

Ruth's Romance of Redemption

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STUDY TWO

THE DECISION AND THE RETURN

"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 how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mothers house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons; Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her." (Ruth 1:6-18)

In the preceding study the trend of Elimelech and Naomi was downward, and the general thought was **degradation**. In this study the main thought is **renunciation**. What a sad picture we have of Naomi! She is in a strange country, a land of an enemy, bereaved of husband and sons. But often the darkest hour precedes the dawn. Such was the case with Naomi.

1. The Decision. *"Then she arose . . . she went forth out of the place where she was."* (vs. 6-7). As the prodigal son of Luke 15, she said, *"I will arise."* She remembered her father's house, and because of that she went **"out of the place."** It must be a decision great enough to cause you to leave the old crowd. It's one thing to arise, but it's another thing to leave the country of Moab.

One of GOD's demands is separation. "*Come ye out from among them and be ye separate,*" saith the Lord. As long as Israel as a nation remained separate from the other nations, GOD blessed her. The church is a called-out body, for "*Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to **take out** of them a people for his name.*" (Acts 15:14). It is because of this truth that twice-born men have no connection with the political or social realm and spirit of the world. They have been raised and made to sit together in Heavenly (not earthly) places. Their conversation (citizenship or commonwealth, F.E. Marsh) and affections are above.

2. The Return. "*Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might **return** from the country of Moab.*" (v. 6). Here you will notice it gives the place from whence she was to **return** -- "*they went on the way to **return** unto the land of Judah.*" (v. 7). The journey from Moab to Bethlehem might be called the "pathway of repentance." It is heart-rending to compare their journey from Bethlehem-Judah to Moab and that from Moab back to Bethlehem-Judah. On her journey to Moab she had a husband and two boys, health, youth, and hope, but on her return she had only widowhood, want, and woe. Desolation, distress, and death had visited her, and with a broken heart she was returning to her native land. This shows that the way of the transgressor is heard. Let us note in this study --

- 1. THE CAUSE.**
- 2. THE CONFESSION.**
- 3. THE CHOICE.**

1. THE CAUSE.

When a backslider returns to his Father's house, there is always a reason. In the story of the prodigal son, Luke 15, there were reasons that caused him to return to his home.

(1) **A Divine awakening.** "*He came to himself.*" It was like a man awakening out of a sleep, for the Scripture classes man without GOD as one who is asleep: "*Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.*"

(2) **A revelation of his need.** "*I perish with hunger.*" When a man is awakened to the fact that he is about to perish, a spirit of fear will possess him, and he will begin to look toward his Father's house for help.

(3) **A vision of good.** "*How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare.*" He remembered the bountiful supply and the table well spread with good things to eat. Naomi, likewise, remembered the bountiful harvest in days of old, the feasts of the Lord that were held in the temple, and the great Day of Atonement on which Israel's sins of the coming year were canceled. She, like the prodigal, was reflecting over the past years, and as a result we find "*she went forth out of the place.*" That, however, was not the main cause for her return. In the first verse of this study we will find three reasons which brought it about, (v. 6), namely:

- A. THE COMMUNICATION.**
- B. THE VISITATION.**
- C. THE PRESENTATION.**

A. THE COMMUNICATION. "*She had heard in the country of Moab.*" In the land where she was awakened, a message came to her from some source, for she heard that the Lord had visited

His people in Bethlehem-Judah. This expresses her great need. She said, "I am hungry and in poverty, but GOD hath visited His people in giving them bread. I will arise; I will meet the issue; I will leave Moab and return to Bethlehem, the house of bread." Someone, unknown to the readers of the Scriptures, brought the message. No doubt, he received his reward for bringing the gospel of good news. GOD has had faithful messengers in all ages to tell men that there is bread in Bethlehem. Someone with a burden brought this truth to a triplet of widows in the country of Moab.

