

# G Jones Bible Survey 6 of 7

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] We'll turn in the Bibles here to Ruth chapter 4, which we'll find on page 224.! And as Chris mentioned, we'll be looking at David. You might be wondering, well, why on us, we'll turn into Ruth 4, and hopefully everything will become clear. So page 224, Ruth chapter 4. And I'll read that, but I'll just explain what we're doing. Whenever we go to the doctor, what are we hoping for? If you're feeling unwell, and you go and see the doctor, well, first of all, we're hoping that the doctor can tell us what the problem is, aren't we? But critically, what we want to hear are those words, what you need is, and whatever the answer is. We want that sentence to finish. We want that sentence to come out of their mouths, and to finish.

And I wonder, if you stood before God, the God who had made you, the God who knows you inside out, and he started that sentence, what you most need is... How do you think that sentence would end? How do you think that sentence should end? Maybe you expect him to say, well, you need to turn over a new leaf, and you need to start over. You need to try harder. Maybe you need to belong to a certain group. Maybe you need to keep certain rules. That might be what you expect to hear. And over the past few weeks, as we've seen God working out his plan, he's made a promise at the beginning, and he's working out this plan, and along the way, one thing that we see is that those things are not what we need. And that's not the answer. Because in Noah's story, you do see a new start, and that's not enough in and of itself. Because the problem has remained that man is still inherently rebellious against God, ever since Adam's rebellion, our main, our first representative, turned our hearts away. He took our allegiance away from God, and to this figure called the serpent, or the devil. In Abraham, we see that simply belonging isn't enough, because even though he is the chosen one, and his family is the chosen family, many of his descendants end up not really being, not really belonging, not truly being God's people. And last week we looked at Moses, where this family is constituted then as a country, as a nation, with laws and rules, and even then, that is not enough to really resolve all the problems. And the next significant figure we're going to meet is King David, as Chris mentioned. You may have heard of him, you may be aware of the story of David and Goliath, and you might be wondering, well, what is that story all about? Why do we learn of

King David? You may remember that I mentioned that as we read the Bible, it's like watching a plant grow over time, so DNA remains the same all the time, but over time it looks different. So where does David fit into that? What is that story of David and Goliath all about? What are all the other stories I've heard of David? What are they all about? Well, actually, this story of Ruth, who is the great grandmother of David, actually tells you a lot about David, even though they probably never met.

And yet the story of Ruth is sort of deeply embedded, the DNA of the story of Ruth is deeply embedded in the story of David. And I thought, we look at Ruth, it's quite different from the books we've been looking at so far. It's not just a story of big figures, but here's a love story, a very small, simple life, seemingly insignificant people, and God yet at work in the lives of these seemingly insignificant people.

[ 4 : 1 2 ] And so this beautiful love story actually says a lot about what's happening in the big story as well. And it's a story that shows us that what we need most is somebody to save us. We need God to save us. And it's a story that will show us it's not just God will bring a saviour onto the big, national, global scale, but it's a saviour that will touch the lives of individual people.

The book of Ruth begins, saying when this story happens, it's in the days of the judges. And the judges came after Moses. Moses had led people out of Egypt and into the promised land. And then here they were in that promised land, but without a leader. And increasingly just getting worse and worse and worse and worse. They were more and more rebellious. And so every now

and again there would be a judge. God would bring in a judge, or you could translate the word a deliverer.

Somebody to save the people against the enemies. Somebody to sort out the problems. And yet, as you read through the book, it just keeps getting worse. Even though there's a deliverer coming, it just gets worse and worse. You realise you need someone to save the people, but you need someone who's competent to do so. And it's a really horrible period in Israel's history.

Israel was not the way you would want to live during this period. And the book ends, the book of Judges ends, there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what is right in his own eyes.

[ 5 : 45 ] And hopefully you know enough about yourself, and you know enough about what we've seen over the past few weeks. To know that everyone doing what is right in their own eyes is not a positive thing. That is not a world you want to live in. A world where everyone is doing what is right in his own eyes. So in this land that was increasingly rebellious against God, famine had struck. And we zoom in on just this one town called Bethlehem, which you will have heard of from other stories that come later. Bethlehem literally means the house of bread, and famine has struck the house of bread. What an irony. And we meet a man who has decided he can't be bothered with all of this anymore. So he leaves Judah, and he takes his wife and his two sons with him to go to Moab where there's more food. This man is called Elimelech. His name literally means God is king. And that gives you a bit of a spoiler alert. That is really the answer you're looking for. That is what you want, is God to be king. The solution to his problem was right under his nose the whole time. And so they go there, but then he dies, and then his sons die. But while they were over in this land called Moab, the sons have got married.

