

Ruth's Romance of Redemption

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STUDY FOUR

THE DAMSEL AND THE RELATIONSHIP

"And Naomi had a kinsman of her husbands, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter. And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech. And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearst thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left" (Ruth 2:1-14).

In this study, we find Naomi, the backslider, blessedly restored to Bethlehem-Judah. Ruth, the Gentile sinner is safely gathered with the Israelites of GOD. Both have been tested, but through it they have proved that GOD was to come first and foremost in their lives. Orpah is entirely out of the picture. She remains in Moab with her relatives and her religion. Many, like her, have failed to take the way GOD has outlined in His Word. From now on, Ruth moves forward in

activity, advancement, and alliance and seems to surpass Naomi in prominence. This portrays the Jew, who is set aside temporarily so that the Gentiles might be partakers of Divine grace. Another character is now introduced for the first time in the Book; his name is Boaz. In our present lesson we will see: --

I. RUTH'S WORK
II. RUTH'S WELCOME
III. RUTH'S WEALTH

I. RUTH'S WORK

In chapter two we are introduced for the first time to the near kinsman, one who has the right to redeem. Boaz was a "*mighty man*," and a "*man of wealth*." His name means "*in him is strength*." In Ruth's first day of new life, she meets Boaz, the one who is able to redeem. How beautifully this portrays a converted man coming in contact with JESUS CHRIST. A man is not saved unless he becomes a partaker of the mighty power of the Saviour. The zeal in the new life of the convert can be plainly seen in Ruth's ambition to glean (2:2).

There is a threefold request in this chapter, which is as follows: (1) "**Let me go**" (v. 2). This splendid ambition is often seen in the new convert. (2) "**Let me glean**" (v. 7). Not only does a new convert desire to go and do something for GOD and His Work, but he desires to glean in the Word of GOD and find that which will satisfy his soul. (3) "**Let me find**" (v. 13). What a righteous desire! She wants to find favor in the sight of her Lord. She is seeking the smiles and blessings of Him Who alone is able to bestow. The spirit of humility and dependency is seen in Ruth as she seeks from Naomi, the elder woman, permission to go and glean in the field for ears of corn. She seeks counsel from one who is older in experience. This shows a beautiful spirit. A new convert who is heady and high-minded will make a poor Christian, for all, either young or old, are more or less dependent upon one another. We are all in need of fellowship, counsel, encouragement, and advice; and the heady, high-minded believer will sooner or later learn for his own good that what he can gain from the older Christian is worth much to his experience. Let us note: --

A. A SPECIAL PROVISION FOR GENTILES
B. A SUCCESSFUL PLACE TO GLEAN
C. A SPLENDID PICTURE OF GRACE

A. A SPECIAL PROVISION FOR GENTILES

The term "*Ruth, the Moabitess*," is found five times in the Book (1:22; 2:2, 21; 4:5, 10). She is here identified with the idolatrous worshipers of Moab. They were forbidden to come into the congregation of the Lord even up to the tenth generation. Thus, we see she was a stranger to the covenants of promise (Ephesians 2:12). She is here a representative of the Gentile sinner.

THE NUMBER FIVE

Why is the word "*Moabitess*" found just five times? The number five in Scripture speaks of grace.

When David went to meet Goliath, the giant, he took five stones from the brook and his sling as his weapon. Some say, "But he needed only one stone to slay the giant." This is true. There were four stones left, which show that there is always grace left to help us for the next time of need (and Goliath "did" have four brothers).

The holy anointing oil was composed of five ingredients and took on the name of pure anointing oil, speaking of pure grace: "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin" (Exodus 30:23-24)

The brazen altar was five cubits square, which pictures the grace of the Lord JESUS CHRIST in giving His life a ransom for lost men.

In feeding the multitudes, JESUS took five barley loaves, typical of weakness, and fed five thousand men and their families, showing that by Divine grace He could feed many, and sufficient was the remainder to supply each disciple with a basketful for his journey. This portrayed the imparting of His grace to multitudes in the dispensation of the HOLY SPIRIT.