B. THE VISITATION. "*The Lord had visited his people.*" This quotation of Scripture should lead us to the New Testament where Zacharias, filled with the HOLY SPIRIT, prophesied saying, "*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.*" (Luke 1:68). Here it states that the object of the visitation was to redeem His people. The thought in GOD's mind from before the foundation of the world was redemption. Zacharias continues, telling Who this Visitor is: "*whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*" (vs. 78-79). The Visitor takes on the name "*sunrising*, and the world, which sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, was blessed with sunrise when JESUS CHRIST, the Son of Righteousness, the Bread of Life, was born in Bethlehem's manger. He can guide the feet into the way of **peace**; this corresponds to the song the angelic hosts sang that night, "**Peace on earth; good will to men.**" Likewise, aged Simeon, after holding the Babe (JESUS) in his arms, could say, "*Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.*" "*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (Romans 5:1)...

C. THE PRESENTATION. "*In giving them bread.*" (Ruth 1:6). Here is the thought of presentation. It says "*giving them bread*" -- not selling it or allowing them to work for it. It was a free gift of GOD. The giving of this bread in Bethlehem-Judah reminds us of the coming of the true Bread from Heaven as CHRIST later claimed Himself to be, "*I am that bread of life.*" (John 6:48). We find bread is a figure of life. When CHRIST was born in Bethlehem, it was GOD's gift, the true Bread from Heaven, to a lost world. Some thirty years later, it was broken on the Cross, and on the Day of Pentecost it was handed out through the HOLY SPIRIT to a lost world, giving: (1) light to those who sit in darkness, (2) food to those who die from hunger, (3) freedom to those who dwell in bondage, (4) riches to those who live in poverty, (5) peace to those possessed with fear, (6) life to those who are in death, and (7) hope to those who dwell in misery. Since then true messengers have been giving the message to Moab, to Babylon, and to Egypt, telling the strangers and fatherless that there is bread in Bethlehem. The message that Naomi heard, she believed, and so immediately bade good-bye to Moab and, with Orpah and Ruth, her daughters-in-law, started on her lonely march to the country which GOD had visited.

2. THE CONFESSION. With the return of every backslider, there must be confession. The prodigal son confessed to his father, "*I have sinned.*" Without confession, repentance is not genuine. It is hard for the natural man to humble himself and pray the prayer of the publican, "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*" The Scriptures teach that if man will confess and forsake his sin, he will find mercy. In my ministry, I find that it is much harder for backsliders to get back into relationship and fellowship with GOD than for an out-and-out sinner who has never been converted. The reason is the backslider has sinned against light. The greater degree of light a sinner has the harder it usually is for him to find GOD. This can be proved by the way the Jews and Gentiles received the HOLY GHOST. The Jews, who were in the covenant and were

children of promise, had to tarry ten days (some teach seven) for the outpouring of the HOLY SPIRIT, (Acts 2), but the Gentiles, who were afar off, having little light and no hope in the world, received the HOLY GHOST while Peter was yet speaking. (Acts 10). In the latter case, there was no tarrying, supplication, or waiting on GOD, but while Peter was bringing the message, the HOLY SPIRIT came upon them in like manner as on the Jews at Pentecost. Thus, the Jews could not claim that they had any supernatural manifestations that the Gentiles did not have.

After Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth were some distance from Moab. Naomi tried to induce her daughters-in-law to return to their native land, (v. 8), praying that the Lord might deal kindly with them and grant them rest in the houses of their husbands. Then she kissed them, and they wept bitterly saying, "*Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.*" (v. 10). Again, Naomi tried to persuade them to return and then confesses --

A. HER HOPELESSNESS.

B. HER HELPLESSNESS.

C. HER HAPLESSNESS.

A. HER HOPELESSNESS. She asked them the question, "*Why will ye go with me?*" (v. 11). "I am too old to have more sons. Would you want to wait that you might unite with them in marriage in order to restore the sacred seed-line and redeem back the lost property?" This was the thought that Naomi had in mind, and it grieved her to think her daughters-in-law were left in such a condition with no kinsman to redeem the estate in Bethlehem. She, a widow in want and woe, was stripped of all her possessions, going back over the lonely road to her father's house. What a picture of repentance!

