

Sunday April 3rd 2016

Ruth

Part Ten

1). Ru 2:15 *And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16 "Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her." 17 ¶ So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.*

We had seen in our last Ruth study how Boaz had commanded his young men to purposely let grain fall from the bundles so that Ruth could pick up what they left for her. And we had come to realize that as we work in the Lord's field so He will purposely leave for us that which we are to pick up and work with. The very thing we had seen described in - Eph 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.*

a). And we had noted in our Bible Study that our creation in Christ has purpose, just as the Woman's creation in Adam had purpose - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them [the Man and the Woman] have dominion*

The Woman was created in Adam and was later removed from his body in the form of a rib and was built into the Woman to be Adam's helper, comparable to him, and that which she was to help him to do is what we see in v26 - to have dominion, to rule over the newly restored creation.

b). All Christians are a new creation, created in Christ for purpose - Eph 5:30 *For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

And Christians, created in Christ, have the same purpose as the Woman created in Adam – to have dominion alongside the Man.

c). In God's economy, because of the foundation laid in Genesis with respect to the restored creation, rulership over the earth must take place through a marriage relationship. Just as Adam was not complete with respect to having dominion without the Woman, so Christ will be completed by His Bride. Christ cannot rule in His Kingdom apart from having a Wife, simply because this is the way God's divinely perfect order has been established.

d). Ge 2:21 ¶ *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*

As we see in the foundation it is after Adam has been put into a deep sleep that his side is opened and a part of his body, a rib, is built into the Woman who is then presented to the Man for the purpose of rulership.

e). And in the antitype of this picture we see our Lord is put into a deep sleep - Joh 19:32 *Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

There is no deeper sleep than that of physical death and here in v34 we see our Lord's side being opened with blood and water coming out. And just as Adam's rib was used to build the Woman, so the blood and water are used to build the Bride for Christ. The blood initially speaks of eternal salvation, the beginning point of being created in Christ, and the water speaks of the process in the building of the Bride subsequent to this initial point –

Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

f). The washing of water by the word and Ruth's obedience to Naomi's instructions witnessed in her journey, working in Boaz's field and her preparations are one and the same thing.

g). From our own perspective that pictured through Ruth gleaning and beating out the grain is the process of our cleansing through the washing of the water of the word as the separation is made between the wheat and the chaff, the separation between those things to do with our old man that have no value whatsoever and our new man created in the image of the Lord which has value beyond description. And all of this is brought about through the Word - Heb 4:12 *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

2). So, how does all of this work in our everyday life? Well, to begin with let's look at this verse once again - Php 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;*

a). Let's firstly note the connection between working out our own salvation and obedience – those in the Philippian Church were obedient to the word not just while Paul was with them and teaching them but also 'much more' in his absence. And isn't this exactly what we have seen with Ruth, something that will be the hallmark of the faithful Christian whom she pictures.

b). And secondly let's note our personal responsibility – we are to 'work out' our 'own salvation'. This is something we have to choose to do and something we must take personal responsibility for. Naomi gave Ruth her instructions with a view to the end result of a redeemed inheritance and marriage, but it was Ruth's choice to follow through on those instructions – Ru 3:3 *"Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment.....5 And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."*

c). In conjunction with this the Lord in His goodness and mercy has given us one another so that we may run this race of the faith together – Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to*

the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ-- 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

But whether we grow up in all things, do our share and receive what others supply is a personal choice. If I should choose not to do my share I deprive everyone else because I have nothing to supply to the growth of the body. And if on the other hand you supply what I need and I don't accept it I deprive myself of that which God has provided for me and purposely left for me.

d). And exactly the same principle applies to the husband / wife relationship. The roles and responsibilities to be carried out by the husband and wife are a matter of personal obedience to the commands of scripture, it is a personal choice and so we could go on, but I am sure we get the idea.

e). In fact the scripture says it this way - Ga 6:7 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

f). So, to go back to our picture from Ruth, we know that we are purposely left 'good works' which we are to pick up and work with, all with a view to dying to self so as to walk in the Spirit. And that which the Lord leaves for us to pick up and work with is multifaceted and inextricably connected.

