

RUTH

Message Ten

Ruth's Choosing for Her Goal, Exercising Her Right, Seeking for Her Rest, and Receiving a Reward for God's Economy

Scripture Reading: Ruth 1—4

- I. Judges is a book of Israel's miserable history, dark and foul; Ruth, as an appendix to the book of Judges, is the record of a couple's excellent story, bright and aromatic; the main character in this story, Ruth, is like a lily growing out of brambles and a bright star in the dark night—Ruth 1—4.**
- II. Chapter 1 of the book of Ruth speaks of Elimelech's swerving from the rest in God's economy (vv. 1-2), Naomi's returning to the rest in God's economy (vv. 3-7, 19-22), and Ruth's choosing for her goal (vv. 8-18):**
 - A. Ruth is a book of rest; the Sabbath rest is Christ as our rest, typified by the good land of Canaan—Deut. 12:9; Heb. 4:8-9:
 1. God rested on the seventh day because He had attained what He desired; the desire of God's heart is to have man on earth expressing Him in His image and representing Him with His dominion—Gen. 1:26-28; Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 5:17, 21; Rev. 5:9-10; 22:5.
 2. In the Old Testament the good land was a rest because the temple could be built there; the temple was the ultimate consummation of the entering into the good land by the children of Israel; with the temple God could have His expression and His representation for His kingdom, government, and administration—1 Kings 8:1-11.
 3. Christ is rest to the saints in three stages:
 - a. In the church age the heavenly Christ, the One who has expressed, represented, and satisfied God and who rests from His work and sits at the right hand of God in the heavens, is the rest to us in our spirit; as our rest, He is our perfect peace and full satisfaction—Matt. 11:28-29.
 - b. In the millennial kingdom, after Satan has been removed from the earth (Rev. 20:1-3), God will be expressed, represented, and satisfied by Christ and the overcoming saints; then Christ with the kingdom will be the rest in a fuller way to the overcoming saints, who will be co-kings with Him (vv. 4, 6) and share and enjoy His rest.

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- c. In the new heaven and new earth, after all the enemies, including death, the last enemy, have been made subject to Him (1 Cor. 15:24-27), Christ, as the all-conquering One, will be the rest in the fullest way to all of God's redeemed for eternity.
 - B. For Elimelech to leave the good land meant that he was swerving from the rest in God's economy, thus cutting himself off from God's economy; he swerved from Bethlehem, the birthplace of the coming Christ (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-7), in Judah, the top part of the good land (Gen. 49:8-10; Exo. 3:8b; Deut. 8:7-10), to Moab, a country of idolatry (Judg. 10:6).
 - C. Naomi's returning to the Holy Land was her returning to the rest in God's economy from Moab, the country of idolatry, to Judah, the land of Immanuel (Isa. 8:8) to arrive at Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ (Ruth 1:19a, 22b); she returned with Ruth, her daughter-in-law given to her by God for the accomplishing of His economy concerning Christ (v. 22a).
 - D. Ruth chose the goal of participating with God's elect in the enjoyment of Christ, and she became an important ancestor of Christ, one who helped bring forth Christ into mankind; this was her choosing God and His kingdom for the carrying out of God's economy concerning Christ—Matt. 1:5-6.
- III. Chapter 2 of the book of Ruth speaks of Ruth, as one who had returned to God from her heathen background, exercising her right to partake of the rich produce of the inheritance of God's elect:**
- A. According to her threefold status as a sojourner, a poor one, and a widow, Ruth exercised her right to glean the harvest; her gleaning was not her begging but her right.
 - B. God's ordinance concerning the reaping of the harvest was that Jehovah would bless the children of Israel if they left the corners of their fields and the gleanings for the poor, the sojourners, the orphans, and the widows—Lev. 23:22; 19:9-10; Deut. 24:19.
 - C. Boaz obeyed this ordinance, thereby testifying to his great faith in Jehovah; under God's sovereignty, this ordinance seems to have been written for one person—Ruth.
 - D. Just as Ruth had the right to enjoy the produce of the good land after coming into the land, so we have the right to enjoy Christ

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as our good land after believing into Him; Ruth's exercising of her right to gain and possess the produce of the good land signifies that, after believing into Christ and being organically joined to Him in our "joined" spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17), we must begin to pursue Christ in order to gain, possess, experience, and enjoy Him (Phil. 3:7-16).