B. HER HELPLESSNESS. "*It grieveth me much for your sakes.*" (v. 13). She grieves much over the situation because she feels that she is responsible for the fate of the two girls. By this statement she acknowledges, "I am the sinner, but you are the sufferers. I have disobeyed GOD in bringing my sons to the land of Moab where they intermarried against His commandments. *Because of this, the hand of the LORD is upon me; it grieves me for your sakes.*" This shows that no man liveth or dieth to himself. He either helps to take men to Heaven or helps to drag them down to hell. Your life either lifts your loved ones, neighbors, and friends, or causes them to drift farther from GOD. I was saved nineteen years ago. It was several years before any of my relatives were saved, but in the past six years I have had the privilege of seeing two sisters, two brothers, one brother-in-law, one nephew, one niece, and several other relatives brought to the Lord, most of them directly through my own ministry. Beloved, if you are living in the realm of grace, you cannot help but lead your friends to a higher life. Many children are not saved because their parents do not live close enough to GOD. Had Naomi stayed in the land of Bethlehem, it might have spared Orpah and Ruth many sorrows, and, likewise, if people would remain in fellowship and relationship with GOD, it might spare them and others of their family much distress and grief. One more thought is worthy of our comment: Naomi was ready to shoulder the blame. Many backsliders will blame someone else for their failures, but in reality no one is to blame but themselves.

C. HER HAPLESSNESS. This means unhappiness. "*That the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.*" (v. 13). Did you ever see anyone prosper while the **hand of the LORD** was against

him? Would you rather be in the hollow of His hand or have His hand against you? What a thought -- "**the hand of the LORD!**" Let us notice "*the hand of the Lord*" in the following three cases.

(1) In the case of Elijah. When he stood before Ahab and Jehoshaphat, they requested him to prophesy the outcome of the battle with the Moabites. So he called for a minstrel, and it says, as the minstrel played, "*the hand of the Lord came **upon** him.*" Here you will notice the hand of the LORD **upon** Elijah in revelation, instructing him. GOD planned to give Israel victory in the battle as foretold by Elijah: "*And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.*"

(2) In the case of the disciples who were scattered as a result of the persecution of Stephen. They traveled to Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word of GOD, and the Scripture says, "*The hand of the Lord was **with** them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.*" (Acts 11:21). Here you will notice the hand of the Lord **with** them in service or soul-winning. A great number believed and turned to the faith because the disciples were going forth in the strength of the Lord. In fact, that is the only way of achieving successful soul-winning. That which is done by human efforts and through human accomplishments is not a success. What we need in soul-winning as well as in every department of the work of GOD is the HOLY SPIRIT in our lives.

(3) In the case of Naomi when she acknowledged that the hand of the Lord was **against** her. (Ruth 1:13). Thus we see the hand of the Lord may be **upon** man, **with** man, or **against** man. It is possible for the hand that was wounded for our redemption to be against us. Naomi realized that the hand of the Lord was not only against her, but in the superlative degree was heavily against. Markers on the graves of her husband and two boys and by the fact that there was no kinsman to carry on the seed-line or redeem the lost estate of Bethlehem-Judah nor a bread-earner for her daughter-in-law or herself all showed that the hand of the Lord was heavily against her. They were strangers now in the old form of worship and were not in fellowship with GOD. What could she do in this dilemma? There was only one help. She must humbly seek the mercy of the Lord JEHOVAH, forsake the idolatrous country of Moab, make a complete separation, and go back to the place from which she came. Thus we have seen Naomi in her hopelessness, helplessness, and haplessness.

III. THE CHOICE

Why did Naomi try to induce the two widows, Orpah and Ruth, to return to their own land? I believe the lesson we should learn from this is that every soul will be tested to see if they will follow the Lord on the basis of pure love for Him. Those who follow the profession of Christianity only because of their relatives, because of an obligation to their friends, or for the sake of pleasing their company will be converts of small value and short duration. If Orpah and Ruth insisted on going with her to Bethlehem, Naomi would not have them go on her account but purely in love for GOD. She would have them make it their deliberate choice and count the cost of leaving Moab and going to Bethlehem. Oh, if men who start for Heaven would first consider the separation that GOD demands, the persecution which may be involved, and, in the

face of that, make a final surrender, there would be more folks enduring to the end. This truth JESUS desired to present to the young man who came to Him and said, "*Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.*" JESUS, to test the validity of the young man's statement, said, "*Foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*" (Luke 9:57-58). In the same manner, Naomi deals with her daughters-in-law.

