

## Romance and Redemption Ruth 3:1-4:12

“**What a man, what a man, what a mighty good man.**” So begins the 1993 pop song ... “Salt and Peppa” (I appreciate that name).

- While not endorsing (nor remembering) every line from this song, this catchy line expressed a basic idea shared by many ladies, ***the value of finding a good man.***
- Many ladies continue to repeat the familiar phrase, “**A good man is hard to find!**”
- **It is true today, and it was true in the days of *Ruth*.**
- In *Ruth 2*, we met a mighty good man named Boaz.
- But chapter 2 finishes with a **downer**...
- We want to see Boaz ask Ruth out for a **falafel** or something! (**you’re welcome Sassol**)

### How will things move forward?

- Ruth can go to **Tinder**.
- There’s no “**The Bethlehem Bachelor**” TV show
- She could not even **run an ad in the newspaper**. If she could, who would be interested in a lady that also comes with her mother-in-law! (Must happily accept **bitter old mother in law!**)
- There was such a guy named **Boaz**, who like Christ bears the burdens of others selflessly.
  - (**Single guys; don’t dismiss a lady who is bringing some additional burdens with her! Maybe the Lord will use you to be a Boaz!**).

### 3:1-4:12

- **Naomi’s Plan (1-5)**
- **Ruth’s Proposal (6-9)**
- **Boaz’s Promise (10-13)**
- **Boaz’s Provision (14-18)**
- **Boaz’s Pursuit (4:1-12)**

### The time of day

- **Naomi devises her plan in the evening;**
- **Ruth makes her aggressive move around midnight**
- **Naomi evaluates things happens the next morning.**
- **Boaz immediately resolves things in the morning.**

### Two locations

- Threshing floor (chapter 3)
- The City Gate (4:1-12)

### A Few Caveats

**First, a basic rule in biblical interpretation: narratives are not always normative.**

- Storytellers are simply *describing* events, not necessarily *prescribing* activities.
- I would not give Naomi’s counsel to my daughters!
- We must allow all of Scripture to help us draw appropriate principles from stories.

**Second, this story is full of suspense and not every detail is explained fully.**

- The storyteller does not tell us everything, and there are some cultural practices that we simply do not fully understand.
- We must then focus attention on what is clear and applicable, and avoid making dominant points from speculations.

**Third, the sensuality in the story will make some people uncomfortable, but this very tension is important because it highlights the purity of both Ruth and Boaz.**

- Other OT stories in similar settings led to sexual immorality ( **Gen 19:31-38, 38:1-30**),
- But both Boaz and Ruth give us a much needed example of godliness – godliness in a time in which “everyone did what was right in their own eyes” (**Jud 21:25**).

## 5 Scenes

### Scene #1: Naomi’s Plan (3:1-5)

- 1: The **rejuvenated** Naomi expressing her burden to find Ruth a husband (v 1).
  - Instead of being **self-absorbed**, Naomi is now looking out for Ruth’s welfare.
  - It’s a sign that God’s **hesed** is melting Naomi’s cold heart.
- 2: How did she receive this info? We do not know, but she’s done some research.
  - Previously, Naomi prayed for the Lord to provide a husband and “rest” (**1:8-9**), but now **she seeks an opportunity to answer her own prayer!**
  - She seizes an opportunity that the Lord has provided.

**The threshing floor** was the place where farmers would separate grain from chaff, after all the grain had been gathered.

- Farmers would toss a mixture of straw, grain, and chaff in the air with a pitchfork.
- The heavier kernels of grain would fall to the ground, while the chaff would be blown away.
- The winnowing (or threshing) usually occurred at night because the nightly breezes needed for this separation.
- The location was often on a hilltop (also better for the breezes).
- It was usually done on a hard surface (such as bedrock), so that the grain would not mix with dust, and the chaff could be blown away.
- Further, these threshing floors were communal places, often shared by members of the village, and were places of joy and celebration.
- The workers would sleep in these locations, in order to protect their grain.
- We should also remember that the threshing floor was a place associated with immoral behavior, including prostitution (**Hosea 9:1**).
- Yet, Naomi sees this as the right opportunity for Ruth to have a special meeting with Boaz, despite the dangerous nature of this setting.
- She clearly has a high view of Boaz.