The term "*Moab*" is found eight times in the book. In a preceding study, I explained that eight was the number of a new beginning. From this we see Moab, typical of the Gentile race, was to have a new beginning on the grounds of grace. The term "*Moabitish*" is found but once in the Book. This completes the perfect number, for the word "*Moab*" is found eight times, the term "*Moabites*" is found five times, and "*Moabitish*" once, making a total of 14, $2 \times 7 = 14$. Thus, we have a twofold dispensational perfection.

Let us notice the special provision provided for strangers, the Gentiles. In chapter three the seven feasts of the Lord, (Leviticus 23), were described. Verses 15 to 21 deal with the feast of Pentecost. At this time the wheat harvest, which occurred about fifty days later than the barley harvest, was at its height. Verse 22 tells of the special provisions made at this particular time for the poor and the strangers. The verse reads as follows: "*And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.*"

From a dispensational aspect, the poor and strangers could be none others than the Gentiles for whom these special provisions were provided. That GOD should order the Israelites not to make clean riddance of the corners of their fields or gather the gleaning of the harvest so that the stranger might have supplies that will care for them until the next feast, which occurred in the seventh month, is a provision of grace. How nicely this points forward to this age when we Gentiles may eat the crumbs which fall from the Master's table. According to the Syrophenician woman, the crumbs or the gleanings of grace are sufficient for the satisfaction of the soul: "*And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said,*

It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matthew 15:22-28).

Let us carry this study into Deuteronomy 24:19-22. There we read as follows "*When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive trees, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing."*

In these verses we notice three classes of people -- the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow -- and three articles of provision -- wheat from the sheaf, oil from the olive, and wine from the grapes. If they forgot a sheaf in the field, they were to leave it there that the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow might have for their portion.

The wheat gives us the thought of flour, which is made into the bread of life. This represents CHRIST, Who declared, "*I am the bread of life.*"

The second item was oil from the olive. When they shook the olive trees, some of the olives remained upon their branches. These they were to leave for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow that they might enjoy the luxury of olive oil, which at that time was eaten with other food. This is typical of the HOLY SPIRIT as He is pictured in Matthew 25:1-10 where the foolish virgins failed to provide themselves with oil. Therefore, GOD has provided that the strangers (Gentiles) may have a large supply of the holy anointing oil in and upon their lives.

Third, let us notice that they were not to glean their vineyards, but they were to leave all unripened grapes that they might ripen, thus providing for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, grapes for wine, typical of joy.

Notice them in their order. How wonderfully it portrays the inspiration of Scripture. Life is the first thing needed, and it is the first thing offered (v. 19). Second in order is the olive oil, which speaks of the spirit of power. Bread (life) was provided in the crucifixion and resurrection of CHRIST, but fifty days later the HOLY SPIRIT was poured out on the day of Pentecost, supplying spiritual blessings (wine) for the Church of the living GOD.

This truth is also taught in the cleansing of the leper.

When the blood, representing life, was applied to the right ear, the right thumb, and the great toe of the right foot, it pointed forward to the life that CHRIST was to give as a ransom for polluted lepers.

Then followed the oil. The priest would take a log of oil, pour it into the palm of his left hand, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, giving the leper a perfect standing in GOD's sight. Then he would take the oil and cover the blood on the tip of the right ear, upon the thumb of the

right hand, and upon the great toe of the right foot, and the remainder he would pour upon the head of the cleansed leper.

After the blood and oil had been applied, the leper was cleansed in GOD's sight, but the remainder of the oil poured on the head was typical of constant anointings along the way which every Christian needs from time to time: *"And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD: And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priests, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy: And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot: And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand: And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD: And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering: And the remnant of the oil that is in the priests hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD"* (Leviticus 14:12-18).

