

Sunday March 13<sup>th</sup> 2016

Ruth

Part Eight

1). Ru 2:8 *Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. 9 "Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."*

a). We had seen last week the personal interest Boaz takes in Ruth and how his care for her extends to giving her very direct instructions as to what she is to do while gleaning in his field.

b). And we had seen that he gives these instructions to her so that she will maximize the amount of grain she gleans, so that she will be successful in her work – all of which must be seen within the context of how the account of Ruth ends, with a redeemed inheritance and marriage and David the king in her lineage.

c). Then as we take this over to what this all pictures for us we have come to realize that our Savior is taking the same personal interest in individual Christians whose hearts and minds and determination are as Ruth's 2Ch 16:9 *"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him."*

d). And in order for us to be successful in our work during this time of harvest, so as to maximize our fruit production for the Kingdom as we look to becoming the Bride of Christ and receiving the redeemed inheritance along with the greater Son of David, the Lord, through Boaz, has given us the same instructions.

e). Our work must be done within the Lord's field as we walk according to the Spirit continually keeping our old man in the place of death and we must not allow our old man to draw us away into another field as is the case with Demas - 2Ti 4:10 *for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica*

f). And our work through the man of the spirit can only be accomplished as we remain within the boundaries of the truth of scripture as we begin in Genesis and build on the foundations laid there and we must not be drawn away into another field as we are warned in - Col 2:8 *Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.*

g). And to help us stay in the correct field we are to remain 'close by' those who are like minded for mutual encouragement, support and direction - Eph 4:15 *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.*

h). And should we be wise enough to do these things we can find even greater encouragement from our Lord from the mouth of Boaz - Ru 2:12 *"The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."*

i). In the 4<sup>th</sup> part of the parable of the sower we saw those who produce fruit, some 100, some 60 and some 30 - well, if we follow Ruth's example as she followed Boaz's instructions we are looking at producing fruit one hundredfold, which will translate into receiving the full reward promised to Ruth in payment for her work.

j). And as we would follow the instruction of the scriptures, because of our absolute trust in Him who has promised, so we find ourselves in a place of refuge under His wings - a description we cannot help but take to the Lord's words in the Gospel of Matthew - Mt 23:37 *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"*

The thing that has always been so strikingly sad about this verse is the Lord's desire to gather the Jews together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, a desire to keep safe and to nurture, presented in the tenderest of ways, but the Jews were not willing to allow this. And they would not allow it

because they rejected their King and His proffered Kingdom, refusing to heed the instructions He gave them - Mt 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

As a result they were in the wrong field in a barren and fruitless condition – Joh 19:15 *But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"*

Mt 21:19 *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again [Lit. 'for the age']." Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

k). But, the opposite of that which we see with Israel would have to be true for those who hear the word of the Kingdom today, who believe it and set their face like flint towards it – as with Ruth, if we will follow His instructions we will find ourselves in that place of protection and nurturing, tenderly described as under His wings – refreshed by the work of the Holy Spirit and ministered to by angels - 1Pe 1:5 *who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Heb 1:14 *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*

l). As we consider the enormity of all of this we realize that Ruth's response to Boaz is what ours needs to be to the Lord.

2). Ru 2:10 *So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner [stranger]?"*

Ruth is overwhelmed by Boaz's response to her because she is a stranger, she is not a Jew and here is a wealthy Jewish man giving personal attention to a woman who has come from Moab. And in the picture here we can see ourselves – we have come from a Gentile nation and we have a Jewish Savior taking a personal interest in us. And the reason for this we can find in –

Eph 2:11 ¶ *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.*

These verses describe Ruth before she becomes part of the Jewish family and they describe all of us before we were eternally saved, but this is our condition no longer - Eph 2:13 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.....19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*

a). For Ruth this transition is seen through her becoming a member of a Jewish family; from our perspective though, that pictured through this has necessitated the death and shed blood of the Son of God. The enormity of this sacrifice on our behalf is impossible to put into words, yet we are only here today because of it.

b). Ruth then asks the question, ‘Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take note of me?’ And the answer that Boaz gives speaks volumes to us - Ru 2:11 *And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.*

So, according to Boaz, why has Ruth found favor in his eyes? Is it because she became part of a Jewish family of itself? No, it’s because of all she had done subsequent to this – all that she had done since the death of her husband.

c). And for us, the One who would be our husband in the 7<sup>th</sup> Day has died – here is our eternal salvation once again – and we will find favor in our Savior’s eyes because of what we do beyond the moment of our eternal salvation.

d). Orpah we will remember was still part of the same Jewish family, but the report given to Boaz is of Ruth not Orpah. So what did Ruth do that Orpah didn’t that has caused Ruth to be noticed and blessed? Again Boaz gives us the answer - *all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your*

*husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.*

So what does this look like for us then? What are we to do for our 'mother-in-law' following the death of the One who would be our husband?