### 3-4: 7 Steps

1. **Take a bath (v 3)**. Always good advice when pursuing a spouse! Ruth is no exception.
2. **Put on some perfume (v 3)**.
  - Scented oils were common in this time; modern deodorants did not exist.
  - So Ruth is told to put on a dab of “**Midnight Moabite**” (a new essential oil!?)

### 3. Put on some fresh clothes (v 3).

- Ruth is told to look nice, as a potential bride (see **Ez 16:8-12, Israel as a faithless bride**), and not as a widow in a time of mourning (see **2 Sam 12:20**).

<sup>8</sup>“When I passed by you again and saw you, behold, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness; I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord GOD, and you became mine. <sup>9</sup> Then I bathed you with water and washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil. <sup>10</sup> I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk. <sup>11</sup> And I adorned you with ornaments and put bracelets on your wrists and a chain on your neck. <sup>12</sup> And I put a ring on your nose and earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. <sup>13</sup> Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour and honey and oil. You grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. <sup>14</sup> And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor that I had bestowed on you, declares the Lord GOD.

**App:** Naomi’s goal is not merely to make Ruth look and smell alluring, but her plan does include this aspect.

- We need to stop and recognize that to be godly you do not have to look and smell unattractive and unpleasant!
- Holiness is not frumpiness.
- One can overdo it for sure, and character is more important than external appearance (1 Peter 3:3-4; Prov 31:30), **but the Bible recognizes people and things in creation as being pleasing to the eye and the other senses (Gen 39:6b; Eccl 11:7; Song of Songs 1:2-3; 4:1-7; Matt 6:28-29); and things like physical fitness as having value (see 1 Timothy 4:8).**
- We are not **Gnostics** (those who only emphasize spiritual things).
- I say this with caution because so many in our day value external beauty more than biblical faithfulness, but Naomi’s instructions to Ruth are important to note for those who gravitate to a ridiculous extreme and fail to give attention to his or her body and appearance.

### 4. Visit Boaz at the threshing floor when he is in a good mood. (3)

- Talking to a hungry man is never a very good idea!
- After a hard day’s work, and some good food and a bit of wine to the glory of God (1 Tim 4:4-5; Ps 104:14-15), Boaz will be relaxed.
- **There had been years of famine, but now one can imagine Boaz staring up at the stars, under the blessing of God, in a very happy state.**
- The mention of drinking wine is significant in that it shows how Boaz enjoys wine with self-control.
  - He and Ruth display godliness, radically unlike the experience between drunken Lot and his daughter-in-law (**Gen 19:30-38**), from whom Ruth was a descendent.
- Ruth is not a stereotypical Moabite and Boaz is not a stereotypical dude in the days of the judges!

**App:** This picture of Boaz is important, for many have tried to equate holiness with unhappiness, rather than seeing one's delight in God and gratitude to God as the heart condition motivating holiness. "Happy are the holy"

- Many people believe that to pursue a life of holiness you must abandoned all pleasure.
- We are **not ascetics**.
- Holiness is about finding your ultimate pleasure in God, the God who gives us everything for our enjoyment (1 Tim 6:17).
- **Boaz enjoyed God's gifts rightly.**
- We should labor, eat, drink, rest, marry, and enjoy creation in a way that the giver of such gifts is glorified.
- We sin when we exchange the Creator for his gifts in creation.
- Let us not abuse God's gifts.
- Do not become mastered by anything.
- Avoid turning them into idols, but enjoy them properly, as God designed for God's glory.