Thus, we see here life in the blood, power in the oil, and joy and blessings in the wine for the cleansed leper (typical of sinners) when he was admitted into the camp and was permitted to have fellowship and joy with the Israelites of GOD. How wonderful these Old Testament studies portray the New Testament plan of grace.

Let us notice the three classes we have previously mentioned, namely, the strangers, the fatherless, and the widows. **First**, the strangers referred to those outside of the covenant of Israel, the Gentile nations. **Second**, there were the fatherless. This class must refer to none other in the spiritual realm than the backslider, for *"fatherless"* speaks of two things, birth, and death. It is the same in the spiritual realm; it refers to those who once enjoyed grace from the hand of GOD but now do not enjoy it. **Third**, the widow is mentioned. This refers to Israel, not as a nation but to the individual Jews of which the nation is composed. Israel is now in widowhood according to Romans 7:1-2: *"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband."* Although, as a nation, Israel has been temporarily cast off, there are still provisions made for the individual Jew who may desire life, power, and joy. Let us note: --

B. A SUCCESSFUL PLACE TO GLEAN

Her holy desire to glean is found in chapter 2:2 where she says, *"Let me now go."* Her gleaning she would not put off for another time. Her desire was to be busy at once. How this marks the picture of a newborn soul desiring after Divine Truth and gleaning ears of corn from the Word of GOD. How natural it is for a newly-converted soul to want others to find the same peace and joy he is experiencing, and how many of us, when we were saved, thought our whole family, neighbors, and friends would at once seek the same salvation, but to our disappointment we found they rejected the same CHRIST that we had previously rejected. A beautiful truth is seen when she requests to be allowed to *"glean ears of corn after him."* Anyone who will glean after

CHRIST is sure to get corn. Corn is not found in the funnypage of your daily paper, in many of the magazines found on library tables, or in novels often read by so-called Christians. If the Christian wants corn, he will have to find it in the Word of GOD and in good religious books, or periodicals. Glean after CHRIST, and you will have, as the disciples after the feeding of the multitudes, a basketful to carry with you.

C. A SPLENDID PICTURE OF GRACE

"And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech." (v. 3). One writer says, "The word field was in the singular because there were no fences marking off fields." Stones were used to mark the boundary of their land. In Proverbs 22:28 we read: "*Remove not the ancient landmark* (or stone markers) *which thy fathers have set.*" These were the landmarks that showed the divisions of the fields, the same as fences today. There was an instruction given to Israel in Deuteronomy 19:14: "*Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark,*" and a curse was pronounced upon the man that did so: "*Cursed be he that removeth his neighbours landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen*" (Deuteronomy 27:17).

It was GOD's special plan of grace that she should begin her gleaning on the territory that belonged to him who was later to be her husband. Today, GOD, by a special plan of Providence, arranges that a tract should fall into the right party's hand, that he should move into a certain neighborhood, or that he, out of curiosity, would attend a camp meeting, or Bible conference and thereby, as Ruth, come into the field of Boaz. How wonderfully Providence has led men from time to time, in an appointed way, and at an appointed place. It isn't guesswork. GOD has His eye on man from the cradle to the grave.

Let us notice the demand of Solomon, "*Remove not the ancient landmarks.*" There are four landmarks in the field of CHRIST. If these are removed, a man will no longer be in the territory of grace but in the districts of sin. These four cornerstones or landmarks are incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. If a person will remain with this boundary and glean, he will find ears of corn that will feed his soul and encourage him to press on to higher heights and deeper depths in GOD. The same instruction that Boaz gave to Ruth, CHRIST gives to us, "*Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence*" (v. 8). If one will stay within the fundamental doctrines of CHRIST, he will find plenty of gleanings along the way.

