

The Book of Ruth – Part Three

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Adapted from John Herbert's Notes; Presented by Jim Robison

1). Ruth 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.

2). The Book of Ruth, as we have noted, chronicles the events in the life of the Christian who is successful in their race of faith.

a). This faithful Christian, like Paul, will be able to say –

2Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day...

b). This Christian will, at the Judgment Seat, be found to be an overcomer – an overcomer who will receive the promise –

Revelation 3:21

"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

3). As we saw last week, the events that lead to Boaz's threshing floor, and the marriage and regality beyond, begin with setting out on a journey.

a). And the journey is one of our foundational scriptural types.

b). We saw it in relation to Abraham, Rebekah and Israel.

c). And in relation to ourselves we see it as the journey from the land of our birth – the world – to the land of our calling – the Kingdom of the Heavens.

d). And with the journey, there is a literal change in geography at its end –

1Thessalonians 4:16

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

e). This change in geographical location cannot be separated from the destination in time, which is the central focus of the journey's end – the Seventh Day, the Seventh Millennium, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

4). Now the Book of Ruth is very specific about the order of events that take place.

a). There is the journey, which we are currently dealing with, which is followed by working in the field and the preparation for meeting Boaz.

b). And although in the Christian experience all these things happen concurrently, proper working and proper preparation cannot take place until a determination to make the journey has been made. That is the way it is presented in the type and so the antitype must follow.

c). And what we see from our opening scripture is that both Ruth and Orpah were aware of their destination before they set out.

d). In Genesis 24 Abraham's oldest servant, a type of the Holy Spirit, goes to Abraham's family with a view to finding a bride for his son. And his purpose is made clear to all.

e). But it is the one who draws deeply from the well of water who will marry Isaac – a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

i/ We may remember that Jacob and Moses both found their prospective brides by a well of water.

ii/ And the Samaritan woman, a Gentile, meets the Lord by Jacob's well – at the sixth hour. And she has had involvement with six men prior to this time.

5). Back to the journey –

Ruth 1:7

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 the journey begins we see an initial point of testing – 'Go return...'. And a resolve to continue, 'Surely we will return with you...'

b). And we cannot miss the reference to *rest* in the house of the husband.

6). Now testing is another of our foundations, and it is always related to the final destination of the journey. Testing is for a purpose, with a specific goal in view – it's not arbitrary, nor coincidental... it's *deliberate* that it comes.

a). Our foundational type comes with Adam.

b). Genesis 1:27

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."

c). God makes very clear His purpose for creating Man – both the Man and the Woman knew why they were there and what was expected of them. They weren't wandering around wondering, "What's all this about?" *God had told them specifically what it was all about.*

d). And as we know, the test comes in relation to the fulfillment of God's stated purpose. God wanted them to have dominion, but they needed to go through a test first to see if they were worthy.

e). And as we consider the test that was given to them, we need to start seeing this in a more correct twofold manner-

i/ Genesis 2:16

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

The Scriptures also record this –

ii/ Genesis 2:24

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

f). This is significant for us because as we see in Romans 5:14, "Adam is a type of him who was to come" – that "type" being Jesus the Christ. God removes the woman from Adam's side; she is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. He needs her in order to complete him and she needs him in order to complete her. Without each other they are not a complete being.

g). Now the woman is deceived and she eats of the forbidden fruit. She eats of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now here's the dilemma for Adam – he cannot rule apart from her as God had said that it was “not good” that the man be alone. Adam needs her in order to be able to rule. And she can't be redeemed apart from him, but he's not in a position to be redeemed because he's perfect at this time.

h). So what is the only thing that Adam could do when he discovers that his wife is in a place of sin and needs redemption? The only thing for him to do is enter into that sin with her, looking to that redemption which is to come so that they could together fulfill the purpose for their creation.

i). It's a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, who came to this earth and saw His bride in sin and therefore became sin for her (us), in order that she could be redeemed.

j). So back to Adam and the woman – we see God' purpose clearly stated, and *then the test comes in relation to that purpose.*

k). And as a result of the test there is a separation.

7). Now also in respect of Israel, God makes His purpose very clear –

Exodus 6:7

'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"

a). Then at Mount Sinai God spells out for Israel the details of what He expects from them and what He will do for them in respect to the fulfillment of His purpose.

b). And the test comes at Kadesh Barnea, again in relation to the fulfillment of His purpose –

Numbers 13:2

"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them."

i/ And as result of the test there is a separation –

Numbers 14:36

Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, 37 those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD. 38 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

b). We also see a test in relation to the stated purpose in the experience of Rebekah –
Genesis 24:56

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."

i/ And as a result of the test there is a separation –

Genesis 24:59

So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.

c). I am sure we realize by now that each of these testings is in relation to participation in the fulfillment of God's plan for the Seventh Day.