**5. Observe where Boaz lies down (v 4).**

- Ruth definitely needs to follow this step – make sure it is Boaz! **Oops! Wrong feet!**

**6. Uncover Boaz's feet and lie down close to him (v 4).**

- One can sense the tension in these instructions.
- **Apparently, this nonverbal gesture was a customary means of requesting marriage, something that Ruth will eventually communicate verbally.**

**7. Listen to Boaz's instructions. (4)**

- Naomi leaves the matter to Boaz.
- She has made her plans but the Lord will determine the next steps (**Proverbs 16:9**).

**V 5:** Ruth's remarkable commitment/courage/loyalty.

**Naomi has devised quite a scheme.**

- We do not read of this specific method anywhere else in Scripture.
- She is encouraging Boaz to act. No other redeemer has acted yet either.
- One wonders **why?**
- Was Boaz waiting on the closer relative to act?
- Was it because Ruth was a Moabite?
- Were they keeping their distance because Ruth was grieving?
- Did Boaz simply think Ruth was out of his league (see v 10)?
- Ruth's actions at the threshing floor will force Boaz to say and do something!

**We must admit that this is a risky plan.**

How does the **stereotypical** guy respond to this?

1. If groggy, one could respond **harshly** – "what are you doing, woman! I just fell asleep!"
2. He could charge Ruth with acting like a prostitute, and **shame** her publically.
3. Other men may interpret Ruth's actions as a **license to sin**.

**Scene #2: Ruth's Proposal (3:6-9)**

**6-7:** Ruth follows the plan

- Or “secretly” - She came in like a ninja! You can **feel the tension** in the air!
- Boaz could **feel the air on his feet!**

8: What is more, you find a woman lying at your cold feet! (v 8).

- **“behold.”**

9a: All the storyteller tells us is Boaz’s question, **“Who are you?”** (v 9a).

- Did he whisper? Did he react in a sense of shock and surprise? Was he upset?
- We do know that he did not initially recognize her.

9b: Ruth answers briefly, “I am Ruth, your **servant**” (v 9).

- Her response is different from 2:13 - not even being one of Boaz’s servants.
- Now, an improved status, that is, **the kind of woman that Boaz might marry.**

9c: Ruth does **not** follow Naomi’s plan exactly.

- Instead of waiting on Boaz’s instructions, Ruth takes the initiative.
- **“Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer”** (v 9).
- She is **not interested in some dirty one-night stand. She is interested in marriage.**
- **Modern day: “if you like it, then you better put a ring on it.”**
- The idiom **“spread your wings”** is an idiom for marriage (see **Ez 16:8**).
- **Ruth sought refuge under the wings of Yahweh (v 2:12). Now Ruth is asking Boaz to become part of God’s protection and provision for her life.**

9d: “you are **a redeemer**” (v 9). There is also some caution expressed here.

- Boaz is **“a redeemer”** but not the only redeemer, that is, not the closest family member.
- And **Boaz was not the brother of Elimelech** (nor his sons for that matter).
- **So a pure “levirate marriage” is impossible.**
- Remember, under certain circumstances, the kinsman redeemer was obligated to marry his *brother’s* widow in order to raise up a family for the dead brother, so that the family could inherit the property (**Deuteronomy 25:5-10**).
- But Boaz was **not in this precise position.**
- He did bear some family responsibility, and he may choose to act in the spirit of the law.
- But we must not think that Boaz has no choice in this matter.
- He was not the brother.
- Otherwise, **this whole midnight drama would be unnecessary.**
- **Why not just go up and ask him to marry you in the daylight and appeal to the law?**
- Just because **Boaz was a “redeemer” did not mean that marriage was a done deal.**
- But because Ruth thinks it **increases her chances with Boaz**, and because she knows something of the character of Boaz she raises the issue.
- Boaz’s redeemer status also implied that he could help **support Naomi**, a willingness that Boaz displays in the story.

Ruth continues to amaze us.

**This was a bold move by a bold Moabite!**

### Scene #3: Boaz's Promise (3:10-13)

10a: Boaz  **blesses**  Ruth! What! **This is not Lot/Daughter, or Judah/Tamar!**

- It's **not a steamy scene** of passion, but a **worship service**.
- It turns out that he was not put off by her directness, but actually pleased by it.
- The "kindness" (*hesed*) referred to is Ruth's kindness to provide Naomi with an heir by marrying Boaz.
- Ruth first showed Naomi kindness by choosing to journey to Bethlehem with her (2:11).

