

## Book of Ruth-The Journey(Part 3)

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- In our previous lessons, we looked at how Ruth and Orpah still remain Naomi's daughters – in – law even after the death of their husbands.
- They still remain part of the family and that relationship does not change, nor could it because of what it pictures – the free gift of eternal life –  
**Ephes. 2:8** *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*
- This family relationship now gives access to the covenants of promise –  
**Gal. 3:28** *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*
- We also looked at Ruth and Orpah embarking on a journey to Judah with Naomi. When faced with a choice(test) right after, Orpah chose to go back to her people and to her gods, while Ruth continued on with Naomi.
- **Ephes. 2:10** - after our spiritual birth, the Bible reckon that we become His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. So, keeping the 'good works which God prepared beforehand for us to walk in' in mind let's return to Naomi, Orpah and Ruth and the journey to Judah.
- Something I would like us to note is this; the only way that Orpah and Ruth know about the land of Judah is through Naomi; the reason for going there is made known to them by Naomi and ultimately Ruth gleanes in Boaz's field and prepares herself to go to Boaz's threshing floor because of the instruction she receives from Naomi.
- The **completion of the journey, the gleaning and the preparation** picture the good works prepared beforehand for us to walk in and we may clearly understand that it is only through our proper engagement with the scriptures and our faithful obedience to them that the purpose for our creation in Christ can be realized –  
**2Tim 3:16** *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*
- And just as Ruth was dependent upon Naomi - **Ruth 3:5** *"And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."*
- So we are dependent upon the scriptures. Quite simply we have to know, from the scriptures, the reason for our eternal salvation and what it takes to see that reason fulfilled.
- Now, although we see a chronology of events in Ruth – a journey, followed by gleaning in Boaz's field, followed by preparations to meet Boaz on his threshing floor there is no chronology to that which these events picture in the life of the Christian.
- In our spiritual journey from the land of our birth to the land of our calling that pictured through the journey, the gleaning and the preparation, all happen concurrently and continuously and Paul speaks of it this way in-
- **Phil 2:12** *"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"*
- It is the same continuous process that we see in the metamorphosis in –
- **Rom. 12:1** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"*
- Although the process is continuous there are however specific points in time for the Christian which do have a chronology. There is a **beginning point, as in Day 1** of the restoration of the ruined creation in Genesis which is the **foundational picture for the free gift of eternal life** seen in Orpah and Ruth **becoming part of a Jewish family**. Following this, there comes a point in time when the Christian is to make a **decision to embark on the journey**,

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pictured through Orpah and Ruth, (**separation of the carnal and the spiritual**) determining to return with Naomi to the land of Judah and her people and there is a **terminal point** that finds the Christian standing before the Lord at His **Judgment Seat, pictured in Ruth appearing on Boaz's threshing floor.**

- Between the decision and the Judgment Seat are to be found the concurrent and continuous activity that we see pictured in Ruth Chapters 1-3.
- And just as there is a progressive revelation given to Ruth beyond the starting point in the journey – revelation to do with Bethlehem, a kinsman redeemer, work and wages, inheritance and marriage, so it is with our own experience as we move from the milk to the meat, to the strong meat of the Word; as we progress from faith to faith.

**John 16:13** *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."*

In other words the Holy Spirit takes the God breathed scriptures and opens them to our understanding, thereby guiding us into all truth concerning that which is Christ's, His Kingdom and His Kingdom rule - **1Cor 2:9** *"But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."* **10** *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.* **11** *For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.* **12** *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.* **13** *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."*

And so, as we read the Book of Ruth and see the instructions given to Ruth by Naomi we must not only think, 'the holy scriptures' but also the work of the Holy Spirit through these scriptures. The 2 must go hand in hand.

