

The Book of Ruth – Part Ten

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

1). Ruth 3:1

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest 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." 6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her.

2). The events that transpire on Boaz's threshing floor are the defining moment of a process that had begun for Ruth back in the country of Moab.

a). It is a moment towards which Ruth had looked, hoped and organized her life.

b). That Boaz would be winnowing barley on his threshing floor at the end of the harvest would be an absolute certainty, but the question remained as to whether Ruth's *hope* would be realized.

3). We will remember –

Ruth 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. 5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

- a). Ruth had married into this Jewish family, and as a consequence had access to the inheritance that would come to her husband.
- b). On the death of Ruth's husband, the inheritance was lost because there was no male heir to continue the line.
- c). The only hope for the inheritance NOT to be completely lost would be the redemption of the inheritance by a relative who would become Ruth's husband and who would produce an heir for the dead husband so that the inheritance would remain in the family.
- d). It is immediately following the death of Ruth's husband that the process begins that leads to Boaz's threshing floor.

e). Ruth 1:9

"The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband."

4). What we see here is a panoramic type, taking us all the way from the Garden of Eden to the Judgment Seat of Christ. And within this panoramic type, there is the specific type of the experience of the faithful Christian.

a). And this is the only way it can be as the experience of the Christian is an inextricable part of the broader picture of the six thousand years of restorative work in which the Lord is presently engaged.

b). The inheritance that God had intended for the human race – rulership over the restored creation – was lost through the death of Adam as a result of sin.

c). For this inheritance NOT to be completely lost, it would need to be redeemed by a relative entering into a marriage relationship with the woman who survived the death of her husband.

d). And this is of course exactly what we see in the antitype.

e). In relation to the Christian and the heavenly realm of the Kingdom (which has to do with rulership over the earth), this inheritance was lost to us in the Garden. But, there is a relative of ours who could redeem the inheritance, marry us and restore that which was lost.

f). But, as we have noted so many times, if this is to be a reality for us *as individuals* then we will need to follow the example of the type revealed to us in the Book of Ruth –

Romans 8:17

...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.

g). That Christ will be performing the separation shown in the type of winnowing barley at the end of the harvest is inevitable –

Matthew 13:39b

... the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

And-

Romans 14:10b

... For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

h). But the question still remains as to whether our individual request concerning the inheritance and marriage will be granted.

i). And as we have seen, this is not a matter of *chance* but a matter of *proper preparation*.

5). The experience of Ruth from Moab to the threshing floor parallels the faithful Christian's experience of going from immaturity to maturity – from the milk to the strong meat. This is what we find in the journey, the work and the preparation.

a). And as we review this now, let us please remember that this is not the experience of every Christian, *although it could be*, but the experience of the Christian who faithfully seeks the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first.

b). This is the Christian from the Matthew 13 parable of the sower, who hears the word of the Kingdom and because of their response to it finds themselves in good ground producing fruit.

c). But from that same parable, keep in mind those who are by the wayside, in stony places and amongst the thorns and thistles. They not only don't produce fruit, but what they did hear and receive is taken from them.

6). We have seen in time past that the process of going from immaturity to maturity (from the salvation of the spirit to matters surrounding the salvation of the soul) are laid out for us in the foundational type for the restoration of a ruined creation in Genesis Chapter 1 – the six days of work followed by a seventh day of rest.

7). This very same picture we can see in the Book of Ruth.

8). Day one of the Genesis account brings light where there was only darkness, causing a division between the two –

Genesis 1:3

Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

- a). In this we see our new birth, our spirit salvation as we have "passed from death into life."
 - b). This is Ruth's marriage into a Jewish family.
 - c). Everything from this point onwards moves towards a destination other than the land of her birth and an encounter that remains yet future.
- 9). The second day in Genesis sees the division of the waters above the heavens from the waters below the heavens -

Genesis 1:6

Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7 Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

- a). In this we see our choice to separate ourselves from the things of our carnal nature, choosing instead to follow the leading of the Spirit -