10b: He expresses delight that Ruth hasn't "gone after other young men, whether poor or rich.

- **Ruth is younger than Boaz** (also "my daughter," also v 11, and 2:8).
  - Ruth could have gone after young men (or "**choice men**").
  - **Boaz was not a frail old man**; he has a robust work ethic.
  - **But he is probably older than Ruth.**
- **Ruth is more attractive** than Boaz.
  - She could have either a rich guy (for money) or poor guy (for passion and looks)
  - She has other values...

11: Boaz comforts Ruth by saying, "do not fear" (v 11).

- **You can imagine how fast Ruth's heart must have been beating!**
- **He then promises to do everything that Ruth has requested, which probably includes taking care of the family and property, not just marrying Ruth.**

11b: His fellow townsmen recognize Ruth as a "**worthy woman**" (v 11).

- A phrase occurring in **Prov 31:10**.
- Another connection to Proverbs 31 is "**her works praise her in the gate.**"
- Ruth is respected and praised by others.
- **Her ultimate beauty is her godliness.**

12-13: Boaz **presents the problem**: an unnamed chap was a closer relative than he was.

- Boaz honors these social customs.
- But Boaz promises that if the other guy is unwilling to redeem her, then he pledges under God to take her. Either way, Ruth will have a redeemer.
- Boaz then urges Ruth to remain with him during the **night for the purpose of safety**

### Scene #4: Boaz's Provision (3:14-18)

14: Before it was light enough for people to recognize Ruth, Boaz sends her off (3:14).

- This is preserving her **dignity** and **reputation**.

15: Boaz sends Ruth off with a gift.

- It is such a large amount that Boaz had to "**put it on her**" (v 15).
- either on her head, on her back, or over her back; an amount that was likely around **60-90** pounds of grain (if the "measure is a "seah").
- She then carried it all the way home!

## Why this extravagant gift? Two reasons:

1. A basic provision for two desperate widows.
2. A symbolic provision; that is, a message to Naomi. Boaz, by taking Ruth as his wife, will also be committed to caring for Naomi. (Made clear in the following verses).

16: She actually asks, “**Who** are you, my daughter?”

- It is exactly the same question Boaz asked Ruth in verse 9.
- Remember previously Boaz asked, “Whose is she?” and the foreman responded, “She is a young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi” (2:6).
- Is this still Ruth’s status?
- “**Did the plan work? Are you his wife? Has everything turned around for us?**”

17: Ruth tells Naomi everything that Boaz had done. Then she mentions the grain saying...

- Boaz’s gift was intended to bless **Naomi**.
- This same Naomi previously described herself as “**empty**” (1:21).
- She was both childless and hungry, but now she has a load of grain before her.
- **Boaz’s gift is probably symbolic of both kinds of provision.**
- **We are witnessing Naomi’s journey from emptiness to fullness, through the lives of Ruth and Boaz.**
- **Her days of emptiness are soon to be over.**

18: Naomi recognizes Boaz’s serious commitment to meet with Mr. So-and-So, so she says...

- “**settle**” – finish, accomplish
- Naomi trusts Boaz to **resolve** the complication immediately, and so she urges Ruth to wait until he does just that.
- Previously, she told Ruth to act; now **she tells her to rest in the work of Boaz.**
- She believes Boaz to be a man of his word, who will not leave important work unfinished.

### Scene #5: Boaz’s Pursuit (4:1-12)

#### A. Boaz Meets with Mr. So-and-So (4:1-2)

**The City Gate:** Legal transactions, judicial proceedings, and official business were all conducted at the city gate.

- It was a **spacious** place for people to assemble, like a modern day courthouse.
- Not only was the city gate a place to hold official business, but it was also **the best place to find someone**. So Boaz waited on for the other potential redeemer to come through.
- **behold**, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by

2: Once seated, Boaz asks the ruling body to sit down, as well (v 2).

