

Ruth Series – Part Two
September 24th 2006

The Journey – Part One

1). As we began our study of the Book of Ruth last week we saw in it a Jewish family that had been dispersed into a Gentile land during the time of the Judges – a period of about 300 years – from the time of Joshua's death until Samuel the prophet, because of famine.

a). Even though this Book is set in the time of the Judges and is located in the OT, the Book of Ruth is essentially a typological picture of the life of the faithful Christian. In the events surrounding the Jewish family and its involvement with the Gentiles we would see primarily a picture of the present dispensation where Israel has been set aside and God is now dealing with a new group of household servants – the Church –

Ac 15:14.....God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.

b). Although the primary focus is the present dispensation we do see events that precede this time with Elimelech's family dispersed in a Gentile land under judgment - Ru 1:3 *Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.*

c). We see presented to us the complete Christian experience during this dispensation, from the birth from above, pictured in the marriage of Gentile women into a Jewish family, through the events of the journey, the work in the field and the preparation for meeting the Kinsman Redeemer.

d). We also see events beyond this dispensation pictured in Ruth's appearance on Boaz's threshing floor – the appearance of Christians at Christ's Judgment Seat – to marriage and regality which follow.

e). As part of the typological structure we had noted that Naomi is a type of the remnant of the Jewish nation that will return to the land after the Tribulation and by extension she is also a type of that which has come to us through the Jewish nation – the scriptures, a Saviour and salvation.

f). Ruth and Orpah are types of two kinds of Christian – Ruth is the successful, overcoming, victorious in the spiritual warfare, led by the spirit Christian – Whereas Orpah is the unsuccessful, overcome, defeated in the spiritual warfare, carnal Christian – additional types of these would be the wise and foolish virgins, the faithful and unfaithful servants of the parables.

g). These types we must keep in mind as we continue our study.

2). This week we are going to begin to look at the journey that is started by both Ruth and Orpah in the company of Naomi towards Bethlehem.

a). Ru 1:6 ¶ *Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread. 7 Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. 8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 "The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people." 11 But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12 "Turn back, my daughters, go-for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, 13 "would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!" 14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. 15 And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." 16 But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. 17 Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me." 18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.*

3). Both Ruth and Orpah become part of the family of Elimelech, a Jewish family, by marriage and although their respective husbands die, they remain a part of that family - Eph 2:13 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

a). In their marriages we find a picture of salvation by grace through faith, the birth from above, passing from death unto life – the salvation of the spirit.

b). Ru 1:3 *Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. 4 Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years.*

c). Now you will note here that there are just nine words at the beginning of verse 4 that picture the birth from above for us.

d). Similarly, at the beginning of scripture our foundational type for the new birth is presented in Day One of God's restorative process –

i/ Ge 1:2b...*And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 ¶ Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.*

e). But as we know there are another five days beyond Day 1, dealing with events beyond the new birth, leading to the seventh day, the day of rest.

f). Again, in another of our foundational types for the new birth, the redemption of Israel from Egypt, we have one Chapter, Chapter 12, that deals with events surrounding the new birth, followed by twenty eight chapters dealing with events subsequent to this as the nation moves towards the land of promise.

g). And what we would see here is not that the birth from above is an insignificant event – the free gift of God made possible only by the death and shed blood of God in the person of the Son would amply demonstrate this – yet as awesome as this event is, God's attention is focused on that which follows, as ours should be – events leading from the new birth to the Seventh day - also, of course, only made possible by the Son's death and shed blood.

4). And this is exactly what we find in the Book of Ruth represented in the journey, working in the field and preparing to meet Boaz on his threshing floor.

5). Having become part of the family a journey now begins – and this journey has a specific destination – in the case of Naomi, Ruth and Orpah it is to return to the land of Judah.

6). The making of a journey subsequent to the new birth is another of our scriptural foundations.

a). We find it in relation to Abraham - Ge 12:1 ¶ *Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

b). The journey is to take Abraham from the country of his birth to a specific land that God would show him, with the promise of blessing following.

c). We find it in relation to Rebekah - Ge 24:58 *Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." 59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. 60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become The mother of thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them." 61 Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.*

d). The journey is to take Rebekah from the land of her birth to this same land promised to Abraham where she would marry Isaac, with blessing following – the whole of Genesis Chapter 24 being a picture of the Holy Spirit's current work amongst Christians – calling out a bride for the Son.

c). We find it in relation to Israel - Ex 6:6 *"Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"*

d). The journey is to take Israel from the land of their bondage to the same land promised to Abraham, again with blessing following.

