

The Book of Ruth – Part Four

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Adapted from John Herbert's Notes; Presented by Jeanne Alley

1). As we continue our study of the Book of Ruth, we will remember that this small OT Book provides us with a type, a word picture, of the life of a Christian who will be found worthy at the Judgment Seat of Christ, who will occupy a position of rulership with Christ during the Millennial Kingdom.

a). This has nothing of itself to do with the salvation we already possess, the salvation of our spirit, other than the fact that without receiving salvation by grace through faith there can be no opportunity to press on to the salvation of the soul, which if we receive will result in the reward of the inheritance, ruling and reigning with Christ.

b). As we have seen in past weeks, the free gift of our initial salvation, us passing from death unto life, that which we would call the new birth or the birth from above, is pictured for us in two gentile women – Ruth and Orpah – marrying into a Jewish family during this family's dispersion in a Gentile land.

c). In the antitype, or the fulfillment of this picture, this would be those who are eternally lost, predominantly Gentiles, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and thereby becoming part of a Jewish family because of their positional standing in Christ, during a period of time when the nation of Israel remains dispersed in Gentile lands.

d). Romans 12:5

...so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

e). Galatians 3:29

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

2). We have also seen that the moment we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ we are automatically placed at the starting point of a journey, that which Paul likens to a race –

1Corinthians 9:24

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

a). And that decisions and determinations have to be made in respect of the outcome of the journey.

b). Now the outcome of this journey has no bearing whatsoever on our eternal destination because that is secure, but it does have every bearing on our destination for that period of time before eternity begins – the world to come, the Millennial Kingdom, the Seventh Day.

3). We had seen last week that an understanding of the destination in respect of the journey, and a determination to make the journey, are essential if that which is to follow is to be properly undertaken.

a). **Ruth 1:14**

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;

b). We noted the separation that takes place now, in this time, between Christians who do not determine to make the journey, pictured in Orpah, and those who do, pictured in Ruth. And how the fullness of this present separation will be realized at Christ's Judgment Seat when those pictured by Ruth are given positions of rulership in the Kingdom and those pictured by Orpah are excluded from the Kingdom.

c). And remember once again, this exclusion that some Christians will experience relates only to the Seventh Day, the seventh millennium, the coming Kingdom of Christ – not eternity. And although there is a specific time limit on this exclusion, showing the mercy of God, we should in no way consider this as a viable alternative.

d). **Hebrews 2:2**

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

e). We must realize and settle for ourselves once and for all that neglecting so great a salvation is choosing to reject the very reason for Man's creation and the very purpose of our salvation – considering Christ's death and shed blood to be a common thing.

4). So let's resume our study of Ruth, where we find Ruth in the company of Naomi, arriving in Bethlehem after having determined to make the journey.

a). Ruth 1:22

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

b). Ruth 2:3

Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

c). Ruth 2:7b

So she came and has continued from morning until now,

d). Ruth 2:17

So she gleaned in the field until evening,

e). Ruth 2:23

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.

5). The next facet of the Christian experience we see laid out for us in Ruth is work that takes place in the field – Pictured in Ruth gleaning amongst the harvest.

a). And there is an enormous amount of spiritual truth for us to glean with regards to the setting and the timeframe that is presented to us in our scriptures.

b). We see Ruth working from morning until evening, showing a complete period of time.

c). For us as individual Christians, this would represent the time covered from the moment of our new birth to the time of our physical death or rapture.

d). And in a broader context this would represent the whole of this present dispensation, some 2000 years, which of course cannot be separated from the present work of the Holy Spirit in calling out a Bride for God's Son from amongst the Church.

e). We also see that Ruth's work extends from the beginning of barley harvest to the end of barley and wheat harvest – also denoting a complete period of time, but this reference has more to do with the nature of the work to be undertaken, as we shall see, than with a duration of time.

f). And finally we see Ruth working in the part of the field that belonged to Boaz. Giving us a specific location if you will, where the work is to take place.

6). Now Boaz, the kinsman redeemer, is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore we can determine that the Christian, after their new birth, is to work in the part of the field that belongs to Christ.

b). Now we know, according to the parable of the Sower and the parable of the Wheat and Tares, that the field is the world and that Christians are sown into the world for the purpose of producing fruit-

c). Matthew 13:24

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

d). Matthew 13:38

"The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom,

7). In the parable of the Sower we find that all those sown into the world hear the word of the kingdom -

Matthew 13:18

"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,

a). And this would be in complete agreement with both Ruth and Orpah knowing that their destination was Bethlehem in the land of Judah as that which Bethlehem pictures for us is the very subject of the word of the kingdom - the Seventh Day, the Millennial Kingdom.

b). But according to our parable, only those Christians who find themselves in good ground produce fruit -

Matthew 13:23

"But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

c). And this of course is the one who is pictured by Ruth.

d). The others who are by the wayside, in stony places, amongst the thorns are those pictured by Orpah.

e). And of course the ground in which Christians find themselves is determined by each and every Christian's response to the Word of the Kingdom - their determination to make the journey or go back.

f). So then, the good ground of the parable of the Sower would be the same thing as the part of the field belonging to Boaz in the Book of Ruth.

g). And the grain collected by Ruth gleaning in the field –

Ruth 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.

h). The grain that she collects is the same thing as the fruit produced in the good ground – some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty in our parable.

8). And just to join all the dots, let's remember what Jesus said about fruit production and the Kingdom –

Matthew 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.