Romans 8:6

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

- b). This is the separation we see between Ruth and Orpah. Orpah being carnally minded, turning back to the world and Ruth clinging to her mother-in-law -

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; For wherever you go, I will go;

c). The motivation for Ruth's decision was the promise of the Lord granting her rest in the house of her husband. In this we can also see -

Matthew 13:19

"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom...

d). After someone "hears the word of the kingdom," there is a choice to make, isn't there? Either set aside the things of this world and look to the world to come, or set your mind on the things of this world and neglect or ignore the things concerning the future. That is why Paul says this in -

e). Colossians 3:2

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

10). Going back to the picture given us in Genesis, we see on the third day that the dry ground appears and begins to produce fruit -

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). The connection of the third day with resurrection and the dry land appearing from the place of death by the power of the Spirit all point to the fact that it is only through the death of self and through following the Spirit that fruit can be produced.

b). This is a stage in our spiritual maturity that is crucial.

c). And we would also note that fruit is not produced in a vacuum, but specifically in relation to 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.

d). This is what we see in Ruth's arrival in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest – the barley harvest (we will remember from our sermon of a couple of weeks ago) points to that which can only be done through the resurrection power of the Spirit.

c). We see Ruth's decision to die to self in the words she speaks to Naomi after Orpah has left –

Ruth 1:16

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.

d). It is immediately following this that their arrival in Bethlehem is seen, and it is now that Ruth is able to begin producing fruit, pictured in the gathering of grain, as she works in Boaz's field.

e). Again, this is not an arbitrary action, but deliberate and with purpose, which cannot be separated from the reason for leaving Moab.

f). Ruth 2:1

There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz. 2 So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

And—

Ruth 2:20

Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives."

g). She is determined to find rest in the house of her husband and is commended for the separation she has made from the things of this world—

h). Ruth 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.

i). And just in case we miss it, the following verse links her actions with a reward from God –

Ruth 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."

11). Now back to Genesis. The fourth day in Genesis involves the lights in the firmament –

Genesis 1:14

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

a). As we choose to die to self and be led by the Spirit, thereby being in a position to produce fruit, so the word of God illuminates our walk of faith, providing further divisions between our soulical self and our spirit –

James 3:17

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

b). We are now seeing 'the light of the world' in terms of the redemption of the inheritance in the Kingdom which is to come.

c). The Word of God now opens up for us precise direction and instruction with regards to its focal point – the seventh day.

d). Psalm 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

e). The word provides illumination as to the good works we are to do

f). 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.

And—

g). Ephesians 2:10

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

h). Here is Ruth working from the beginning of barley harvest until the end of barley and wheat harvest, following the instructions given to her by Boaz in respect of the harvest. She gleans that which the reapers have left for her beforehand –

Ruth 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.....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."

i). Here are the angels being ministering spirits for the heirs of salvation, those who choose to 'work out their salvation' by producing 'good fruit.'

j). Ruth has come to Boaz knowing he is a close relative, seeking work in his field and he provides her with everything that is necessary –

k). Matthew 7:7

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

l). Just as Naomi knows that Boaz is their close relative, so Boaz would know also. And let us not suppose that his actions in respect of Ruth are just charity. He has, because of *her* actions, seen her as his prospective bride and is helping her toward that end -

Hebrews 2:16

For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

12). Now back to Genesis. On the fifth day of the restoration account we have the creation of the birds and the sea creatures -

Genesis 1:20

Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

a). Here on the fifth day we see a progression in the maturity of a Christian's understanding of the word. The illumination of day four has led to the ability to soar into the heights of the word as the birds fly across the face of the firmament and to plumb the depths of the word as the great sea creatures in the sea.

b). Again this is not in a vacuum, but in relation to His promises, our inheritance and the kingdom which is to come.

c). 1Corinthians 2:9

But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 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.

d). We can see this in Ruth's preparation for the threshing floor.

