

Sunday January 31st 2016

Ruth

Part Two

1). Ru 1:1 ¶ *Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion-Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. 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.*

a). As we began our study last week we saw that the Book of Ruth has a type/antitype structure which teaches us great spiritual truth concerning both Israel and the Church. However, the focus of the Book is not Israel but Christians during this present dispensation and then one particular group of Christians pictured through Ruth rather than those pictured through Orpah.

b). It is Elimelech's family, and beyond verse 3 solely Naomi, who picture the nation of Israel and Naomi/Israel remain visible throughout the events in Ruth because of the inseparable connection that remains between that nation and the Church with respect to the completion of God's purpose.

c). Last week we had seen this connection with regards to salvation – Jon 2:9b.....*Salvation is of the LORD.*

Joh 4:22b.....*for salvation is of the Jews.*

Only God can provide salvation and it is Jesus our Lord, God the Son, who is the Jewish Messiah, who provides salvation for us, and it is having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, having put our trust in His substitutionary death for us, that we find ourselves 'in Christ' and therefore part of a 'Jewish family' and partakers of the promises given to Abraham - Ga 3:29 *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Ge 22:17 *"blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

d). Our becoming part of a Jewish family through our eternal salvation is described for us this way in the Book of Romans – Ro 11:16 *For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.*

The olive tree is consistently used in scripture to represent the nation of Israel and in these verses from Romans we see a 'natural' olive tree and a 'wild' olive tree. The natural olive tree is Israel and the Gentiles are represented as 'a wild olive tree' some of whom have been grafted in to be partakers of the root and fatness of the natural olive tree in place of the branches which were 'broken off' - Ac 15:14 *"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.*

e). And we can see clearly in Romans 11:18 that we 'do not support the root, but the root supports' us. We can of course see 'the root' as a reference to the Lord, but let's also remember that the scriptures we possess, particularly in reference to the OT, are the Word which 'became flesh and dwelt among us' and these were given to the Jews - Ro 3:2.....*because to them were committed the oracles of God.*

The very scriptures that we possess that teach us the Word of the Kingdom and show us the 'great and precious promises', that work in us the metamorphosis; the scriptures which we study to know God's purpose for us and the means by which that purpose will be accomplished have come to us by the hands of Jewish writers under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

f). And it is faithful obedience to that which is taught through the scriptures that is pictured in the relationship between Ruth and Naomi – Ru 3:1 ¶ *Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? 2 "Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. 3 "Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 "Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do." 5 And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."*

Quite simply, if we are to find ourselves properly prepared to meet Christ at His Judgment Seat, pictured in Ruth going down to Boaz's threshing floor, then we will need to be faithfully obedient to that which the scriptures teach just as Ruth was to Naomi.

g). And in order to be faithfully obedient we need to make sure we understand correctly what the scriptures teach by following the scriptures own instructions on how to study them - Isa 28:10 *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little."*

Lu 24:27 *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

1Co 2:13 *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

[Power Point]

2). Now Naomi's presence throughout the events in the Book of Ruth is not just about the central role of the scriptures in our spiritual journey, although this would be the main focus because of the context, but it is also about the fulfillment of God's purpose for Israel which also finds its conclusion in the 7th Day.

a). We will remember that Elimelech's family went to Moab and remained there because of a famine in the land of Israel during the days 'when

the judges ruled' – a period of time of about 300 years epitomized by the final verse in the Book of Judges – Jg 21:25 *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

b). The continual cycle of disobedience followed by punishment [just as God had made known to them in Leviticus Chapter 26 and repeated in Deuteronomy Chapter 28] leading to repentance, restoration and then disobedience again continued on past the days of the judges for another 450 years during the time of the historical kingdom.

c). Finally, when Israel's cup of iniquity had become full God allowed the nation to be removed from their land and taken into captivity firstly by the Assyrians and then by the Babylonians, beginning a time which scripture calls 'the times of the Gentiles', a time when the nation would find itself dispersed amongst the nations of the earth, nations who would hold the scepter of rulership in Israel's place; just as the Lord had said in - Le 26:33 *I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.*

d). And this is a period of time and a circumstance that exists even today and those Jews in the land of Israel at present, who are there in disobedience and unrepentance, will be scattered amongst the nations at the mid-point in the tribulation - Lu 21:24 *"And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

e). But remember Israel's dispersion and affliction has Divine purpose – Eze 22:14 *"Can your heart endure, or can your hands remain strong, in the days when I shall deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken, and will do it. 15 "I will scatter you among the nations, disperse you throughout the countries, and remove your filthiness completely from you.*

God's purpose for the nation will be fulfilled at the conclusion of the tribulation when the horror and affliction experienced by the Jews will bring them to repentance and to their ultimate restoration, their filthiness having been completely removed from them, so that they will enter Christ's Millennial Kingdom, the 7th Day, at the head of the nations as God had always intended.

f). It is then this whole sequence of events that is pictured through the family of Elimelech, particularly Naomi, seen in the detail of the Book of Ruth.

g). Ru 1:3 *Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.*

The death of Elimelech, Naomi's husband, pictures for us both the end of the Theocracy with the Babylonian captivity and the end of the marriage relationship between God the Father and Israel because of Israel's unfaithfulness - Jer 3:8 *"Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also.*

From this point onwards only death is seen in the relationship between God and Israel also seen through the type of Lazarus who is in the tomb 4 days.

f). Although the relationship with respect to rulership between God and Israel found itself in the place of death the nation of Israel still continued, pictured through Elimelech's 2 sons, Mahlon and Chilion and Naomi.

g). But Israel's unfaithfulness and disobedience still remained – a degree of spiritual sickness that the Lord described through Isaiah the prophet – Isa 1:4 *Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward. 5 Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints. 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head, There is no soundness in it, But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.*