- Now, in the Book of Ruth we see a progressive period of time in which the journey takes place, followed by gleaning in Boaz's field from the beginning of barley harvest to the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest, work taking place from morning until evening. All of this picture for us the work to be done throughout the entire Christian life as we continue to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.
- What we see then is the Holy Spirit's present and continuous work amongst the eternally saved throughout the complete time of this dispensation, a time in which He will fulfill that seen in 1 Corinthians 2:9-13 for those with eyes to see and ears to hear.
- So on the one hand we have the Holy Spirit opening the scriptures to our understanding to reveal the deep things of God [hearing the word of the kingdom] and on the other hand we are to take that which we are given through this revelation and work with it to produce fruit / a harvest / a profit / an increase / to beat out the grain.
- And all of this activity on our part and on the part of the Holy Spirit has one end in view – our appearance at Christ's Judgment Seat for the purpose of being approved for rulership.
- As we study the book, there's something very important that we should not forget;  
**Ruth 1:18** *"When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her."*

Now we have rightly said that Orpah and Ruth faced a test when it came to going on or turning back, but I do not want us to think that there is a point at which testing ceases for us based upon this verse.

Quite simply here we see that once Ruth has shown her determination to go on, Naomi stops trying to persuade her to go back, but Ruth's testing does not end here. In fact every time Naomi gives Ruth an instruction the implicit test

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is will she be obedient or not? Her choice to be faithfully obedient is just that – **a choice**! Faithful obedience to the scriptures is what is required of us as well just like Ruth.

**Ruth 1:19** “Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, “Is this Naomi?” **20** But she said to them, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. **21** “I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?” **22** So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the **beginning of barley harvest**” **Ruth” 2:23** So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until **the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest**; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.”

- We see Naomi and Ruth arriving in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. And again, the timing of their arrival is not just an insignificant detail, but is rather loaded with spiritual significance.

**Lev. 23:10** “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. **11** ‘He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.’”

It was a sheaf of barley that the High Priest waved before the Lord on the Feast of Firstfruits.

Now it was on the 3rd day following Passover in the year our Lord was crucified that Firstfruits was celebrated, therefore the High Priest’s waving of the sheaf of barley before the Lord on this day speaks of **resurrection** following death.

i). And so, what we need to learn from Naomi and Ruth arriving in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest is that **Ruth’s work in this harvest is a work in connection with resurrection**.

ii). And to grasp the significance of the wheat harvest we can go to that which the Lord says in –

**John 12:23** “But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. **24** “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. **25** “He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal [age lasting] life”

iii). And losing our ‘life’ here has to do with denying ourselves –

**Mat. 16:24** “Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone [anyone of you – His disciples] desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. **25** “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. **26** “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

- Simply put, the work that Ruth is to do in Boaz’s field is to be done in connection with resurrection and is also to be done in connection with death and resurrection. The work to be done is through the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit and must necessitate the death of self for this to be accomplished; Orpah and Ruth must be separated –

**Gal. 5:24** “And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **25** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

**Rom. 8:13** “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

Isn’t this the truth that we saw in the foundation in **Gen. 1:9**” Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so. **10** And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. **11** Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is

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in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. **12** And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **13** So the evening and the morning were the third day"

It is only after 'the dry land' has been raised from beneath the waters, raised from the place of death, by the power of the Holy Spirit that the land becomes fruitful – and this happens on the 3rd day. This is the picture of water baptism that we discussed in the past...Rom. 6:3-12.

❖ **Let us choose to walk in the power of His resurrection as Ruth did!**

### QUESTIONS;

- 1). When Orpah went back, she was not only separated from Ruth but Naomi as well. What can we learn from that?
- 2). Read Ephesians 2:10 again – How are the 'good works' in this verse represented in Ruth?
- 3). Read 2 Timothy 3:16 – What is the connection between this verse and Naomi and Ruth travelling to Judah and the gleaning and preparation that takes place after this?
- 4). In Ruth there is a sequential chronology that begins with becoming part of the family and ends on Boaz's threshing floor preceding the redemption of the inheritance – how would we explain this within the Christian experience?
  - a). Which scriptures did we look at in connection with this?
- 5). Read Ruth 1:18 – does this mean no more testing?
- 6). What is the significance of the Barley and wheat harvest?
- 7). Where did we see that in the foundation and what do we learn from that?