It is unclear **why the writer does not give us the name of this other man**.

- Boaz would have known his name, and one needs to know a person’s name in court!
- Further, the book ends with a detailed genealogy, and so we assume the writer knew Mr. So-and-So’s name.

- His anonymity may simply be a reflection of the fact that he will be dismissed in the story and forgotten.
- Perhaps he is left anonymous to save his family from embarrassment.
- The writer might also be saying that this man is not worth naming.

Whatever the case, he sits down with Boaz to resolve an important matter before the elders.

## **B. Boaz Obtains the Right of Redemption (4:3-8)**

We can imagine people gathered around the men and the elders, witnessing this interaction.

**3-4:** This does not begin the way we anticipate.

- Boaz does not begin with Ruth, but with Naomi & piece of property belonging to Elimelech.
- Was this is an **intentional strategy of Boaz**?
- **Was he trying to play his cards right, diverting attention away from Ruth, in order to win Ruth for himself?**
- Whatever the reason, realize that **Boaz did nothing wrong or deceitful.**
- **Redeeming property was a customary action of a *go'el* (Leviticus 25:25).**
- Further, Boaz's gift to Naomi at the end of chapter 3 indicates that he was willing to do more than simply marry Ruth.

The property was apparently not sold when the family made the sojourn to Moab.

- Naomi is now putting it up for sale.
- This land had not produced for a decade.
- And it was the only thing in Naomi's possession.
- Due to her and Ruth's desperate situation, Naomi needs to sell it.
- It would have been a crushing thing to do, given the fact that property was more significant to the Israelites than us.
- **God dispersed this land among the twelve tribes of Israel.**
- Those sections of land were then subdivided among clans and families.
- **But this land was God's, not the peoples.**
- No one was relocating outside the land for a job change or a career move.
- **Land, spiritual life, and one's lineage were bound up together.**
- All of this explains why provision was made for a desperate Israelite who needed to sell it (**Leviticus 25**).
- The nearest relative was to purchase it, & give to back to the owner, in this case Naomi.
- It was a **law of love, not a means of financial gain.**

**4b:** "If you will redeem it..". Having the first right of refusal, Mr. So-and-So gets to decide first whether he wants to acquire it. If not, Boaz commits to redeeming it.

- You can sense Boaz's eagerness to resolve things.
- The anonymous redeemer agrees to seize the opportunity "I will redeem it" (**v 4**).
- He responds earnestly to the proposal.
- And why not, **this was a good deal.**
  - "For very little money, he could carry out a respected family duty and perhaps enhance his civic reputation. Financially, the investment was a bargain without risk...."

His little investment would develop into years of productive, profitable harvests; it would enlarge the inheritance of his heirs. How could he lose?" (Hubbard)

5: Boaz then plays his ace of spades: **Ruth**.

- The redemption of the property would involve more than personal gain.
- It would involve **sacrifice**.
- To be sure, it would cost money to redeem the property, but it would require resolve and risk of reputation (for she was a "Moabite") to acquire Ruth as well.
- Further, as for the "**name of the dead in his inheritance**," Boaz was asking Mr. So-and-So to first honor his family member's memory.
  - **But it also involved raising up a child for the dead man, so that the child would inherit the field when he grows up.**

6: Upon further review, the unnamed kinsman balks at the proposal saying.

- The sacrifice was too great for him.
- Duguid paraphrases: "If there were to be a child from the relationship with Ruth, the redeemer [Mr. So-and-So] would lose the field and there would be no benefit to his own children and estate to compensate for the costs involved in taking care of Naomi and Ruth. In other words, Mr. So-and-So was interested in ministry to the poor only if there was a payoff for himself and his family."
- Notice the personal pronouns usage, "I cannot... I impair ... I cannot redeem."
- This reflects his interests: himself.
- He was more concerned with his own welfare, property and posterity, and so he urges Boaz to redeem it.
- **A redeemer is the kind of person who gives up himself for the good of others**, and that is a mark of Boaz not Mr. So-and-So. Ironically, **no one knows this man's name**, while Boaz, who reflects the selfless love of Christ (**Philippians 2:1-11**), is remembered as one in the line of Messiah.