II. RUTH'S WELCOME

In our study today we find the following alliteration:

- 1. THE GLEANINGS OF RUTH**
- 2. THE GREETINGS OF THE REAPERS**
- 3. THE GRACE OF THE REDEEMER**

In the fourth verse (second chapter), we find Boaz greeting the reapers; this is in the form of a blessing: "*The Lord be with you.*" To this the reapers reply, "*The Lord bless thee.*" In those days that was the established custom of greeting between employer and employee. What a wonderful world this would be if that relationship would exist today between masters and their servants, but

we will have to wait a few more years until the Millennial Age when such blessedness shall exist. The gulf is becoming larger and larger between capital and labor until strikes are known throughout the universe. James pictures very forcefully this condition for the last days and urges the Christian brethren to be patient unto the coming of the Lord: "*Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain*" (James 5:7). He uses Job as an illustration of a man of patience.

Boaz at once notices the newcomer in his congregation, and he asks, "*Whose damsel is this?*" (Ruth 2:5). He desires to know all the gleaners in his field. The servant replies that it is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the land of Moab (v. 6). He further tells Boaz how she requested permission to glean in the field and how she had continued to do so until the present time when they were gathered **in the house**. I want to call your attention to the words "*in the house*," for it gives us a new line of truth, commonly known as "*church truth*." We notice JESUS used a different line of teaching when by the seashore than He did in the house. One seemed to be for the world at large and the other for the disciples or those who were following Him. So the next verses in our study give us some thoughts for the believer of which Ruth is here typical. This fact is seen in the way Boaz addresses Ruth. She is no longer called "*the damsel*," but he calls her "*my daughter*" (v. 8). Ruth is pictured in this study in the following threefold relationship:

- 1. A DAMSEL IN THE FIELD (vv. 1-6)**
- 2. A DAUGHTER IN THE HOUSE (vv. 7-13)**
- 3. A DINER AT THE TABLE (v. 14)**

When Boaz called her "*my daughter*," she received a welcome from him. In the same way, our Heavenly Boaz (JESUS) will welcome all who come to Him and will give them the titles of "*sons*" and "*daughters*," which refer to sonship through the new birth in JESUS CHRIST. I desire to give a little practical truth here for the Church. A welcome to sinners in the house of GOD may be the means of many finding CHRIST. Often strangers who visit the house of the Lord must sit there without a song book to sing from and must leave without a hand shake or a word of welcome from anyone. In some places, the members instead will clique together and enjoy the fellowship of each other while the sinner passes out without an invitation to return or without feeling that anyone is concerned regarding his presence. This same situation exists in camp meetings; believers come to have their souls fed, but receive no welcome and are treated as strangers while on the grounds. In my early Christian life I attended meetings to which I felt I would never want to return because I received no welcome. Let us, as Christians, be careful regarding this particular matter.

THE UNNAMED SERVANT

I wish to call your attention to the **unnamed servant**, "*that was set over the reapers*." It does not tell who this servant was. Some may wonder why he, who has such an important part in the work of Boaz and who carried the responsibility of the reapers and the managing of the fields, is not named, but this is made plain if viewed from a dispensational standpoint. The HOLY SPIRIT is the unnamed servant of the dispensation of grace. He was without a name that He might exalt a name which is above every name; that name is JESUS.

There are three characters in the Old Testament whose servants were unnamed. They are given as follows in their typical order:

First, Abraham sent forth his "*eldest servant*," (Genesis 24:2), into the far-off country to seek a bride for Isaac; the servant's name is not mentioned, but it states "*that he ruled over all that he had*." Here we see a picture of the HOLY SPIRIT coming into the far-off country, this world of sin, to call out a bride for the Heavenly Isaac, JESUS. The HOLY SPIRIT is now engaged in this work.

Second, there is Boaz, whose unnamed servant had charge "*over the reapers*" (Ruth 2:6). This is typical of the HOLY SPIRIT bestowing His gifts upon those who are engaged in the vineyard of the Lord as gleaners and reapers of the harvest.

