

Sunday March 20th 2016

Ruth

Part Nine

1). 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). We had seen last time how the bread and the vinegar that Ruth is to eat is a picture for us of sharing in the Lord's suffering, the very thing the scriptures tell us we must do if we are going to be a joint heir with Him in the Millennial Kingdom - 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.***

b). And we can see from our verse in Ruth that it is Boaz who provides the bread and the vinegar and the instruction that Ruth is to eat it, and from our perspective it is the Lord who has provided for us that which is pictured here through Ruth - 1Pe 2:20 *For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. 21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

Christ then is our example of suffering, whose steps we are to follow, and to this – suffering – we have been called. And in v23 we are given insight into what this can look like for us. If someone reviles us we are not to revile in return. If someone is treating us really badly we are not to respond by issuing threats – in both instances we are to commit ourselves to God who judges righteously and we are to leave it right there - Heb 10:30 *For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,"*

[Power Point Slides 1-4]

c). Now, hopefully we will remember the parched grain given to Ruth that is originally seen 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.*

This verse is part of the instructions given by the Lord to Israel for the keeping of the Feast of Firstfruits – the same feast we have seen pictured through the barley harvest when Ruth begins her work, the feast that speaks of resurrection.

d). And as we see that Ruth is given parched grain to eat by Boaz it is implicit that she has brought an offering to God, an offering seen through dipping the bread in the vinegar and eating it, an offering pointing to suffering by dying to self, something that can only be done in resurrection.

e). And we are then told - *and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back* – it is the parched grain that she ate and was satisfied with and the parched grain that she kept back. And that which she kept back she gave to Naomi later - Ru 2:18 *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.***

f). So, let's firstly deal with Ruth being satisfied – we are still dealing with the parched grain of course, which we have already seen signifies an offering having been given to and accepted by God. Ruth being satisfied would show her having brought to completion the giving of her offering, a complete period of time then of dying to self. A complete period of time of continuing to keep the old man in the place of death so as to walk in the Spirit and this is what we saw for ourselves last week 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.*

Our 'living sacrifice' is our continual dying to self as we take up our cross daily and follow the Lord and as we do this until the time of our physical death or the rapture so our faith will be brought to completion, so we will be satisfied - 1Pe 1:9 *receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

This is how we should understand Ruth being satisfied with eating parched grain and this is what our consistent practice needs to look like.

g). Now we have also seen that Ruth kept back some of the parched grain to give to Naomi. And as we see her doing this remember that what is pictured through the parched grain does not change - the parched grain is still picturing an offering to the Lord having been made, and it is still an offering given through dying to self. So, Ruth giving the parched grain to Naomi points to the fact that at a time yet future Naomi will also make the same offering as Ruth had done.

h). As Naomi pictures the nation of Israel the question we are left to ask is when will that nation make this offering as they haven't do so yet? And the answer to this question can only take us to one period of time - the end of the Tribulation when Israel will cry out to the God of their fathers in repentance because of the intensity of the persecution they will have experienced at the hands of Antichrist - 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.*

Joh 2:1 ¶ *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.*

i). And if we think about the chronology of these events as they have been prophetically laid out for us we will realize that it is only after the Judgment Seat of Christ when the faithful Christian's faith will have been brought to its conclusion, Ruth being satisfied, that the Tribulation begins providing Israel with the opportunity to make the acceptable sacrifice; to die to self by turning from their unfaithfulness and disobedience in repentance in order to embrace their Messiah.

j). In that day, having been brought from the place of death through the power of resurrection Israel will be qualified to eat the parched grain associated with firstfruits.

[Power Point - Slide 5]

2). 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.*

a). The reason why Boaz 'commanded his young men' not to reproach or rebuke Ruth can be found in - 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.'*

According to the Lord's instructions here in Leviticus there was a certain part of the field, the corners, which were to be left for the poor and the stranger and the gleaning was to take place after the harvest. And in Ruth 2:15-16 we see Ruth, who is by her own admission a stranger, gleaning 'among the sheaves', not just in the corners, and she is gleaning while the reapers are gathering the harvest, not after their work is done and as such she is doing that which, according to Leviticus, she was not supposed to do – hence Boaz's command not to rebuke her.

b). What is this picturing though? Well simply this, the Kingdom of the Heavens was promised to Abraham's descendants, the Jews, and the harvest in relation to this should have been theirs with the Gentile nations then receiving the gleanings from this harvest, the blessings that would come through Israel. Now because the Kingdom of the Heavens was taken from them to be given to the one new man in Christ, so Christians, who were once strangers from the covenants of promise, find themselves gleaning amongst the harvest that had originally been for the Jews.

c). We can say that this is something Christians, as with Ruth, were not supposed to do because the nations of the earth were to be blessed through Israel, but there again this was always God's plan from the beginning.

d). But, what is most significant for us in the command Boaz gives to his young men is found in v16 - *"Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."*