e). She left Moab with the hope of finding rest in the house of her husband, she has worked in the field of the close relative hoping to find favour in his sight. Her present preparations- wash yourself, anoint yourself, put on your best garment - are with a view to bringing her hope to a future conclusion. And all of this she did in faithful obedience to her mother-in-law's instructions. And when Ruth appears on his threshing floor in this prepared condition, keeping in mind everything that has gone before, she will demand he make a decision about the inheritance and marriage.

f). For ourselves in the antitype, these preparations are also made with determined purpose, and in order to make them it will require us searching the heights and the depths of the word of God, that we may follow the instructions given to us.

g). To wash ourselves we will have to understand about the Levitical priesthood and the Tabernacle of Moses. We will have to make the connection with the foot washing episode of the Last Supper and understand what the Lord was teaching, taking this forward to understand 1 John Chapter 1 (Jesus is the Word made flesh). We would then need to link all of this to Ephesians Chapter 5, where we read about Christ and His

Bride and the necessity for washing. There is no denying that all of this takes WORK and DETERMINATION.

h). And if we seek to anoint ourselves, we will need to understand the purpose for anointing as seen in the Old Testament. We will need to understand the type and antitype of oil and Spirit. We must see that which is taught in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, and understand what being filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 and Colossians 3:16 means for us. (All of this we have taught repeatedly.)

i). And to put on our best garment we will need to understand about the necessity of a wedding garment, and the consequences for not having one, about acts of righteousness and how we are to perform them, looking to Abraham as our example as presented in both Romans and James. We will need to understand works and the salvation of the soul.

j). We need to first KNOW in order to DO.

13). And so we come to day six of the restoration account in Genesis, where we first see man and woman, and the purpose for their creation –

Genesis 1:24

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion

over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 "Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.

31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

And—

Genesis 2:21

And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

- a). And here we have the defining moment of our spiritual journey, with the woman in the presence of the man with a view to rulership.
- b). This takes us to the church in Christ's presence at the Judgment Seat where the Bride will be revealed and accepted at the conclusion of the sixth day.
- c). And this of course is Ruth on Boaz's threshing floor – at the end of barley and wheat harvest.
- d). Boaz we will recall, like Adam, is awakened from his sleep to find a woman at his feet –

Ruth 3:8

Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.

e). A woman who, by her actions, makes her desire known to him –

Ruth 3:7b

... and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

This is in accordance with the Jewish Law, a Law she takes an oath to obey when she swears to do all that Naomi tells her to do –

f). Deuteronomy 25:5

"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. 6 "And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. 7 "But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' 8 "Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' 9 "then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' 10 "And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

g). Because Ruth has done everything according to the instructions of her mother-in-law, she expresses a bold expectation through her actions and her words. From Boaz's perspective (according to the Law), there is no mistaking what Ruth is asking –

Ruth 3:9

And he said, "Who are you?" So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative."

h). And because there is no doubt as to what she is asking (it does not need to be verbalized because her actions expressed it plainly enough) and because of her past conduct in respect of the journey, the work and the preparation, she elicits this response from Boaz –

Ruth 3:10

Then he said, "Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. 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.

14). And Christ, although not physically sleeping, will at that Judgment Seat find the woman built from the blood and water from His side in His presence.

15). It is hard to imagine that we would have such boldness in the presence of Christ at His Judgment Seat. But we should realize that, just as Ruth, our actions now in respect of the journey, the work and the preparation will of themselves boldly declare our intention to Him and we can expect the same positive, joyous response from our Saviour as Ruth received from Boaz.

a). This is the joy that was set before Christ, for which He endured the cross, and He longs for the fulfillment of this day just as we do.

b). Genesis 24:67

Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

16). Just as Adam received the woman with a view to regality, so Boaz receives Ruth with a view to regality (presented in the Book of Ruth by the birth of a child in David's lineage), so Christ will receive His bride with a view to regality also. Unlike the first Adam, the Last Adam and the woman taken from His body will fulfill God's plans and purposes of the ages, and that which was lost in Eden will be restored, and a change of rulership will ensue -

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

And in this we can greatly rejoice in hope of our finding ourselves in that position with Him.

Let's pray.