Third, we find in the case of Joseph, who was a type of JESUS CHRIST. When the brethren of Joseph brought Benjamin to him he gave special instruction to the "*ruler of his house*," (Genesis 43:16) saying, "*Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house*" (Genesis 43:16-17). It was the ruler of his house, the unnamed servant, who brought these men home that they might dine with their brother Joseph at his table. In like manner, the HOLY SPIRIT is busily engaged bringing the redeemed of the earth to their Heavenly home that they might dine with their elder Brother, JESUS, at the marriage of the LAMB.

Thus we have the work of the HOLY SPIRIT revealed in a threefold manner: first, how He came to call men out of the world of sin to a life of righteousness, then how He bestows upon them His gifts and graces, and prepares them for the marriage supper of the LAMB. This truth is blessedly portrayed in the servant of Boaz, who is a type of the HOLY GHOST bringing Ruth into the house, a type of the Church of GOD. From this we see the typical teaching of the HOLY SPIRIT is not left out of this little Book of Ruth, which so remarkably portrays the dispensation of grace. Let us notice four facts relative to Christian life: --

A. GOOD INSTRUCTIONS

"*Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens*" (v. 8). Boaz opens the conversation by saying, "*Hearest thou not, my daughter?*" He requested that she give him her attention, then he gave the following instructions:

First, "*Go not to glean in another field*." This was special instruction to remain separate; he asked her not to run off to the world for her supply but to remain by his maidens. A continuous separation for the believer is demanded by GOD. Seemingly this is the first instruction that Ruth receives. Some may wonder why this is so important that it should come first, but JESUS in His High Priestly prayer said, "*The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*." (John 17:14). In His address on the vine and the branches, He said to His disciples, "*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you*." (John 15:18-19).

It is the world that crucified and is rejecting CHRIST, and when the Church becomes allied with it, it will soon lose its spiritual power, as Samson of old, who fell into the lap of Delilah, typical of the world.

Second, she was instructed to cherish Christian fellowship, "*Abide here fast by my maidens*" (v. 8). It is not enough to remain separate, but man should cherish Christian fellowship, for that is comfort for the soul. The older maidens, who had the advantage of longer experience and who were more accustomed to the work in the field of Boaz, would be desirable companions for her, for they could direct her rightly. It is advisable for any new convert to keep close to the older established Christian that he might learn to walk in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Boaz adds, "*Let thine eyes be on the field.*" Special instruction is given here concerning the eyes, for a glance into the field of the world might cause an unlawful desire, which might later prove a disaster as in the case of Eve, who looked upon the fruit and ere long ate of the forbidden product.

B. GREAT PROVISIONS

First, he provided protection, "*Have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee?*" (v. 9). As long as we stay in the field of our Heavenly Boaz, we are under His protection; under the shadow of His wing, there is perfect security; and it is under the wings of the ALMIGHTY that she had come to trust (v. 12). What a blessed place of retreat! I was recently told of an aged Christian man of splendid character. One night he was returning at a late hour to his home. As he, with no sense of danger, was hurriedly crossing the street, a strong hand forcibly pushed him backward, thus halting him on his onward course. The force of the assault was so strong it nearly pushed him over, and in the next second an automobile came dashing by at a rapid rate of speed. Immediately he looked for the stranger, whom he thought had severely pushed him to stop him from rushing into the path of the oncoming car, but to his amazement no one was to be seen. He looked to the right and left, but there was no one around. Who was it then? It was the hand of the Divine, Who was interested in His own child, and in mercy spared his life for a few more months or years so that he could fulfill his work on this earth. This incident actually occurred in the State of California. It illustrates the hand of GOD in protection.

Second, she received restoration, "*When thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn*" (v. 9). A good drink from the wells of salvation restores the weary gleaners in their efforts of service as they glean in the field of Boaz. He said, "*Drink of that which the young men have drawn.*" The young preachers and workers are able today to draw from the wells of truth, and they are able to give the Christian that which will aid him in his spiritual activity. With Boaz these young men "*draw water out of the wells of salvation.*" Notice the liberty he gave to Ruth, "*when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels.*" Any time, any place, and in any condition, CHRIST invites us to drink.