- E. The book of Ruth portrays the way, the position, the qualification, and the right of sinners to participate in Christ and to enjoy Christ; according to God's ordination, we who have believed into Christ have been qualified and positioned to claim our right to enjoy Christ (Col. 1:12; Rev. 2:7; 22:14).
- F. As a narration, the book of Ruth is lovely, touching, convincing, and subduing; in the aromatic story in chapter 2, four types are implied:
 1. Boaz, rich in wealth (v. 1), typifies Christ, who is rich in the divine grace (2 Cor. 12:7-9).
 2. The field of the God-promised good land (Ruth 2:2-3) typifies the all-inclusive Christ, who is the source of all the spiritual and divine products for the life supply of God's elect (Phil. 1:19-21a).
 3. Barley and wheat (Ruth 2:23) typify Christ as the material for making food for both God and His people (Lev. 2; John 6:9, 33, 35).
 4. Ruth, a Moabitess, a heathen sinner alienated from God's promises (Deut. 23:3; cf. Eph. 2:12), being given the right to partake of the gleanings of the harvest of God's elect typifies the Gentile "dogs" who are privileged to partake of Christ as the crumbs under the table of the portion of God's elect children (Matt. 15:21-28 and footnote 1 on v. 27).

IV. Chapter 3 of the book of Ruth speaks of Ruth's seeking for her rest:

- A. "Naomi, her [Ruth's] mother-in-law, said to her, My daughter, I must seek some resting place for you, that it may go well with you"—v. 1:
 1. Naomi realized that the proper person to be Ruth's husband was Boaz; hence, Naomi acted as a "middleman" in order to prod Ruth to get married.

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2. The genuine ministers of the New Testament are like Naomi in that they stir up the believers in Christ to love Him as their Bridegroom that they may take Him as their Husband—2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7; 21:9-10.
 3. The only way for us to have rest is to take Christ as our Husband; we must know Him as our Husband and take Him as our Husband, living in the closest and most intimate contact with Him—1 Cor. 2:9; cf. 16:22.
 4. If we marry Christ, taking Him as our Husband, our life will be changed; we will realize that we must have a wife's fidelity, and we will learn how to enjoy Christ as our life and our person, walking and behaving in oneness with Him—2 Cor. 2:10.
- B. After coming to the good land and exercising her right to enjoy its rich produce, Ruth still needed a home so that she could have rest; this kind of rest could come only through marriage:
1. Although we may be saved and love the Lord, in order to have a home for our rest we must marry the Lord Jesus, taking Him as our Husband, and live together with Him in the church as our home—Rom. 7:4; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27.
 2. Christ as our Husband and the church as our home are a complete unit for us to have a proper and adequate rest (v. 32).
- C. Considered in the light of Matthew 1:5-6 and 16, Ruth's seeking for her rest was actually for the continuation of the genealogy to bring in Christ.
- D. Boaz told Ruth, "I am a kinsman, yet there is a kinsman closer than I"—Ruth 3:12:
1. In this verse the first kinsman of Ruth's husband, Ruth's closest kinsman, typifies our natural man, who cannot and will not redeem us from the indebtedness (sin) of our old man (4:1-6).
 2. Boaz, the second kinsman of Ruth's husband, typifies Christ, who partook of blood and flesh (Heb. 2:14) to be our Kinsman and who can redeem us from our sin, recover the lost right of our natural man in God's creation, be our new Husband in His divine organic union with us, and take us as His counterpart for His increase (Ruth 4:7-13).

V. Chapter 4 of the book of Ruth speaks of Ruth's receiving a reward for God's economy:

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- A. As part of her reward for God's economy, Ruth gained a redeeming husband, who typifies Christ as the redeeming Husband of the believers; now as believers in Christ, we have a Husband who is our eternal, present, and daily Redeemer, rescuing us, saving us, delivering us, from all our troubles.
- B. In addition to gaining a redeeming husband, Ruth was redeemed from the indebtedness of her dead husband (vv. 1-9); this typifies the believers being redeemed from the sin of their old man:
 - 1. According to Romans 6:6 and 7:2-4, the dead husband, our old husband, is our old man; God created us to be His wife, but we rebelled against Him; we gave Him up and assumed the position of a husband for ourselves.
 - 2. Our sinful husband encumbered us with many debts, but on the day we married Christ, we received a Husband who is our almighty, omnipotent Redeemer; we all need Christ to be such a Husband to us, and we should habitually come to Him and simply say, "Lord Jesus, I need You."
- C. Another aspect of Ruth's reward is that she became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy to bring in the royal house of David for the producing of Christ (Ruth 4:13b-22; Matt. 1:5-16); this indicates that she had an all-inclusive and all-extensive gain with the position and capacity to bring Christ into the human race; she is thus a great link in the chain that is bringing Christ to every corner of the earth.
- D. Ruth not only became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy for the producing of Christ, but she also continued the line of the God-created humanity for the incarnation of Christ; the incarnation of Christ was a matter of His being brought out of eternity into time and with His divinity into humanity:
 - 1. Every day of our Christian life should be a continuation of Christ's incarnation, with Christ being brought forth in order to be born into others through our ministering Christ as the Spirit into them—2 Cor. 3:6.
 - 2. In order for this to happen, we all need to speak for Christ, to speak forth Christ, and to speak Christ into others; ministering Christ in this way will surely change us, and the ones for whom we care, in a metabolic way for our transformation into His image—v. 18; 4:1.