Orpah returned to her **relatives** and to her **religion**. "*Thy sister in law is gone back unto her people (relatives), and unto her gods (religion).*" (v. 15). There are certain conditions that must be met by those coming to JESUS CHRIST for the remission of their sins. Two of these are the giving up of **relatives** and the surrendering of **religion**. How often **relatives** have hindered people from going with GOD. A wife, a husband, a brother, a sister, or some other member of the family is often the influential factor in the lives making the wrong decision. Likewise, it is difficult for many to give up their **religion**, religion without salvation. Yes, many are church members and through baptism or confirmation have been so from the first few months of their lives, but they have never been born again. One of the hardest things in the world is to get a person to give up a false religion or a religion with no life or spirituality. So Orpah and Ruth were tested to see whether they were ready to give up **relatives** and **religion**. JESUS said, "*So likewise, whosoever be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*" (Luke 14:33). Besides these, there are other reasons why people do not make a complete surrender, such as social prestige, the riches of this world, the opinions of people, the separation demanded, and other things too numerous to mention.

There are six items in Ruth's decision. These will be studied in couplets.

- (1) "*Whither thou goest, I will go*" and "*where thou lodgest, I will lodge.*"
- (2) "*Thy people shall be my people.*" and "*thy God shall be my God.*"
- (3) "*Where thou diest, will I die.*" and "*there will I be buried.*"

Her consecration could go no farther than the grave, for without Divine life one has no hope beyond the realm. Nevertheless, her consecration was complete as far as it could go, for there was no provision made for returned to Moab, and according to her statement, nothing but death could separate them. There are six items in this decision -- one short of the number seven, the seventh being provided by the resurrection of CHRIST. The man or woman "*in CHRIST*, having eternal life, can look beyond the grave and see "A land that is fairer than day; and by faith we can see it afar." Let us view these three couplets in the following order:

A. HER SUBMISSION. "*Whither thou goest, I will go*" and "*where thou lodgest, I will lodge.*" Her surrender was so complete that she desired to walk in the footsteps of another. "*Whither thou goest, I will go*" (v. 16). In like manner, the natural consequence of salvation will be a desire to walk in the footsteps of JESUS and to follow where He leads us. It may seem hard at times, but it is the pathway that leads to discipleship, as seen in the life of CHRIST. After thirty-three years of earthly trials, hardships, misunderstandings, persecutions, and finally death, He was raised to the right hand of the Throne of GOD. JESUS said, "*He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me.*" Likewise, Ruth left the land of the curse for the land of the covenant.

"*Where thou lodgest, I will lodge*" is the second condition under the heading, "Submission." She

has completely renounced all freedom of choice and commits herself into the care and keeping of another. Where Naomi lodged, she desired to lodge. Why? That she might have communion. Our lodgment may not be the best here on earth, but if we have JESUS, it will be a paradise. Ruth made no demands as to the place where she was to lodge. Her one and great desire was that she might be in the company of the one to whom she had committed herself. Likewise, we as Christians, regardless of the place where we must lodge, desire the companionship and presence of JESUS more than anything else. We may have like Jacob of old, a stone for a pillow, but we are awakened to find that GOD is in the place. We can sing with the poet of old --

A Tent or a cottage, why should I care?
They're building a palace for me over there!

To lodge with Him here means that we shall dwell with Him hereafter. Ruth may be classed with those in Revelation who "*follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*" (Revelation 14:4). Her whole future life was veiled, but her faith and confidence held fast in one whom she knew would lead the way aright. If she lodged with Naomi, the responsibility of her support and her keeping would be in the hands of the one whom she desired to follow. Likewise, the believer who yields completely to CHRIST may look to Him as the source of his supply.

B. HER ACCEPTANCE. "*Thy people shall be my people.*" and "*thy God shall be my God*" (v. 16). This meant a separation from all her old associates and an **acceptance** of a people whom she had never known. For this act Boaz compliments her and says, "*It hath been fully 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.*" (Ruth 2:11). Between the people of the world and the followers of CHRIST, there is a line of demarcation, for GOD's people are not of the world though they live within its sphere. As in the case of Israel and the Egyptians on the other side there is light; there can be no affinity. The connection links of the former fellowship are severed when we come to CHRIST. Ruth's definite decision proclaimed her severance from Moab and all its idolatrous worship.