### C. Boaz Purchases the Property and Ruth (4:7-10)

Boaz was willing to pay the price necessary for Ruth, and so in verses 7-8 we read that the purchase was confirmed through an ancient custom...

- It was like a "**handshake**" to confirm the deal.
- Mr. So-and-So hands his sandal to Boaz.
- The removal of a **sandal** was probably associated with **walking the land as a symbol of ownership (Joshua 1:3)**.
- "**Feet**" often symbolized **power, possession and domination**.

9-10: With the official business complete, Boaz now offers a speech.

- Bookends: "You are witnesses" (**v 9-10**).
- He also reiterates the phrase "this day," which again highlights his zeal to fulfill his promise to Ruth (**3:13, 18**).
- The redeemer resolved the matter, as he said he would.

## D. A Three-Fold Blessing Is Offered (4:11-12)

A three-fold prayer of blessing from the people and the elders.

1. **The first blessing is directed to Ruth:** “May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel” (v 11a).
  - Recall that Rachael and Leah, and their two handmaidens, Bilhah and Zilpah, bore Jacob twelve sons, which made up the twelve tribes of Israel (**Gen 29-30; 35:16-18**).
  - Leah was the mother of Judah (**Gen 25:23**), the ancestor of the tribe of Naomi and Boaz.
  - The people are then asking the Lord to give Ruth a place alongside of these mothers of the people of God; that is, may Ruth be given a key role among the people of God.
2. **The second prayer of blessing is pointed to Boaz:** “May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem” (v 11b).
  - This is not just a prayer for prosperity and a good reputation, but it is a prayer for the reputation of the family that he will father.
  - It is a prayer that he would have a renowned lineage in Bethlehem.
  - Little did they know how great Bethlehem would be through him!
3. **The final blessing is directed to the family as a whole:** “and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah” (v 12).
  - Recall Tamar (**Genesis 38**).
  - Like Ruth, she was an outsider to the covenant people of God.
  - She too had lost her husband and was childless.
  - Like Ruth, her family line was threatened.
  - They both dressed up in pursuit of a child and a better future.
  - But there are also differences between the two ladies.
  - Ruth revealed her identity and received a child legitimately through marriage, whereas Tamar concealed her identity and deceived Judah, in order to have a child via incest.
  - Both unions, however, in the providence of God proved to play in important role in salvation history.
  - God promised that the Messiah would come through Judah, and his strongest son was Perez (**Genesis 49:10**).
  - Boaz and most of those in attendance descended from Perez.
  - And eventually the Messiah would come, albeit from a rather crooked family tree (**Matthew 1:1-17**) – because Jesus came to save sinners! (**Matthew 1:21**)

### Did God answer these prayers? Yes!

- Ruth does become a key person in the story of redemptive history.
- Boaz’s family does have renown in Bethlehem.
- And it was through Boaz that David’s house was built. (At this point, the people of Israel have not even asked for a king yet, but from this man Boaz, King David would emerge).

**12b:** The last phrase is significant, pointing to how Ruth and Boaz’s future would contain such blessings, and how sinners would be redeemed: “because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman” (4:12).

- The word “offspring” is “seed,” an important subject in redemptive history.
- The references to Tamar and Judah and the reference to “seed” would have made the audience think of certain seed promises in the Old Testament. (**Genesis 3:15**).
- Eventually, our redeemer came...

## The Ultimate Love Story

The narrator does not tell us how the news got back to Ruth and Naomi.

- One can imagine the various possibilities.
- All we are told next is that Boaz took Ruth as his wife, and they conceived and bore a son (**4:13**), but we are not told what happened between the city gate and this union and birth (at least nine months later)!
- Were Ruth and Naomi watching for his arrival?
- Did Boaz **have a sandal behind his back** and say, “Surprise! You are now my bride!”
- We do not know. One thing is for certain: Boaz was unique.