C. GLORIOUS ADORATION

"*Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground*" (v. 10). With such instruction and wonderful provision, she is immediately struck with a spirit of humility and deep reverence. She bows in adoration and questions, "*Why have I found grace in thine eyes?*" "I am only a stranger; how is it that you have given me, a Moabitess, so much? Pray tell me, why have you extended to

me such wonderful grace?" How many of GOD's people today have experienced this same feeling when they see the marvels of His grace -- how they have been redeemed, forgiven of all the past sin, washed in His blood, filled with His SPIRIT, are now enjoying Christian fellowship, and possessing a blessed prospect for the future. We ask ourselves the question, "*Why have we found grace in His sight?*" What a touching thought she expressed when she classed herself as a stranger, an outcast of Israel, and an idolater of Moab. Such were we Gentiles before we were saved. Boaz answers her question by saying, "*It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done*" (v. 11).

First, he speaks of her separation, "*How thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity*" (v. 11). Boaz recognized the separation she made when she left her relatives and her religion as mentioned in chapter one. Two of the hardest things in the world for people to do is to leave their relatives and to leave their religions. Boaz fully knew all that she had done and, likewise, our Heavenly Boaz understands the decisions and desires of each heart.

Second, he mentions the acceptance, "*Art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore*" (v. 11). She had become a Jewish proselyte. To accept meant not only to renounce her own relatives and religions but also to embrace the people of another race and of another faith -- to renounce the old and to take on the new.

D. GRACIOUS RECOMPENCE.

"*A full reward be given thee*" (v. 12). She has a promise of a full reward. Some will receive but a partial reward, some will receive no reward at all, but Ruth had a promise of a "*full reward.*" This reward is to come from the Lord GOD of Israel. It was not man's reward, for he cannot reward honestly and justly; he can only look upon the surface, but the Lord, Who understands the motives back of each life and act, will reward not according to our success but according to our faithfulness.

Doctor Watson, the great Methodist writer, in his book, "*Our Own God*," pens the following wonderful words concerning rewards: "So many times our dear Saviour uses the word 'great' in connection with coming rewards, so that for a few sufferings, for a few tears, for a few toils, which in reality are essential to our own welfare, JESUS says '*great is your reward in heaven.*' It looks as if GOD was beside Himself in love for us. Just see, out of His love He gave us this wonderful existence, and then gave us grace to repent, to believe, and to love Him in return, and out of His love gave us the sanctifying SPIRIT, to live and labor for Him; and then out of His love He contrives to reward us, with honors, and glories in the age to come. He gives us the love to love Him with, and then rewards us for loving Him with His own love. Did you ever see the beat of it in all the world? If we pondered these things, would not our hearts burn within us, with a feverish desire to love Him up to all our capacity.

III. RUTH'S WEALTH

Under the division "Ruth's Work," we have seen Ruth as a **damsel** in the field. Under the division, "Ruth's Welcome," she was pictured as a **daughter** in the house. Under this division, "Ruth's Wealth," we shall see her as a **diner** at the table. From this it is evident that grace not only bestows new life, relationship, fellowship, and blessing, but it also provides the opportunity

to gain rewards. Let us note: --

A. THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

"Thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid" (v. 13). She was so charmed with her first day with Boaz with the fellowship, promises, and blessings he gave that she was forced to acknowledge, *"Let me find favour in thy sight"* (v. 13). The word "favour" is from the word 'chen' and is the same Hebrew word as "grace" found in chapter two, verse ten. She acknowledges she has found grace in the sight of Boaz, and says, *"Thou hast comforted me."* The words of Boaz were words of comfort; they were like honey to the taste, like incense to the nostrils, like music to the ear, and like scenery to the eye. His words were not only comforting but charming. How wonderfully CHRIST can speak words of welcome, forgiveness, friendship, and encouragement and says, *"for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid"* (v. 13).