She went a step farther and said "*thy God shall be my God.*" This brings her into the realm of worship. The idols of Moab are left behind and she, like the Thessalonians, "*have turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God*" (I Thessalonians 1:9). She makes this a personal matter and says, "*He shall be my God.*" She wanted a personal GOD for propitiation, power, protection, and provision. David made a similar statement when he said, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*" He embraces Him as his own personal shepherd. From now on, Israel's GOD was to be Ruth's object of worship. What a step of faith on the part of Ruth. So it is with everyone that turns to the Lord JESUS CHRIST and claims Him as his own personal Saviour.

C. HER CONSECRATION. "*Where thou diest, will I die.*" and "*there will I be buried.*" Her consecration went as far as the last breath of her earthly career. Whether this was a few days or of long duration, every moment, every hour, every day, every year was involved in the consecration. She was making a decision that would never be reversed or altered. It meant good-bye to Moab, home, and everything. "*No man,*" says JESUS, "*having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God*" (Luke 9:62). From this we see Ruth was not like

Lot's wife, who looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt, but she set her face steadfastly toward Bethlehem. To follow in the footsteps of CHRIST, to go where He goes, to lodge where He lodges, and to die where He died will lead you to Gethsemane and to Calvary. It will take you up to Golgotha's brow, and there you will see the agony CHRIST endured, the punishment He bore, the separation He chose, and the death He died. Moreover, you will be able to say, "*I am crucified with Christ, His death is my death,*" but you can still go further and say, "*nevertheless, I live, and His life is my life.*" You have the hope of the coming resurrection which is the unmentioned item in Ruth's choice.

The climax of the six items is "*there will I be buried.*" Her love had reached its highest peak and its greatest abandonment. One has said, "The life has been surrendered in blank." She had pursued this earthly life to its farthest goal. Beyond the cemetery her consecration could not go. How unlike the natural man was she, who thinks of this life only, who lives as if it terminated in death, seldom thinking of the life beyond the grave. However, a more thorough, complete, and deeper consecration could not be made, for she did not want even her bones, the remains of her earthly career, to be buried in Moab. She desired her remains to lie on GOD's territory, in Canaan's possession. Likewise, Joseph requested in his departing hour that his embalmed body be taken from Egypt and buried in Canaan (Hebrews 11:22). Hundreds of years later, Moses took the bones of Joseph with him as he crossed the Red Sea on his journey to Canaan (Exodus 13:19). A consecration so complete and thorough that the world (Egypt) and cold formality (Moab) could have no claims on even the final remains of her earthly house is certainly worthy of comment.

THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH

A typical picture is seen in the case of Abraham purchasing a burying place for his wife, Sarah (Genesis 23). In the preceding chapter, verses 20 to 24, Abraham had heard from his native land, Chaldea, how Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, had given birth to several children. Having heard this recent message about his kindred, it was natural that he should desire to bury Sarah among his own people. Yet for certain reasons, Abraham chose to bury his dead in a strange land apart from his kindred and home circles. The thought of a future resurrection from the grave was one of the strong doctrines embraced by dear old Abraham, the man of faith. This is shown when he made preparation to offer up his son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah. He did it on the grounds "*that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he raised him in a figure*" (Hebrews 11:19). So in purchasing this cave as the resting place for the bodies of himself and family, his faith challenged death and said, "*we shall live again,*" looking forward to a coming resurrection. Palestine with its fertility and abundance of riches could have provided for Abraham a permanent home, a place in which he could settle and abide throughout the remainder of his earthly career. However, he chose rather to dwell in tents, as a stranger and pilgrim, having no certain dwelling place that he might look forward for the eternal inheritance that GOD had promised him as a reward for his step of faith and obedience. Likewise, we who renounce the spirit and life of this world declare with Abraham that we seek a city whose builder and maker is GOD.

