love your neighbor as yourself

- Submit and respect your husband, love your wife
- Overcome evil with good
- Make disciples through sharing Christ, teaching Christ, & living Christ

**This is power of redemption! Is it work? YES! We are not redeemed to be lazy!**

**This is living everyday in the rewards of redemption.** There is an eternal reward for living everyday with Jesus' redemption, just as there was a reward for Ruth getting up early every morning, staying late every night,

the reward for living out our redemption is

**SIN HAS NO STING AS WE LIVE A FRUIT FILLED LIFE FOR JESUS.**

The challenge is really simple, but the application is hard work!

ARE YOU LIVING EVERYDAY IN THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS' REDEMPTION?