8). We will also note that despite the separation, Adam remained God's created son.

a). Despite the separation between Joshua and Caleb and the rest of Israel, the rest of the nation still remained a people who had been completely redeemed from the land of Egypt

b). Despite the separation when Rebekah leaves, those who remain behind still remain her family.

9). Now the point is this – the testing we see of Ruth and Orpah, taking all the types together, must be in connection with the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes to be realized in Bethlehem, and that both Ruth and Orpah knew what potentially awaited them there.

10). Ruth 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.

a). After the first test there was a resolve by both women to continue with Naomi.

b). Now we have a second test, which is really the same test as before, that now results in a separation between Orpah and Ruth.

c). And although Orpah is not seen again within the Book of Ruth, there is no change in her status as a member of the family. In fact, there is never a distinction made between the two in respect of the family – they both remain 'my daughters'. However, the distinction *is* seen later, in relation to the outcome.

d). Ruth marries the kinsman redeemer... and Orpah doesn't.

11). Now let's say a quick word about Naomi having “no more sons in her womb” – 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.

a). Both Mahlon and Chilion are dead, so Naomi would have had to produce other sons to be brothers to the dead to provide husbands for Ruth and Orpah.

b). This may appear strange, but it has to do with not losing the family's inheritance.

c). Naomi of course doesn't even have a husband, let alone other sons, and so there is no immediate hope of providing an inheritance for her daughters in law.

d). Any hope would be yet future in Bethlehem and would remain uncertain.

e). We would do well to see Naomi's barrenness as a picture of Israel's present unfruitful condition while separated from her Husband. And while in that condition, they are in no way able to bring God's blessing to the Gentile nations as God has intended. It is when Israel is restored – in the picture of Abraham marrying Keturah – that she will become fruitful again, producing more sons, and the Gentile nations will be blessed through Israel as God promised Abraham.

12). What we are seeing here with Orpah and Ruth is a separation between the Christian whose focus is this world and the Christian who clings to the scriptures and the hope they give concerning the world that is to come.

a). We can see this in –

Hebrews 11:13

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a

homeland. 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.

b). It is the same thought that we see in –

Luke 9:62

But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

c). And the warning of –

Luke 17:32

"Remember Lot's wife.

d). And the separation between Abraham and Lot –

Genesis 13:10

And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.

e). We can see in Orpah the desire to settle for what can be attained in this world, thereby walking by *sight* and not by *faith*, rather than governing her life based on a promise that remains yet future. This would be similar to Esau selling his birthright – the right of the firstborn – for the bowl of stew. It is the picture of disregarding future blessing in favor of present gratification.

13). Nothing is said directly concerning Orpah's decision to return in the Book of Ruth, but there are plenty of other places in scripture we can turn to have understanding of this.

a). One of our primary sources would be the parable of the Sower in Matthew 13, where we witness various outcomes for those who heard the word of the kingdom, who had heard what lay ahead just as Orpah had done.

b). Matthew 13:19

"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. 20 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. 22

"Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

c). In each of these examples we can see Orpah's return to her people and to her gods. In each of these examples you would see that *each one* had heard the word of the kingdom *first*.

d). We can see this separation brought to its conclusion in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins –

Matthew 25:10

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

e). And we see the same thing in other parables with regards to the unfaithful servants and the wedding guest who does not have a wedding garment. You see a turning away, a separation that *takes place now* (based on their choices)...with consequences being yet future, when they are separated by the Lord Jesus Christ from His kingdom on that Seventh Day.

14). That there is a separation between Christians based on their faithfulness to their calling is clearly evident in the Scriptures–

Philippians 3:14

I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

a). Hebrews 3:1

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,

b). 2 Peter 1:10

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure,

c). It is clearly evident that each and every Christian has exactly the same calling. Your calling is no different from my calling. And let's make sure that we note the distinction between our "calling" and our specific jobs within the Church. Our calling is a heavenly one, an upward calling, to rule and reign with Jesus Christ in the Coming Millennial Kingdom. What job we do within the Church presently is not our *calling*, but rather the works we are to walk in in order to be faithfully obedient so that we may be found worthy to achieve to our calling.

d). So don't ever be confused again about what your calling is. God is very clear on the matter – your calling is a heavenly one, so as Peter says, *be even more diligent to make your calling sure*. Do whatever it takes to continue on the journey – do not turn back when tested... cling to the word of God and to the Spirit of God *which only leads us in one direction* – to the land of our calling, the heavenly land.

e). And as a side note, just make sure that we understand that salvation by grace through faith – the salvation of our spirit – is not our calling. You must first be *saved* before you are *called*.