CHRIST not only speaks to the ear, but His words of comfort find lodgment in the heart. The religion of JESUS CHRIST is a heart religion. While many today are training the physical, CHRIST trains the heart. Then her acknowledgment is consummated with a spirit of humility, *"Though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens."* She felt herself the least among the thousands of Bethlehem-Judah, and yet out of her was to come the ruler in Israel: *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting"* (Micah 5:2). The New Testament quotation, *"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted,"* is fulfilled in Ruth. What an acknowledgment she had given: first, a favor extended; second, a comfort received; third, words rightly spoken; and fourth, the least among the thousands of Judah.

B. THE INVITATION.

The previous acknowledgment of Ruth so stirred the heart of Boaz in affection for her that he adds more grace, more comfort, and gives her a special invitation to dine. She has an invitation to the table of the Lord. Now we see the convert rising higher in Divine grace until she is now a partaker of Divine ordinance. Boaz says, *"At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar"* (v. 14). The provisions on the table were bread and vinegar. The word "vinegar" is from the word "chomets," which is the word used for sour grapes or grapes that have been made into sour wine. From this we see the elements of the table are bread and wine, thus pointing forward to the dispensation of grace in which we are living. (The Book of Ruth is full of dispensational teaching)

She is now invited to partake of sweet fellowship that she might have the opportunity to express her appreciation of the bread, the body that was broken, and the wine, the blood that was shed. This points forward to another table found in II Samuel 9.

Saul, who mightily opposed David on his march to the throne, had a descendant by the name of Mephibosheth. David invited him to sit at his table, which foreshadowed an act of Divine grace. This invitation so affected Mephibosheth that he fell on his face and did reverence (II Samuel 9:6). As Ruth, he said, *"What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I*

am?" (II Samuel 9:8). All who are invited to the table of the Lord also feel that they are not worthy to be partakers; it is only by Divine grace that we receive the invitation. Mephibosheth, who represents the sinner, was so affected by the fall of man that he was unable to produce a righteous walk, being lame in both feet. However, while the emblematic elements of the atonement, bread and wine, were on the table, he was able to sit there in peace. In the same way, man today may enjoy the communion at the Lord's table in peace and gratitude because of what CHRIST has accomplished for him and in him by His atonement. How much like Mephibosheth are the children of light. Although they have been forgiven of all transgressions and their hearts have been made pure by the blood of the LAMB, yet because of poor judgment, human mistakes are made, which in a measure affect the walk of life. Nevertheless, we have a place where our feet are covered by Divine atonement; that is under the Lord's table. We will close this study with the thought of: --

C. THE SUFFICIENCY

"*She sat beside the reapers*" (v. 14). The weary gleaner not only needs nourishment, but she needs rest. To meet this need she was privileged to sit beside the reapers. Food and rest must go together, and so unlike the beast of the field, who eats standing, we are provided with a place to sit. **Sitting** in the Scripture always indicates a work accomplished. After the demoniac had been delivered from the legion of devils, we find him no longer among the tombs living a life of self-destruction but rather calmly "*sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind*" (Luke 8:35). His posture indicated a work accomplished. The same truth is found in the Book of Hebrews, which deals with the New Testament High Priest. In four different places in this Epistle, you will find some form of the verbs "*sit*" or "*set*"; (1:3; 8:1; 10:11-12; 12:2). The writer in this Epistle is exalting JESUS CHRIST above the Levitical priesthood and the other various Old Testament characters by describing Him sitting "*down on the right hand of God*" -- with a work accomplished --- in a place of honor.