3). Ac 2:42 ¶ *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.....46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,*

Every week, within our corporate setting, the Lord provides for us that which we are to pick up and work with – right now it is Ruth – Part 10 – the scriptures from this part of the Book of Ruth that He is opening to our understanding – and the truth in these scriptures is the same as that taught by the Apostles, and this we are to continue in steadfastly, 'breaking bread from house to house', not only in our Bible Studies, but also in our individual homes

and in our personal study. And we are to do this 'with gladness and simplicity of heart' - Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

a). And so, as we pick up that which the Lord purposely leaves for us on a Sunday and work with it throughout the week so it will bring about the separation of the wheat from the chaff, so it will impact our life for change – the word washes us and the metamorphosis takes place.

b). And that which we learn through this study of the word is then tested as it must be - 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, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 ¶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

c). It is right here at this point of testing that we can become that grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies, right here that we can produce fruit for the Kingdom so that we can receive praise, honor and glory at the Lord's Judgment Seat.

d). And inevitably this testing of our faith is going to take place through relationship - Eph 4:32 *And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*

e). So, the choice we face each week and even right now is, will we pick up that which has been purposely left for us and work with it to beat out the grain? Ru 2:16 *"Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her." 17 ¶ So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.*

4). And then, within the overall context of our corporate experience, the Lord will purposely leave for us that which we as an individual need to work with which could be absolutely anything found in the pages of scripture.

a). A really good example of this can be seen in the account of the rich young ruler - Lu 18:18 ¶ *Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit age lasting life?" 19 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 20 "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" 21 And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." 22 So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 23 But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.*

For this young man that which the Lord wanted him to work with was covetousness, his idolatry of placing his wealth before God. He had obviously heard the Lord teaching about the Kingdom and his question was what did he have to do to inherit life in the Kingdom age and for this young man, personally, at this moment, that which was purposely left for him was the choice between covetousness and obeying that which the Word said to him, *Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.*

He just needed to pick up that which had been purposely left and work with it; from the scripture though we know that he didn't choose to do that.

b). And this is how this process works for us – hopefully without the same end result – we all have a variety of things in our life that need to be dealt with so that we might have that abundant entrance into the Kingdom and as we continue in the scriptures so the Lord will purposely leave that with which we are to work – we need to see it, recognize it for what it is and then work with it, knowing that this works for us with regards to the Kingdom – 2Co 4:17 *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and [age lasting]weight of glory,*

Jas 1:2 ¶ *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

c). Then if we view another facet of the good works prepared beforehand it may be that the Lord brings individuals into our life with whom we are to share the word of the kingdom. These would be those found in the parable of the sower, those who have been sown out into the world who are to hear the word of the kingdom for the purpose of producing fruit. We are to wait for the Lord to bring people and when He does we must not be reluctant to share the word of the kingdom with them. And if they receive the word then it is incumbent upon us to work with them for the purpose of bringing them to completion to receive the salvation of their soul - 1Th 2:19 *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.*

d). And an integral part of every facet of the good works is waiting, waiting on the Lord to leave that with which we are to work - Ps 37:34 ¶ *Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.*

e). These then are the good works prepared beforehand for us to walk in so that we may fulfill the purpose for our creation in Christ Jesus, just as we have seen pictured through the Man and the Woman in Genesis and repeated through the same picture with Boaz and Ruth and prophetically portrayed in – Re 19:6 *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."*

And all is brought about through that pictured through the blood and water that came from the Lord's side.

5). Ru 2:17 ¶ *So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. 18 Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied. 19 And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz." 20 Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives." 21 Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'" 22 And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field." 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.*

And as we come to the end of Chapter 2 we see Naomi's absolute delight in Ruth having gleaned in Boaz's field, a man who is a 'relation of ours', a close relative – literally a redeemer.

a). Perhaps in this we can surmise the joy that will be found in the camp of Israel in that future day upon the realization of what has taken place during this dispensation in the lives of faithful Christians – faithfulness that will have ultimately led to Israel's repentance and restoration and blessing.

b). And with the joy of this future day in view there are the repeated instructions - *'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'* - *that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field.*" All of which Naomi says, 'It is good', with unmistakable echoes of God's words in the restoration of the ruined creation in Genesis Chapter 1 - *Ge 1:12 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.*

c). And from the beginning of barley harvest to the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest is the complete period of time needed to restore that portion of the ruined creation called Man, that portion we know as Christians.

d). And to see this through on a personal level we are to stay in that place of protection and provision provided by the angels who minister to the heirs of salvation so as to not be found in another field and we are to stay close by those who are like minded with us who will not let us stray beyond the boundary of the Lord's field and will help us keep our eyes upon the prize and to continue to pick up that which the Lord purposely leaves for us.

e). And again the Lord repeats that which we have seen and have come to know - *and she dwelt with her mother-in-law* – I trust we will never grow tired of being reminded that in the scriptures is our salvation, in the scriptures is our life and our hope – in the scriptures is our Lord and we must cling to the scriptures as though our life depended upon it, which in one sense it does – 1Co 15:58 ¶ *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

f). We will pick this up again next time – if the Lord is willing.