And Naomi has heard now that Naomi is the mother, the wife of Elimelech. And she's stuck now with two daughters-in-law that she'd acquired while in this country. And it's time for them to go back. Because she's heard there's food again back home. One of those daughters-in-law has stayed put. But one of them has committed to come with her. Even though she said, you should stay here, this daughter-in-law called Ruth, decided, no, I will go with you. I will be part of your people. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God. I'm going to completely join in.

And so they showed up in Judah. And yet it's still a horrible place to live. There's still everyone doing what's right in their own eyes. There's still no king, but at least there's food.

And so Ruth has set out to glean in the fields. That was a provision made for poor people. That they could glean what was left over in the field. And she just happened to glean in a field of probably one of the few worthy men left in the land. And this worthy man called Boaz just happened to be one of the relatives of the family who was in a position to buy back the land of the family so he could provide for the family and keep the name of Elimelech and sons going. So in this horribly dangerous time, Boaz is literally a godsend. He provides for their needs.

He protects Ruth where there's danger. And he gives her plenty of food. I think one of my, if I had money to commission a painting, I would commission a painting of Ruth going back from the field on the first day, struggling under the weight of all the grain that Boaz gave her. It's a really beautiful picture to think of her being so well provided for. But after all this wonderful provision, and after you see a blossoming love just beginning, just a bud between Ruth and Boaz, you suddenly hear the clang of a spanner hitting the cogs. Because as wonderful as Boaz is, he's not the right redeemer. It's the wrong redeemer, Ruth. There is one nearer than Boaz. He is not first in line to do it. It's like those moments in stories where suddenly there's that sickly sweet stepmother who shows up in the story.

[ 9 : 40 ] Or, you know, a very serious looking aunt. Or like in Wallace and Gromit, the penguin shows up. And you think, ooh, I don't like the look of this one. And we don't really care how nice they are, but they just don't belong here. And you want them gone. And, you know, maybe, maybe, maybe this guy might be better than Boaz. But we don't really want him around. And it's not likely that he's better than Boaz. There's probably not very many worthy men around in the days of the judges. But Boaz has told Ruth that he will sort it out. It's not actually for him to sort it out. It's actually for Ruth to sort it out. But Boaz seems to know that it's probably better if he sort it out. And as we'll see in a moment, that is what he does. And he's clearly got something up his sleeve. But also, God has got something up his sleeve in this story. And so that is where we begin to discover what the point of the story of Ruth is. Where this story of Ruth fits in this growing plant. And how this fits in to the story. So I'm going to read Ruth 4 and see what we can learn from this story. So Ruth chapter 4 on page 224.

Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the Redeemer of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, Turn aside, friend. Sit down here. And he turned aside and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, Sit down here. So they sat down. Then he said to the Redeemer, Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. So I thought I would tell you of it and say, Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you. And he said, I will redeem it.

Then Boaz said, The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance. Then the Redeemer said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.

Now this was the custom in former times in Israel, concerning redeeming and exchanging. To confirm a transaction, one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other.

[12:26] And this was the manner of attesting in Israel. So when the Redeemer said to Boaz, Buy it for yourself, he drew off his sandal. Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, You are witnesses this day, that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech, and all that belonged to Kilion and Marlon.

That was his two sons. Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Marlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers, and from the gate of his native place.

You are witnesses this day. Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel.

May you act worthily in Ephrathah, and be renowned in Bethlehem. And may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bought to Judah, because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman.

So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. Then the women said to Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a Redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel.

[13:49] He shall be to you a restorer of life, and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.

Then Naomi took the child, and laid him on her lap, and became his nurse. And the women of the neighbourhood gave him a name, saying, A son has been born to Naomi. They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Perez. Perez fathered Hezron. Hezron fathered Ram. Ram fathered Aminadab.

Aminadab fathered Nashon. Nashon fathered Salmon. Salmon fathered Boaz. Boaz fathered Obed. Obed fathered Jesse. And Jesse fathered David.

What's happening in this story? What is Boaz up to? But more importantly, what is God up to? God is bringing salvation through this tiny little love story.

[14:54] He's bringing a lot more than food to Israel. And here's just a few things that we can see about how God is bringing salvation to the land. First of all, he's bringing salvation through a scandal.