There was no seat provided for the priest in the Tabernacle because his work was never completed; Israel's sins were not entirely removed, and sacrifices had to be made continually because of constant transgression. The high priest entered into the Holy of Holies once a year, according to Hebrews 9:7, to put away the sin and transgression of the past year, but the writer to the Hebrews said, "*This man [JESUS] after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God*" (Hebrews 10:12).

He emphasized that the High Priest was a man, "*this man*." Now we have, as our HIGH PRIEST, perfect manhood sitting in the seat of intercession on the right hand of GOD. This indicates the accomplished work of atonement. It is completed. What man or GOD could add to it would be valueless. When we find Ruth sitting beside the reapers, it indicates, from a spiritual standpoint, that atonement had been accomplished in her life in the work of regeneration.

You will notice that while she sat at the table, Boaz "*reached her parched corn*" (v. 14). Parched corn has a wonderful significance in the work of redemption accomplished in and by JESUS CHRIST. S. Ridout writes: "She gets food from his own hand. The heart of our Lord is not satisfied till He Himself is ministering to the soul. How He longs for this personal contact, not satisfied merely with feeding, but passing the food from His own hand to the needy one."

How true this is. There is a threefold lesson concerning JESUS CHRIST, typified by the corn.

(1) **The Corn of Wheat**, ground into fine flour, as seen in the meat offering of Leviticus 2, pictures the Lord in His incarnation and earthly life. The grinding of the corn into the flour speaks of the suffering which He endured during His earthly career. "*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him*" (Isaiah 53:10). The corn must pass through the grinding process before it could be made into fine flour. In the same way nearly the whole life of CHRIST was one of suffering and sorrow.

(2) **The Corn was Parched**. This speaks of the crucifixion of CHRIST, how He passed through the fiery judgments of Calvary. JESUS brings out this thought when He says, "*Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone*" (John 12:24). The fire must pass over the corn to parch it. This reminds us that we are bought with a price; that price was the suffering, death, and penalty that He bore. He, Who knew no sin, was made sin. He endured the Cross, despised the shame, took upon Himself the penalty that mankind deserved, explored death's chambers, endured its agony, and conquered its destinies. All this truth is seen in the parched corn.

(3) **The Corn also speaks of Resurrection**. When the children of Israel came to Gilgal in the land of Canaan, they did eat of the old corn of the land and the parched corn the very day that they entered (Josh. 5:11). The old corn here speaks of CHRIST in His incarnation as the Son of GOD, the parched corn speaks of crucifixion as just stated, but the eating speaks of CHRIST in resurrection, which is proven in Leviticus 23. We again refer to the feast of the Lord, where GOD demanded that on entering Canaan's land they should wave a sheaf of the firstfruits of their harvest before the priest and bring an offering after which they were allowed to eat parched corn, as was explained. This feast was the feast which was typical of resurrection. When Boaz handed to Ruth this corn, he imparted to her this threefold truth on which she could feed, namely, His incarnation, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. What sacred food for the saints of GOD, who feed at His table in holy fellowship! They do not feed on what the world offers or on human emotion but on CHRIST, Who is all and in all. You will notice the closing words of this study: "*And she did eat, and was sufficed, and left*" (Ruth 2:14). The word "*sufficed*" means "*she was satisfied,*" which also Ruth's name indicates. There can be no satisfaction for the soul unless it is found in JESUS CHRIST. He alone can meet all the needs of the human heart. We are closing this study with Ruth in a state of satisfaction.

If the reader desires, he may use the following outline, dealing with the kinsman redeemer, in studying chapters 2:1-14. Note the kinsman's --

(1) **Inquiry** "*Whose damsel is this?*" (v. 5).

(2) **Interview** "*Hearest thou not, my daughter?*" (v. 8).

(3) **Instruction** "*Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens*" (v. 8).

(4) **Interest** "*Have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink*" (v. 9).

(5) **Information** "*It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore*" (v. 11).

(6) **Invocation** "*The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel*" (v. 12).

(7) **Invitation** "*At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar*" (v. 14).

~ end of chapter 4 ~

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