

Sunday February 7<sup>th</sup> 2016

Ruth

Part Three

1). 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."*

a). As we had seen in our previous study, Orpah and Ruth had become part of a Jewish family which has death at its center through the demise of Elimelech and his 2 sons, the husbands of Orpah and Ruth, Mahlon and Chilion.

b). These 3 deaths, as we had noted, picture God's complete judgment upon Israel for the nation's unfaithfulness and disobedience –  
Le 26:27 *'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, 28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.....31 I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. 32 I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. 33 I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.*

And as such this picture takes us from the end of the Theocracy at the time of the Babylonian captivity to the conclusion of the Tribulation when God's judgment will have been completed portending Israel's repentance and restoration - 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. 3 Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.*

c). And then, from a slightly different perspective these 3 deaths point us to 2 specific times in Jewish history. The Death of Elimelech remains the end of the Theocracy and then the deaths of Mahlon and Chilion in conjunction with Orpah and Ruth, 2 Gentile women, becoming members of the family points to the setting aside of Israel at the Lord's first advent so that He would take from the Gentiles a people for His name during the course of this dispensation; a new nation that would receive the Kingdom of the Heavens which Israel had rejected - 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.*

d). And it is the experience of Christians during this present dispensation that is pictured through Orpah and Ruth setting out with Naomi to go to the land of Judah as we read in our opening verses this morning.

[Power Point - 1]

2). Now as we look at Orpah and Ruth setting out on this journey with Naomi there are a couple of things we must take note of. Firstly, even though in the account of Ruth both Orpah and Ruth's husbands die, these two women still remain just as much a part of the family as they had done previously. They are still Naomi's daughters in law and that relationship does not change, nor could it because of what it pictures – the free gift of eternal life - 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. 11 ¶ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands-- 12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 ¶ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle*

*wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,*

And here in Ephesians Chapter 2 we can see this whole picture succinctly put. We see the free gift based upon the work of Another, we see the family relationship which now gives access to the covenants of promise –  
*Ga 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.*

And we see the 'good works' that we are created in Christ to walk in, 'good works' that were prepared beforehand by God for us.

a). So, keeping the 'good works which God prepared beforehand for us to walk in them' in mind let's return to Naomi, Orpah and Ruth and the journey to Judah. The second thing we must take note of 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.

b). 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 - *2Ti 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 - *Ru 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.

c). It is the scriptures in conjunction with the Holy Spirit guiding us into all truth that teach us about the 7 days, about a marriage relationship, about a

redeemed inheritance and about rulership - 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.*

Ro 8:16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

And right here in the scriptures, in 4 short Chapters that we call the Book of Ruth, is set out for us a treasure trove of truth teaching all these things through types and antitypes.

3). 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 Philippians - 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). It is the same continuous process that we see in the metamorphosis in Romans –Ro 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.*

b). 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, pictured through Orpah and Ruth 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.

c). And 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.

d). 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. It is true to say that we understand so very much more about the Christ and His Kingdom than we did even 2 years ago. And the scriptures continue to be opened to us as we continue to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.

[Power Point 2]

4). Now let's return to our opening verses this morning - Ru 1:8 *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."*

a). Both Orpah and Ruth set out with Naomi to go to the land of Judah and at the outset Naomi challenges them to return to their 'mother's house', that each might find 'rest' in the house of her husband. Naomi gives them both

a goodbye kiss, but both women 'lifted up their voices and wept' and declared to Naomi, 'Surely we will return with you to your people'.

b). What we see here is a test and what is pictured through it is the choice faced by every Christian to leave the land of their birth, this present world system, in wholehearted pursuit of Christ's Millennial Kingdom or instead to continue to embrace the things of the world. This is the choice that the Lord draws attention to in – Mt 16:24 ¶ *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone 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? 27 "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.*

And is at the heart of the Lord's instructions with regards to the future marriage relationship between Christ and His Bride found in the foundation – Ge 2:24 *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

c). Within the account of Ruth the literal choice is between that which is familiar and feels safe, the country of Moab, or trusting Naomi and following her to another land which is completely unfamiliar. A land for which there is no tangible proof only that which Naomi has said about it.

d). And it is good for us to note here that at the time Naomi issues her challenge to choose both Orpah and Ruth are in possession of exactly the same information. Naomi has spoken to both of them and told them about the land of Judah and the reason for returning there – it is a level playing field in that respect. Both have heard and both have to choose based upon that which they have heard and it is only in the choice they make that a distinction is seen between them.

e). This is exactly the same picture that the Lord presents in His explanation of the parable of the sower - Mt 13:18 *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,*

And we will remember that what follows on from this is the description of 4 groups of Christians, all of whom have heard 'the word of the kingdom', all of whom have been given the same information and the same opportunity. The

distinction between them comes from what each group choose to do based upon what they have heard. Although they all hear 'the word of the kingdom' only one group is fruitful. Just as in the parables of the talents and the minas all the servants are given their Master's goods to work with but a distinction is seen between the servants based on those who made an increase on that which they were given and those who don't - Lu 19:16 *"Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'* 17 *"And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'*

Mt 25:26 *"But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 'So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 'Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

f). So keeping this in mind let's return again to Ruth - Ru 1:11 *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.*

V11-15 continue the test and again the choice is presented between having your best life now or looking to a future hope. And faced with this choice both women again lift up their voices and weep once more, but this time we see Orpah kissing Naomi, a kiss goodbye, as she turns back to that which is familiar, an opposite direction to that to be taken by Naomi and Ruth, and Orpah is not seen in the Book again.

g). Now, although Orpah turns back she remains no less a part of the Jewish family than she did previously. What we see here has nothing whatsoever to do with eternal issues, these were dealt with by becoming part of the Jewish family in the first place, but these are issues to do with being approved at Christ's Judgment Seat.

h). And Ruth provides the type for the faithfully obedient Christian who will be found worthy at the Judgment Seat who will hear the words recorded in – Mt 25:21 *"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

i). There is no need for Orpah to be seen again as issues surrounding the unfaithful Christian appear many other places in the scriptures and it is to those places we must go if we wish to see this detail.

j). Incredibly, just as the names Mahlon and Chilion revealed enormous spiritual truth with regards to spiritual condition of Israel, so do the names Orpah and Ruth within the context of the faithful/unfaithful Christian.

i). Orpah = stiff necked / Ruth = a female associate, one plus another. From a root word meaning 'to rule'.

j). The Book of Hebrews addresses the choice to go back or go on this way - Heb 11:15 *And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

For Ruth there was no turning back to the country from which she had come out, she left behind the land of her birth and all that was associated with that land looking instead to the hope set before her and as a result in order to see this hope realized she clung to Naomi - 2Ti 1:13 *Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.*

Heb 10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

*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."*

5). The choice we see Ruth making here is the same choice after the same fashion as one we have seen made in another foundational type in Genesis – Ge 24:53 *Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. 54 ¶ And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master." 55 But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go." 56 And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master." 57 So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally." 58 Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."*

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