That is an element that we see in the plant that's growing. That the salvation comes to this dark world actually through scandalous circumstances. You might be wondering, I don't see why the scandal is here.

And what I mean is that first scene at the city gate. What happens there is actually really scandalous. You could call it the sandal scandal. Because that's what it is.

Verse 1 and 2 has set the scene for us. And Boaz has said, sit here my friend. That word friend isn't quite the best way to translate that. Boaz probably would have called him by name.

And that word friend is just sort of bracket, insert name here. The narrator is telling us very clearly, I'm not going to tell you his name. Which is probably not a good sign for what kind of man this is going to be.

[15:56] It's probably protecting the guilty. But that word just kind of shows you this is probably not going to be good news. If you look at verse 7, we get an explanation of what happens.

Why was this whole kind of sandal exchange? But what's happening there? The author is not giving you a nice, interesting cultural lesson. As though you should kind of read it.

Oh, how interesting. What a quaintful custom. I remember when I first moved to France to live for a few years. We would find things difficult and annoying.

And our colleagues would just very patiently say it. It's not wrong. It's just different. That is not what the narrator wants you to think here. He wants you to be really shocked by this.

You shouldn't read this and think, oh, how sweet. You should be really scandalised by this.

Because when you read the law that was given through Moses, precisely for this situation, it's a million miles from this.

[16:57] This is what you read in Deuteronomy 25. If brothers dwell together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger.

Her husband's brother shall go in to take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

And if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, If my husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.

Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. And if he persists, saying, I do not wish to take her, then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face.

And she shall answer and say, So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house. And the name of his house shall be called in Israel, the house of him who had his sandal pulled off.

[18:09] The removing of the sandal was meant to be an embarrassing, shameful thing. But this is how bad Israel had gotten by this point, is that they just couldn't care less.

So when he says, I don't want to do it, he's just like, just take it, I don't care. Take my sandal. I couldn't care less. That was the custom in Israel.

The author is telling us, this is how bad Israel had got. That they just saw this kind of rule and took it to be a loophole. But right, that's an easy way out. I'll just take off my sandal and just give it.

I just couldn't care less. We see that the problem for Ruth is so much more than just needing a redeemer. She's living in a terrible place. She really needs to be saved. And yet to be saved, this scandal needs to happen because that's the only way Boaz can save her.

It is not the first time in history that salvation will come through a scandal. And it is certainly not the last. Just as this man shamelessly dodges the law and its requirements, so also in a later generation, that is what the Jews would do to Jesus.

[19:22] To get him on a cross in shame and scandal. So salvation has to come through a scandal. Also salvation comes through a second man.

That's another key thing we see. Salvation comes through a second man. What did Naomi and Ruth need? They needed a redeemer. But they already had a redeemer.

It was this man, this Mr. whatever his name was, Mr. So-and-so. Why do they need Boaz? Because they still need a redeemer. Because the redeemer they have is awful.

He's useless. He's completely worthless. They need a second worthy redeemer. When King David came, what did Israel desperately need?

They needed a king. But Israel already had a king when David came on the scene. They'd been given Saul. Because Israel had scandalously rejected God.

[20:25] And they got Saul as part of that. So they already had a king. But did Israel still need a king? Absolutely. Because this king was awful. This king was worthless.

David could now take his place. David is the second man. The kingdom is given to Saul. But then is transferred to David. So you needed somebody to replace Saul.

And we needed Boaz to replace this Mr. So-and-so. We need a covenant representative. We need somebody who represents us before God.

Now we already have somebody who represents us before God. His name is Adam. We met him on the beginning of our series. But that's the problem.

We have such a dreadful representative before God. What we need is a second man. The son of David. To take over from him.

[ 21 : 26 ] You need a champion. You need a better representative. That's what David and Goliath is all about. It's about Saul's failure to defend his people.

And David taking over. It's not about you conquering your giants. It's about the one who conquers the giant for you. And it's the one who will truly do it. Versus the really rubbish failure king. And that is how this story's DNA is infused into David's story. Salvation will come for a second man. Thirdly, salvation will come through a son.

Once the deal is done. The scene is wrapped up before the city. The elders blessing Boaz. And they pray for them to have children. And that is a wonderful thing for them to wish for. That's what they get. They get the son. And it's especially a blessing for Ruth and for Naomi especially. The women are really pleased. The son has been born for Naomi. After all that horrible time of trouble.