e). Now with regards to Israel, whom Naomi typifies, they are currently journeying, although this will not be seen in actuality until the end of the Tribulation, from the land of their dispersion to this same land given to Abraham – an earthly land - Eze 6:8 ¶ *"Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered through the countries.*

f). For Ruth and Orpah, who we will remember typify Christians, their journey is from the land of their birth and bondage – the world – all thing connected with the kingdom of Satan – to a heavenly land, which is also promised to Abraham and his seed and was rejected by Israel at Christ's first coming - 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

7). And I am sure we will notice from all of these examples that the destination at the end of these journeys is specific and clearly stated.

a). In the physical realm the journeys made by Abraham, Rebekah, Israel, Naomi, Ruth and Orpah would take them from one geographical location to another – all terminating in the same place.

b). And in the spiritual realm that which these journeys typify also terminate in the same place. This is not so much a geographical location, although this will certainly be a truth, but rather a destination in time.

c). The destination to which all of scripture, history and prophecy inexorably moves – the Seventh Day, the Day of Rest, the Lord's Day, the Messianic Era, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ with the change in the present system of rulership that will accompany it.

8). And let us be absolutely clear once again that the establishment of the Kingdom with His Son as King ruling with His coheirs in the place of Satan and his angels and their earthly counterparts during the Seventh Day, the seventh millennium, has been God's plan and purpose from eternity past.

a). We have seen it foundationally in Genesis - Ge 2:1 ¶ *Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

b). In Ex 31:13 *"Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14 'You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15 'Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16 'Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. 17 'It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'"*

c). Ps 2:1 ¶ *Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."*

d). Ac 13:16 *Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: 17 "The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. 18 "Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. 19 "And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment. 20 "After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. 21 "And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 22 "And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' 23 "From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior--Jesus—*

e). Concluding in Re 11:15 *Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"*

9). And with respect to the journey as we find it in the Book of Ruth, both Orpah and Ruth initially set out on it with Naomi - Ru 1:7 *Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.*

a). The very fact of our new birth automatically places us at the starting point of the journey.

10). In His first letter to the Corinthians, the Holy Spirit through Paul, uses the metaphor of a race to represent the journey. The journey and the race are one and the same - 1Co 9:24 ¶ *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.*

a). And just as the journey has a specific destination, so the race has a specific conclusion and they are of course one and the same thing

1Co 9:25 *And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

Php 3:14 *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

The prize for the successful completion of the race is an imperishable crown to be received at the Judgment Seat and worn by those who will rule with Christ during the coming Kingdom.

b). And in relation to the race the Holy Spirit through Paul says this in the next verse - 1Co 9:26 *Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

c). It is obvious from our scripture that Paul understands the goal of the race and what is required in order to win the imperishable crown. In consequence his life is organized in such a way that it has direction and purpose – his actions are geared toward achieving the crown.

d). And by the end of his life he has confidence of his success in the race - 2Ti 4:7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

11). And here is where we come across a dilemma within Christendom today.

a). Abraham knew of his destination when he set out on his journey
b). Rebekah knew of her destination and what awaited her there
c). Once redeemed Israel was completely cognoscente of where they were going and why.

d). Ruth and Orpah knew where they were headed, and by comparing scripture with scripture, putting together all the types – we must conclude they both knew what potentially awaited them in Bethlehem.

e). Yet most Christians today, however, are in ignorance of the journey, the destination or the potential outcome. (The focus on 'heaven')

12). And in consequence they find themselves doing the opposite of Paul – they are in the race by virtue of the birth from above, but they are running with uncertainty as they have no clue as to the direction they should be headed. (Every wind of doctrine – 'Christian activity')

a). They are nominally engaged in the spiritual warfare, but just beat the air.

b). And many who do discipline their bodies do so out of a religious spirit and spiritual pride, rather than through faith because of what is at stake.

13). None of this or course should be surprising, even though it is extremely saddening, as it is only what scripture teaches.

a). Mt 13:33 *Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

b). The leaven has done its damaging work and the church generally finds itself in the lukewarm, Laodecian condition described in Revelation 3 in respect of the message concerning the Seventh Day –

2Pe 3:4... *"Where is the promise of His coming?"*

(Not an exclusive message)

c). Jesus Himself prophesied this during His earthly ministry

Lu 18:8b...*Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find (the) faith on the earth?"*

d). It is exactly that related to us in the epistles - 2Co 4:3 *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

e). The blindness and the working of the leaven are really one and the same thing.

14). There are, however, those who do understand that they are on a journey, who know where they are going and what it will take to get there, and know what to expect with regards to reward and loss – So let's close for today with the admonition that scripture gives to those who are diligently seeking to enter His rest, not wanting to come short of it.

a). Heb 12:1 ¶ *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

(Teach what it means to be looking unto Jesus)

b). Col 3:1 ¶ *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your*

mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

(Teach this)