This is a spiritual sickness poignantly pictured through the names of Elimelech's 2 sons – Mahlon = weak, sick, afflicted / Chilion = pining, destruction, failing.

g). This then is the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel at the time of the Lord's first advent when the Kingdom of the Heavens was taken from Israel, because of their rejection of the King and His offer of the heavenly Kingdom – Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

h). The heavenly realm of the Kingdom would now be given to those who would primarily come from the Gentile nations pictured in Orpah and Ruth becoming part of a Jewish family, a family that has death at its center.

i). The deaths of Mahlon and Chilion themselves picture for us the setting aside of Israel, leaving the nation in the place of death, while the Lord deals with a new group of household servants, the 'Church' – the same truth we have seen at the beginning of Matthew Chapter 13 when the Lord left the house to go to the sea and unequivocally stated at the end of the Book of Acts - *Ac 28:27 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them."* 28 *"Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!"*

j). But as we see in - *Ru 1:5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.*

Elimelech, Mahlon and Chilion have died, 3 deaths demonstrating that there will be complete Divine judgment upon Israel, but Naomi survives. This reinforces the foundational picture of Noah and his family going safely through the flood showing that the nation of Israel will not and cannot be destroyed, rather they are kept for a new beginning to be realized in the Millennial Kingdom following their repentance - *Ho 6:1 ¶ Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. 2 After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.*

Es 5:1 ¶ Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.

And the process by which this new beginning for Israel is accomplished is inextricably linked to the outcome of God's dealings with His Church in this dispensation. It is only after the Bride of Christ has been identified at Christ's Judgment Seat, following the resurrection/rapture, in the antitype of Ruth

appearing on Boaz's threshing floor that, like Boaz, the Lord then redeems the inheritance for her.

k). The redemption of the inheritance for His Bride and the time of Jacob's trouble, the tribulation, are one and the same and it is the events of the tribulation that bring Israel to such a deplorable condition that they cry out to the God of their fathers in repentance allowing for their healing and restoration.

l). And it is following the nation's restoration that they take up their regal position upon the earth as the Wife of God and become fruitful. We have seen this pictured this way in the foundation in - Ge 25:1 ¶ *Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.*

And we see the same picture this way in Ruth - Ru 4:14 *Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel! 15 "And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him." 16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him. 17 Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.*

m). All of this then explains why Naomi remains present throughout a Book that has the eternally saved of this dispensation as its focus. We might also note how the inseparable connection between the parable of the treasure and the parable of the pearl in Matthew Chapter 13 shows this same thing.

3). So now let's begin to turn our attention to the eternally saved of this dispensation typified through Orpah and Ruth - Ru 1:4 *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. 5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband. 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.*

a). As we have already noted Orpah and Ruth becoming part of a Jewish family pictures God calling out of the Gentiles a people for His name and is a reference to the free gift of eternal life that makes this possible.

b). Now what we will realize as we look at this is that eternal salvation is dealt with in 1 verse, v4 – the remainder of the Book, a further 81 verses deals with things which take place after the Christian has passed from death to life.

c). And this is the same as we see in the first Chapter of Genesis where eternal salvation is pictured in Day 1 and then a further 6 days are devoted to events beyond that. The reason for this is simple. The main focus of scripture is not the free gift of eternal life, but what is to take place in the life of the eternally saved following that beginning point.

d). Going back to our verses from Ruth we see that Orpah and Ruth having become members of a Jewish family then embark upon a journey to the land of Judah, Naomi having told them where they are going and why they are going and the route they will take to get there.

e). And here is the thing, all Christians need to be told the reason for their eternal salvation, where their Christian life is leading to, the direction they must take and what awaits them at the end of it. The moment someone believes on the Lord Jesus Christ they embark upon the journey, but many have no clue as to where or why they are going.

f). This instruction is referred to by the Lord in the Matthew 13 parables Mt 13:18 *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,*

Hearing the word of the kingdom requires us to be able to hear spiritual truth. This is not the wisdom 'which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches comparing spiritual things with spiritual'. And only those who have spiritual life are in a position to receive this as we see in the next verse in 1 Corinthians Chapter 2 - 1Co 2:14 *But the natural [unsaved] man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

g). Having spiritual life and therefore being in a position to understand spiritual truth does not mean it automatically happens, hence the numerous occasions when the Lord states, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear'.

h). We have already seen this in the parable of the sower where we saw 4 groups who hear the word of the kingdom, but only one of these groups produces fruit as a result of hearing - Mt 13:23 *"But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word [of the kingdom] and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

And this is exactly what is pictured through Orpah and Ruth. It is only Ruth who continues on in the company of Naomi to Bethlehem. Orpah, although just as much a member of the family as Ruth turns back and is not seen in the Book again.

i). Both however, Orpah and Ruth, begin the journey from the land of their birth to a land they have never seen where an inheritance awaits.

j). And this is not the first journey we find in the scriptures that follows this exact same pattern - 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."*

Abraham was to leave the land of his birth to go to a land that God would show him where an inheritance awaited him and we will note that Abraham is given instructions about his journey and told where he is going before he begins.

k). 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.'"*

The children of Israel were to leave the land of their dispersion to go to the land promised to Abraham where an inheritance awaited them. And they are told the reason for this journey prior to beginning it.

l). And for ourselves, we are to leave the land of our birth to go to the land of our calling where an inheritance awaits us - 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.

m). Now as Abraham went on his journey he was tested, the Children of Israel were tested, Orpah and Ruth were tested and so are we, as we see by continuing in 1 Peter - 1Pe 1:6 ¶ *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.*

We will need to pick this up again next time though – if the Lord is willing.