[ 22 : 25 ] They finally get redemption. But given that sort of the first scene. The elders were just thinking about that.

We'd expect the same thing with the women here. But notice at the end of verse 17. The narrator goes further. It goes further than just a child for Ruth and Naomi. Naomi. It's not just about that. The story goes on. It's a little bit like the third Lord of the Rings film. If you've ever seen that. You look at what you think is the final scene. And it fades to black. And then there's another one. And then that fades to black. And then there's another scene. So you're just never quite sure when it ends. But there's more to it. Just here. Because after all.

There's so much mess. Just one child for Ruth and Naomi. We. Isn't going to do it. We've discovered that the problem is far more serious.

[ 23 : 24 ] Than merely needing to continue this line. Israel really needs sorting out. And so the wonderful news of this son. Carries on.

It would be a bit strange to see this. If you watch a film for example. And sort of you know. The climax of the happy ending. Is somebody getting a son. After years of longing. And yet. Through the window of the hospital. You see bombs being dropped. You can tell. Well the story isn't over yet. Is it? You would at least want it to be continued. At the end of that film. And that is what we get here. With the genealogy. That carries the story on. Beyond this. It's telling us that. Clearly the scope of what's needed. Is so much bigger. So much broader. And finally. Salvation comes through the seed. Ultimately we end up with a list of the generations.

[ 24 : 21 ] Just like we do in Genesis. And the whole point of this generation. Of course. Is to point back to where we began. With Adam and Eve. And the promise to Eve.

In Genesis 3.15. That through her seed. Through the offspring. That would be the one. To deliver all of Israel. And all of God's people.

What they needed. Was not the main. Not the steps along the way. Not the new start. Not the new family. Not the new nation. What you needed. Was the destination. They were aiming for. The whole time.

What you need. Is what. What has been typed into the sat nav. Not the stops on the way. What you need. Is the seed of the woman. You need the one.

Who will come. To defeat the evil one. This genealogy. Obviously takes us. As far as King David. And then Matthew's gospel. In the New Testament. Would finish off the genealogy.

[ 25 : 20 ] Featuring. It will feature women. Like Ruth. And the other women. That we have featured here. Like Tamar. And Rahab. Who was the mother of Boaz. And it takes us all through.

The royal line. To Jesus. The seed. For whom we're waiting. The one who is. Elimelech. Our God. Who is also King.

He is the true Elimelech. He is the true one. Who shows us. The real answer. To our problems. I'll end with.

This poem. It's a song written. By Andrew Peterson. He has a. He's a singer songwriter. He does a show. That kind of takes you. Through the Bible. This is how he gets you. From Moses.

To Jesus. So long Moses. Hello promised land. It was a long long road. But your people are home. So long Moses.

[ 26 : 16 ] Hello Joshua. Goodbye Canaan. We're coming to town. Twelve tribes. And no crown. No crown. Oh Lord. We want a king.

On a throne. Full of power. With a sword. In his fist. Will there ever be. Ever be a king. Like this. Hello Saul. First king of Israel.

You were foolish. And strong. So you didn't last long. Goodbye Saul. Hail King David. shepherd. Shepherd from Bethlehem.

Set the temple of God. In mighty Jerusalem. He was a king. On a throne. Full of power. With a sword in his fist. Has there ever been. Ever been a king like this.

Full of wisdom. Full of strength. The hearts of the people. Are his. Hear O Israel. Was ever there a king like this. Hello prophets. The kingdom is broken now.

[ 27 : 12 ] The people of God. Have been scattered abroad. How long O Lord. So speak. Isaiah. Prophet of Judah. Can you tell.

Can you tell. Of the one. This king. Who's going to come. Will he be a king. On a throne. Full of power. With a sword in his fist. Prophet. Tell us. Will there be another king.

Like this. Full of wisdom. Full of strength. Hearts of the people. Are his. Prophet. Tell us. Will there be another king. Like this. And Isaiah said.

He'll bear no beauty. Or glory. Rejected. Despised. A man of such sorrow. Will cover our eyes. He'll take up our sickness.

Carry our tears. For his people. He will be pierced. He'll be crushed. For our evils. Our punishment. Feel. By his wounds.

[ 28 : 07 ] We will be healed. From you. O Bethlehem. Small among Judah. A ruler will come. Ancient. And strong. The one we're waiting for.

Is that ancient. And strong. Ruler. Who we'll learn about. Next week. On our final. Step. In the journey. I'll just say. A brief prayer.