9). Let us also look at something else the Lord said about producing fruit

a). *John 15:1*

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

b). Again we must keep this within the context of the Millennial Kingdom, not forever and ever.

c). All Christians have a positional standing in Christ, but not all Christians bear fruit, as we saw in verse 2 of our John 15 scripture, and the parable of the Sower.

d). We also see that those who bear fruit are 'pruned' with a view to bearing more fruit, again in verse 2.

e). And we also see that in order to bear fruit, we must abide in Him.

f). Abide = Greek word – *meno* = to stay in a given place, state, relation or expectancy (On a continual basis)

g). And there is a promise that if we abide in Him and allow His words to abide in us we will ask whatever we desire and it will be done for us (John 15:7). This is so exciting as almost these exact words are spoken by Boaz to Ruth on the threshing floor in relation to marriage and the redemption of the inheritance –

Ruth 3:5

And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."

Ruth 3:11

"And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman,

h). Ruth is seen here receiving a reward for her previous actions, which have been determined by her faithfulness to Naomi's instructions, by having her request of marriage granted. For Ruth, and those whom she typifies, there is no need to fear as the Judgment Seat will be a place of reward not condemnation.

i). And this is exactly the evidence of scripture –

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

j). According to the flesh – Orpah – according to the Spirit - Ruth

10). And here is our key to unlocking our understanding of the part of the field belonging to Boaz and the significance of the barley and wheat harvest.

a). The world, as we know, remains under the control of Satan and his fallen angels. And this will not change until the world to come – the Seventh Day.

b). Hebrews 2:5

For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

c). The present world system under Satan is inextricably linked to our first birth, our sin nature, the workings of our flesh – so Boaz's, and therefore Christ's, part of the field must deal with issues outside of Satan's jurisdiction, things connected with the world to

come – in essence, things connected with the Spirit not the flesh, things that can only be associated with resurrection and not with death.

d). Romans 8:13

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

e). Sonship = rulership – only those Christians who are led by the Spirit will be sons who experience rulership, and those who are not led by the Spirit won't.

f). And this we understand as the salvation of the soul.

g). This “so great salvation” has nothing to do with transforming our old man – the man of flesh. Things associated with our first birth cannot be transformed or changed. God has rejected our first birth and accepts only our new birth, which is a spiritual birth.

h). There is nothing good in our old man to be changed –

Romans 7:18

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells;

i). Galatians 4:30

Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

j). Rather the saving of the soul has to do with living a life completely in –

Philippians 3:10

...the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

k). Being conformed to His death and putting to death the deeds of the body is exactly the idea behind the pruning of John 15:2

l). And this is in exact accord with the symbolism of the barley and wheat harvest in which we find Ruth engaged for a complete period of time before appearing at Boaz's threshing floor.

11). Barley and wheat were sown at two different times in the fall, with barley being sown first. This means that at the time of harvest it was sheaves of barley that were

presented to the Lord on the Feast of First Fruits, which is the third of the seven Jewish Feasts -

a). *Leviticus 23:9*

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 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.

b). Now in the year that Christ died as the Paschal Lamb on the Passover, He was raised from the dead on the Feast of First Fruits – on the third day dating from the Passover.

c). Therefore the priest waving a sheaf of grain before the Lord on the Feast of First Fruits must be connected with resurrection.

d). *1Corinthians 15:20*

But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

e). And barley, ripening first and being the sheaf which the priest waved before the Lord at the feast, must likewise be connected with resurrection.

12). In fact, it is only that which is connected to resurrection – that which is connected to the third day (to the third feast) that can produce fruit. This very thought is set in our foundational type –

Genesis 1:9

Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 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.

a). We do not have time to go into the detail of this today, but it is exactly what is presented to us in Israel's passage through the Red Sea (occurring on the third day from their redemption from Egypt), where having died in Egypt they were buried in the sea

to be raised to newness of life on the Eastern shore – for the purpose of entering into the land of promise where they would receive an inheritance and find rest.

b). And this is exactly what is presented to us in the picture of baptism.

c). Romans 6:4

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

13). And this is in complete harmony with our picture in Ruth, with Ruth arriving in the field to begin work at the beginning of barley harvest – beginning to gather fruit exclusively in relation to the resurrected life.

14). However, as we know all too well – even though our old man has been put in the place of death, pictured in baptism, he remains very much alive and as a result we find that we need to be continually putting him to death, so to speak, continually putting him back in the place of death.

a). And this is the very picture that is given to us in respect of the wheat harvest, which speaks to us of both death and resurrection subsequent to our new birth.

b). John 12:24

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

c). Dying to self on a continual basis *after* our new birth and choosing to be led by the Spirit is the only way fruit can be produced, and only the production of fruit will produce life for the age to come

d). Matthew 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.

e). John 12:25

"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal (age-lasting) life.

f). Romans 6:11

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of

unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

14). What we can see then from the Book of Ruth is that we have been called to work in the field by the power of the Spirit- and not according to the flesh - and that we must continue in this work for the complete period of our Christian life - from the time of our new birth until our physical death or rapture. And if we will faithfully do so, we will be granted our desire to be coheirs at Christ's Judgment Seat.

a). **John 4:35**

"Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! 36 "And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal (age-lasting) life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

15). And throughout the complete period of time of our work, we are to continue to cling to the word just as Ruth continued to dwell with Naomi for a revealed purpose -

2Timothy 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.

a). And doing this is exactly what abiding in Christ is all about. And we know the result of allowing His word to abide in us -

James 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.

16) We had learned last week that for the Christian, the journey, the work and the preparation to meet the Kinsman Redeemer happen concurrently, so having determined to make the journey our work in the part of the field belonging to Boaz has already begun.

a). And next week - if the Lord permits - we will try to come to a more complete understanding of what the work in the field looks like.

17). In the meantime, and to close for this morning, let us recall the words of Jesus in -

Matthew 9:37

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. 38 "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."