But why should Abraham bury his loved ones in Canaan's land apart from his kindred and home surroundings? By this Abraham expressed his faith in GOD and in the coming resurrection, at which time he would be heir to the land of promise which GOD promised him upon leaving Chaldea. This act was equivalent to saying that he believed this country would remain

perpetually the country for his children and his people. He had lived as a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, had abandoned his fatherland, and had refrained from buying land or houses in Canaan. The first property then that Abraham had as his own possession was the grave of Machpelah. This was a testimony that he claimed the land of Canaan, which GOD promised him, as his future possession. It was property that he could not exchange, sell, or abandon; it was his as long as the dead remained within its possession. He refused an offer of the children of Heth to use one of their sepulchers. This had to be his own property, purchased by his own hand at the gate of the city where all business was transacted in the presence of the people of the land so that they might witness to the fact that Abraham had bought with a stipulated amount of silver the burying place which was to be his own possession as long as the sacred dust remained within its realms. This transaction had to be recorded on the records of that time so that no usurper or dishonest landgrabber could come forth and claim the possession as his own. This had to belong to Abraham without question or thought.

Four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant, was the price of the burying ground (Genesis 23:16). Silver throughout the Scripture speaks of atonement or redemption. In Exodus 30:11-16, we find the Lord's instructions to Moses regarding the half shekel of silver which the Israelites were to bring to the priest, who, in turn, would scrutinize the coin to see that it was not a counterfeit but a genuine coin according to the shekel of the sanctuary. When this was done and the silver shekel passed upon, his name was recorded in the records of Israel, and he was numbered with the ransomed. This shekel was called the atonement money (v. 16), which was the ransom price for the soul (v. 12). This gives us the thought of redemption. In turn, this money was all used in the construction of the tabernacle. It went to form the foundation of the tabernacle proper on which the boards and bars rested. This is typical of the House of GOD which stands upon the ransom price of the redemption of JESUS CHRIST. No wonder the song writer said:

"On CHRIST, the solid ROCK, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

Peter referred to this atonement money by way of contrast when he wrote, "*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ*" (I Peter 1:18-19). He, no doubt, mentioned atonement money, which was, as we just stated, the price of redemption, to show how this atonement money pointed forward to the time when CHRIST would, with His own blood, be the ransom price for our redemption. Thirty shekels of silver was the price for which JESUS was sold by the hand of Judas. The word "*silver*" is used for the first time in the Scriptures in connection with father Abraham -- the man of faith. The first time silver was used for the purchasing of any material product or land was in the case of Abraham buying from the children of Heth the sepulcher for Sarah, himself, and family. This was to remind us that a life of peace and rest beyond the grave through the hope of the coming resurrection, when the graves shall give up their dead, can be based only on the price of redemption.

Therefore, on the grounds of death and resurrection, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Hebrews 11:9), became heirs of the Holy land in which their sacred remains now lie, waiting for the blowing of the trumpet when the dead in CHRIST shall rise to claim their inheritance, which was promised them by the GOD Who was not ashamed to be called their GOD (v. 16). People who live only

for this life cannot and do not please GOD. He is ashamed to be identified with them. All of man -- spirit, soul, and body -- must look forward to the period beyond the resurrection. Ere long Abraham and his descendants will enter into their inheritance of one thousand years of peace on this earth, Palestine being the capital and headquarters. Because of this anticipation, Abraham purchased for himself a burying place far from his native land of Chaldea so that when his sacred remains of dust shall rise from corruption, he would stand on the very territory that was given as his inheritance. The land of Canaan was promised to Abraham as his possession for his faith and obedience to GOD, but the Scriptures teach that he died in the faith, not having received the promises or the inheritance but having seen them afar off (Hebrews 11:13). There can be only one possible outcome, that is, Abraham will yet receive this inheritance that GOD has promised him.

This brings us back to the thought of Ruth where she says, "*Where thou diest, will I die*" and *there will I be buried.*" The seventh unmentioned item of Ruth's consecration may be embraced in these words, "*For if we be dead with him (CHRIST) we shall also live with him*" (II Timothy 2:11). "*Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*" (I Thessalonians 5:10). When Naomi saw that she was "*steadfastly minded to go with her,*" (Ruth 1:18), she was silent and was convinced that Ruth had made the choice, not because of human ties but on the grounds of faith that there was bread (CHRIST) in Bethlehem. May many others make the same clear-cut decision and, as Ruth, be satisfied and finally unite in marriage with Boaz, the type of CHRIST of Bethlehem.

~ end of chapter 2 ~

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