That which Ruth is to glean is purposely left for her and this is exactly what we find with respect to ourselves in - Eph 2:10 *For we are His workmanship,*

created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Ruth gleaning in the field and the good works we are to walk in are one and the same and both have already been set in place before the work begins. In other words then we are not to manufacture things to do, rather we are to do that which God has already given to us - 2Ti 3:14 *But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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.*

It is through the scriptures and the scriptures alone that we can be brought to the place of completion - 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.*

And through the scriptures and the scriptures alone that we are thoroughly equipped, given everything we need, for every good work - 2Pe 1:3 *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

e). And we will also see from the scriptures that as Ruth gleanes in Boaz's field her activity is not limited to just picking up that which had been purposely left for her - 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.*

Ruth not only gleanes that which was left for her, but she also beats out the grain, she separates the grain from the chaff – she removes that which is of no value leaving only the grain itself and in this picture God has purpose –

Mt 3:12 *"His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

Mt 13:30 *'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'*

Both verses here from Matthew are dealing with judgment with respect to Christ's Kingdom. The first is in relation to Israel and the second is in relation to the 'Church', but the teaching is the same – it is the grain separated from the chaff that will be gathered into the Lord's barn.

f). And so, if we take this back to that pictured in Ruth, her beating out the grain has the Millennial Kingdom as its objective, it is for the purpose of being gathered into His barn.

g). Our own 'good works' then are to have the same focus – all that we do in this respect, beating out the grain, must be for the purpose of being approved at Christ's Judgment Seat and this is something we have seen many times presented through these 2 scriptures - 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;*

Jas 1:22 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

h). And the necessity of beating out the grain with respect to approval at Christ's Judgment Seat is taught through the picture given of Boaz's threshing floor – Ru 3:7 *And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.*

We will deal with this verse more fully later, but for the moment please notice where Boaz lies down – he lies down at the end of the heap of grain, the grain that has been separated from the chaff of whom Ruth becomes the embodiment. The heap of grain pictures all faithful Christians at the Judgment Seat whose experience is portrayed through Ruth.

3). So what does beating out the grain look like in the life of the faithful Christian? Well to start with don't get hooked up on the word beating. Beating out the grain is a picture used from the harvest to demonstrate the separation of the chaff from the grain. And what is pictured in this is the separation of all that is worthless, the things to do with our old man, from that which is of value, the things to do with our new man, the man of the Spirit. Or to say this same thing another way, it is walking in the Spirit not walking in the flesh.

a). And if we take another facet of a familiar scripture from Hebrews – 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.*

We can see that it is the Word of God, the scriptures, which is the winnowing fan separating the wheat from the chaff.

b). So, not surprisingly beating out the grain has to do with faithful obedience, it has to do with patient endurance and longsuffering with joy.

c). It is the process of the child training of the Lord - Heb 12:5 *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

d). Or, we can see this same thing from another scriptural type – Ex 12:15 *'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.*

This is of course the removal of the sin from our life pictured through the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

e). Let's look at just one example of how this operates in our lives – Eph 4:29 *Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*

There are so many things we can look at in these verses, but let's focus for now on forgiveness – 'forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you'. And if we stop and think for a moment, how did God in the person of Christ forgive us? He forgave us through His death and shed blood on the cross. So, following the scripture, what does it take for us to forgive one another? It requires the death of self, laying down our life now that we might receive it then.

f). And we must choose to do this because the Kingdom is at stake and we want to be a part of that heap of grain seen on Boaz's threshing floor – Mt 18:21 ¶ *Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven..... 32 "Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34 "And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."*

g). As we follow our Lord's example so we become doers of the word and not hearers only, we remove the leaven of unforgiveness from our life, we become the grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies producing much grain, we put off the old man who desires revenge and retribution and put on the new man who extends mercy and compassion and so we separate the wheat from the chaff, we beat out the grain.

h). And here is the thing that is oh so important for us to grasp – it is the Lord who provides the opportunity for us to exercise forgiveness and when it

is presented to us we need to pick it up just as Ruth picks up that which had been purposely left for her. And what is also important for us to grasp along with this, because of what we see in Ruth, the Lord provides opportunity for each of us individually.

i). For me for example the Lord might provide opportunity for me to deal with unforgiveness, for you it might be covetousness, or anger, or bitterness, or evil speaking – whatever it is, we are to glean that which the Lord has given to us, we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. And we are not to be critical or judgmental towards our brother or sister because we don't see them working on the same thing we are. Each of us can only work on that which God has given to us and these are the good works that He has prepared beforehand for us individually to walk in them.

j). We are to watch and pray and wait and the Lord will provide our work in His time and if we do this we will glean an abundant harvest –
Isa 40:31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Ps 27:14 Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!

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.

k). And so to close for today we will go back to where we started in 1 Peter Chapter 2 and if we link what we saw there with forgiving one another we can see that this is one example of how we share in the sufferings of Christ – this is how we eat the bread dipped in vinegar. And according to what we see in Ruth the more we will do this the more He will give us - *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.*

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 [abundance, depth] of glory,

l). We will continue to look at this next time – if the Lord is willing.