15). And although there is a terminal point of separation concerning Ruth and Orpah, and this point of separation has Millennial consequences, we can witness a separation between Christians at any point on this journey towards that land. In fact, all of us are here today because of such a separation.

a). And I want us to be absolutely clear as to who has separated from whom. Because so often those who are following where God is leading feel guilty for having separated themselves from those who aren't. So let's be clear on this –

b). Hebrews 1:1

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

c). Everything that God has spoken by the prophets in time past and in these last days by His Son concerns the coming Kingdom which Christ will receive as an inheritance as King, along with those who will rule with Him.

d). All of scripture moves us towards this time.

e). The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth in respect of the destination of the journey, and leads in only one direction – to the land of promise.

f). Those in the likeness of Orpah who choose not to cling to the scriptures in relation to their destination *separate themselves* from those who do cling to them – it is not the other way around. What is really occurring is that they are choosing to separate themselves from God's *purpose*, not the individuals themselves.

g). And inevitably, because you have two groups of people headed in two different directions, it becomes impossible for them to continue in each other's company. There comes a point when a separation happens, and we have to let it go. It is as the old saying goes, "You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink."

16). Now we must also realize that what we see in the Book of Ruth concerns two people who knew where they were going, one choosing not to continue.

a). The five major warnings we find in the Book of Hebrews are given to those who have a mature understanding of the Kingdom to come and their inheritance therein.

b). Now if those who fully understand about their inheritance and the salvation of their soul must be warned about the possibility of losing both, where does it leave those who don't understand?

c). It leaves them in a place of separation, doesn't it? A separation that will ultimately exclude them from the Kingdom.

d). If ignorance of our destination and journey could result in our accidentally finding ourselves in the Kingdom there would be no advantage to knowing the truth. We'd be better off not knowing, wouldn't we? If there would be no advantage to knowing the truth, then God in His mercy would not have given it to us. And there would be no point to the Holy Spirit's present ministry amongst the saved. And there would be no point in the Book for us either, would there?

This is probably very difficult for us to see, but we need to pay attention to the Scriptures. You have to know where you are going in order to get there; you have to know how to get there to get there. You have to know *how* to prepare and *for what* to prepare.

e). Most Christians would know of the Kingdom of Christ, in whatever form that would take - and most would know about the Bride of Christ (even though they probably view it wrongly, as they would think that all Christians make up the bride)- but most would be completely indifferent to what the scriptures *and thereby God* has to say about them. They love to hear what man has to say, but they don't want to hear what God has to say. And when the Scriptures talk about the destination of the kingdom, and the Scriptures talk about the Bride of Christ, *it is God speaking about those things*. And we need to take them seriously, and we need to understand them.

f). And the blame for this must in no small part be placed at the door of the religious leaders, just as it was in Jesus' day -

Matthew 23:13

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

g). Complete indifference with regards to God's revelation concerning His Son and His Kingdom, whether that's manifested through rejecting the message, not caring about it, or not bothering to look for it, is exactly the condition the Church is revealed to be in by that written about the Church of Laodecia in Revelation 3. And the evidence of scripture cannot be denied. That is the way that it is.

h). The gate and the path remain narrow and there are still few who find it.

i). The narrow path and the broad path *are not the same path* and those who walk on each one are separated from one another. Not only now, but so in that Age to come.

j). Philippians 3:17

Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things.

k). There are many who walk... there are many who start the journey...but there are some who start the journey who God says are his enemies. Born again Christians who are the enemy of God, can we believe such a thing? Isn't that what our Scripture just said? Please note that this is not our opinion and I sure would wish it was not so, but the Scriptures say what they say. Because, if God is saying, "Come over here," and someone says, "I'd rather go over there," that puts that person at odds with God.

l). Such a mindset takes the cross of Christ, by which our arrival at our destination is made possible, and tramples it underfoot, treating it as a common thing.

m). Now people don't intentionally think that, they don't start the journey with that in mind and seeing that this applies to them would probably shock them to see, but this is how God sees it, from His perspective. Of course, the only perspective that matters.

17). And even now, after all we have come through, and no matter where we are on our journey at the moment, a choice remains for us as to whether we will be an Orpah or a Ruth. We can make this determination at any time, if we just repent and get back on that narrow pathway.

a). For those who choose the pattern of Ruth, there is some great encouragement -

Ruth 1:15

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.

b). There is a third time of testing for Ruth – three being the number of Divine perfection, showing a complete testing. After which testing in respect of determination to continue the journey ends – *18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.*

c). Even though testing of our resolve to continue may finish, we would do well to remember that testing in respect of our faithfulness to the work and preparation does continue for a specifically revealed purpose –

d). 1Peter 1:6

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,

18). Would you commit once again to your resolve to make this journey to its end? Perhaps speak these same words to the Lord –

16... "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."