### Concluding Reflections

There is much to learn from this love story, though the story of *Ruth*.

- We could draw lessons about what to look for in a spouse.
- But this is a story within a larger story, pointing us to a greater redemption.
- *Ruth* gives us a concrete example --

#### #1: Our redemption is personal.

There is always a danger in learning theology, and it is this: losing sight of the personal nature of our faith.

- Ruth illustrates the personal nature of redemption. Boaz a real person redeemed Ruth, a real lady.
- **Jesus (a real person in human history, our redeemer) died for me (a real person in desperate need).**
- **There is always a risk of loving a theological system more than Jesus.**
- When we do this, we have lost sight of the very purpose of theology.
- **We must never make the gospel mechanical, explaining our salvation as some kind of math equation.**
- Redemption, as we are seeing in the book of *Ruth*, is **personal**.
- Indeed, this fact is one of the most significant things about the book of *Ruth*.

#### #2: Our redemption is the result of our Redeemer’s work.

There are many echoes of **the Garden** of Eden in *Ruth’s* romance of redemption, albeit in a now fallen world.

- In Genesis, God gave Eve to Adam.
- As a result, these two individuals would be united in intimacy, and have children together.
- In *Ruth*, Boaz takes Ruth and they will share in this holy union, and bear a son.
- In the New Testament, Paul says that our first parents’ union (and other marriages, like Ruth and Boaz’s marriage) mysteriously points to Jesus’s relationship with his bride, the church (**Ephesians 5:28-33**).
- Christ loves the church and **gave himself for us**. (Eph 5:25)

- The greater kinsman redeemer, the Second Adam, our Groom, the one from the line of Boaz and Ruth, did not allow **important work to go unfinished**.
- **He would not rest until he said, “It is finished” (John 19:30).**
- **Christ saw us in our need, helpless at his feet, and he paid the price for us.**
- **He spread his robes of righteousness over us and made us his own.**
- **He did all that we asked him to do for us.**

### **#3: Our redemption is the result of our Redeemer’s love.**

Not only must we keep the personal nature of salvation alive in our hearts, but we must also remember that **we have been redeemed out of love**.

- As one considers the theme of redemption, one finds God acting on behalf of the weak and helpless out of his divine love.
- What should stir the affection of a true Christian is not the logical consistencies of a particular theological system (as important as systematic theology is), but the wonder of Christ’s love for sinners like us.
- It is the “romance” of this divine redemption, the intimacy of our union with Christ, “who loved us and gave himself for us” that inspires praise, adoration and obedience.
- **It is the beauty of a person, Jesus Christ, not the beauty of a theoretical system that captivates our soul.**
- In Deuteronomy, Moses conveys God’s love in the work in redemption saying, “And because he *loved* your fathers and chose their offspring after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power” (**Deuteronomy 4:37**, my emphasis.).
- This idea of redemption out of love, is restated in chapter 7:

The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. <sup>7</sup> It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his *love* on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, <sup>8</sup> but it is because the LORD *loves* you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and *redeemed* you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt (**Deuteronomy 7:6-8**, my emphasis).

- In Hosea, God says that love his child motivated the exodus, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son” (**Hosea 11:1**).
- In the New Testament, we find the fullest expression of God’s love motivating his redeeming work expressed in various places and in various ways.  
 “but God shows his **love** for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (**Romans 5:8**).  
 “Christ **loved** the church and gave himself up for her” (**Ephesians 5:25**).  
 “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (**Revelation 1:5b-6**).

Let us never get over **the holy romance of redemption**.

- Let us never lose sight of the personal, intimate, familial nature of redemption, of God's love for his beloved.
- The book of *Ruth* gives us a concrete example of the Lord's personal and particular love for his bride.

And let's tell this message to the world – the greatest of all love stories.

“Redeeming love has been my theme, and shall be till I die.”