e). Well let's just remember the picture given through Naomi – Naomi pictures the scriptures given to Israel - and this should become clear for us. So, to say this same thing another way, what have we done with respect to the scriptures since we received spiritual life?

f). Ruth of course clung to Naomi and followed Naomi's instructions to her. And that which Naomi had said to her caused Ruth to leave her mother and father and the land of her birth to come to a people whom she did not know before where there was the promise of a redeemer to buy back that which was lost.

g). For ourselves in the likeness of Ruth we will choose to be obedient to the scriptures because of what the scriptures teach us concerning who and what awaits us in the future – a Redeemer to buy back that which was lost.

h). We will choose to come to a people we did not know before, the Jews, so that we will no longer be strangers from the covenants of promise –  
*Ga 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

*Ro 4:13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

*Ro 11:17 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.*

And we will choose to do all of this because we know that God is faithful to fulfill that which He has promised from the beginning - *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**.....

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.**"*

2Ti 2:12 *If we endure, **We shall also reign with Him.** If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

3). Ru 2:14 *Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.*

a). Again as we read this verse we can see Boaz's care and attention for Ruth – he is with her at mealtime, literally the time to eat meat and provides her with bread and vinegar and parched grain. And as we have come to expect the items that Boaz provides were not just what were on the menu that day – they provide us with great spiritual truth.

b). Well, 'bread' would be pretty easy to understand, especially if we think about the One who is 'the Bread of Life', but why does it need to be dipped in vinegar? Let's begin by going to the Psalms – Ps 69:19 *You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries are all before You. 20 Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none. 21 They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

These verses are prophetically describing our Lord at the time of His crucifixion and we can see vinegar here used in association with this time of His suffering - Joh 19:28 *After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" 29 Now a vessel full of sour wine [Lit. vinegar] was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. 30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

Jesus drinking the vinegar is a profound symbol of His having drunk the cup of suffering that was given to Him by His Father - Mt 20:22 *But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink,*

*Mt 26:42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."*

c). So what are we to learn for ourselves from Ruth dipping the bread in the vinegar? Watch closely - Lu 9:23 *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*

Now add to this verse these verses from - 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.***

The bread dipped in the vinegar is a picture of Christ's sufferings and we have to partake of the same if we are going to be a joint heir with Him. As Christ died in His flesh so we are to die to our flesh - Php 3:10 *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the [out] resurrection from the dead.*

d). Ruth picturing the faithful Christian will take the bread and dip it in the vinegar and she will eat it, picturing her choosing to die to her flesh, as will the faithful Christian take up his cross daily and follow his Lord. And we will choose to do this because we know and believe what the Lord tells us recorded in - Ro 8:18 *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.*

*2Co 1:5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. 6 Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. 7 ¶ And*

*our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.*

*2Co 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal [age lasting] weight of glory,*

e). *So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.*

Ruth sitting beside the reapers is seen following Boaz telling her about the bread and the vinegar which, as we have seen, pictures sharing in our Lord's sufferings. And as we know, 'the reapers are the angels' this would take us once again to Hebrews 1:14, the angels ministering on behalf of those who will inherit salvation.

f). There is an event recorded in Matthew concerning the Lord that will help us with this - Mt 4:11 *Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.*

This comes at the conclusion of the Lord's time of being tempted by the devil in the wilderness and having resisted the devil's temptations by His total reliance on what is written in the scriptures, the Lord is then ministered to by the angels.

g). The implication here for us is that as we patiently endure through the trials, testing and suffering, relying totally on the scriptures, so we will also be ministered to by angels, just as we see in Hebrews.

h). So having dealt with the bread and vinegar Boaz then passed Ruth parched grain. To understand the significance of the parched grain we will go back to the first time we see it as recorded in - Le 23:14 *'You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.*

I hope we will see at once as we look at this verse that parched grain cannot be eaten until 'the same day that you have brought an offering to your God'.

i). So then, to follow this through, the picture is that Boaz giving Ruth parched grain to eat shows that she has brought an offering to God. And within the context of what we have just been studying the offering would be in

connection with eating the bread dipped in vinegar. The offering then is dying to self, sharing in the sufferings of Christ, just as we are admonished to do in - 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.*

j). Now the instruction concerning the parched grain that we read from Leviticus Chapter 23 is part of an overall set of instructions concerning one of the 7 Feasts given to Israel. I wonder if we could work out which one?

k). Let me give you a few verses and I think we will get it -  
Le 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's the Feast of Firstfruits – the feast associated with the barley harvest when Ruth begins her work – the feast that speaks of resurrection and walking in newness of life.

l). It's the same truth that we have seen before isn't it? Our offering that we bring is our dying to self, our living sacrifice, which can only be accomplished in resurrection.

m). If we then read on in Leviticus we find this - Le 23:22 *'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.'*

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."*

n). At the end of Ruth 2:14 we are told that Ruth ate the parched grain until she was satisfied and kept some back – Why would she do that and what

does the Lord want to teach us through it? Well we will have to look for the answer next time – if the Lord is willing.