

~ Welcome to the Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. One cannot profess belief in the Bible as the Word of God if one is not learned in its contents. At least a basic understanding of every principle, doctrine, the geography, the theology, the Mosaic Law, the kings of Israel, the kings of Judah, the prophets that prophesied to those kings and at what time, the correlation of the nations around and about Israel, the historical Books, the poetic books - and so much more - will dictate whether or not you truly believe and trust the entirety of Holy Writ. I dare say: most self-professing believers do not genuinely accept the Bible as the Word of God; with all manner of perversion and apostasy ensuing. This section of Scripture is, quite frankly, where most people part ways with Jesus.

You will not learn the Bible by guessing at it, friends. You will not learn the kings of Judah and Israel by thumbing through the Bible; and you can never know the Lord Jesus Christ until you grow in the grace and knowledge of all those things I just mentioned, because Christ is all of those things! There is no shortcut to learning the Word of God. I know there are quick little seminars that promise to teach you the Bible in a few weeks or a year; well, make a note, that ain't happening. There is no way. This so-called safari is not just some intellectual exercise. This should be a life changing educational program that results in a decision to accept, learn about, understand and LOVE the Lord Jesus Christ in obedience – and forsake the ways of this world. If you have stumbled across my teaching, it was no accident – the Holy Spirit is calling you to walk closer with Him today.

This is our second report from the “brochure of beauty” we find in the delightful book of Ruth. Our previous report set forth the love aspect of our redemption by God, Who we only love because He first loved us, and it developed the salvation relationship that is our love affair with Christ Jesus. In this first chapter, we are still in Moab where we left Naomi – a.k.a. Mary Sunshine – crying by the side of the road with her two daughters-in-law in our last report. The men in their lives have all died and Naomi is going

home to Bethlehem in Judah. We divided the book of Ruth geographically in the last leg of our expedition and, if you did not read that report, I suggest you go back and read it now; along with the whole book of Ruth – it's only four chapters.

We saw a family who lived in Bethlehemjudah leave that wonderful place of blessing and go down into Moab – God's garbage can. We're considering a prodigal family, and we saw them receive a whipping in Moab; just as the prodigal son in Luke received his whipping in the far country. We also considered the meanings of the names of these people; so, our first report was very, very important. The two sons of Elimelech married two maidens from Moab, which was totally against the Mosaic Law. Well, when you become a prodigal person, the only steps you can take are downward steps.

So, the death of the three men of the house left Naomi with two little foreign widows as daughters-in-law. Naomi has explained what it would mean for these two if they went back to Israel with her. Being foreigners, their lives in Israel would not have been good. Naomi lowered the boom on these two girls as she explained their lives would be utterly unbearable. For instance, there would be no prospect of marriage for either one of them in Israel. The Israelites were forbidden to intermarry – a Moabite woman was out of the question for an Israelite male. Second, the future held nothing but perpetual poverty. See, Naomi had lost her property when she left Israel with Elimelech. His property was in his family, but he was dead – so she was o-u-t! There may be a kinsman redeemer for Naomi, but that wouldn't mean anything to Ruth or Orpah whatsoever. So, Naomi wisely tells these two they should stay and remarry amongst their own people. That's when they all took out their handkerchiefs and had another good cry....

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***10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.***

**11 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?**

**12 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;**

**13 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.**

~ At first, both women say they will return with Naomi. However, as Naomi explains their future, she also blames the Lord for the trouble that has befallen her. Well, the Lord wasn't the problem; the problem is that Naomi was out of the will of God, and she was being severely punished in Moab. Perpetual widowhood in Israel was tantamount to a death sentence because it usually meant perpetual and abject poverty. That would be the price to be paid if these two girls went back to Israel with Naomi....

**14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.**

~ This, my friends, is the stark example of that which is genuine repentance and that which is NOT genuine repentance. Most people think repentance means to shed a few tears for what they have done and that's the end. See, Orpah shed as many tears as Ruth did – maybe more. Orpah may have been emotional, but Ruth isn't letting go! This is the difference between counterfeit Christians and truly born-again believers. The word repentance means "to change your mind." The Greek word for repentance is "metanoia." Tears may or may not be the byproduct of repentance; but it certainly is not a requirement.

Many people are highly emotional, but it doesn't mean anything; they can shed tears during a sad song or movie as easily as they can for their sins. Those types of tears don't mean anything, friends. These people can sure

put on a crying production, and they can make some unearthly noises. They never have any power in the Holy Spirit and God really doesn't mean anything to them - but down they go every Sunday to an altar, crying their eyes out. Orpah wept with them and kissed Naomi, but it didn't mean anything.

*2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death ~*

I see many evangelists who love to make the "congregation" weep. People come down the aisle to the altar bawling their eyes out until their faces are swollen. They leave the service with eyes so red you would think they were drunk. They go away thinking they have experienced real repentance. If you ask them how many tears are required before you are genuinely saved, they get a little perturbed at you. Of course, they are so totally ignorant of the Word of God they don't have the answer to retort – all they can do is become angry and insulting. Personally, I enjoy provoking them – and I know that's not nice – guess what? – I don't care – it's just TOO BAD – for THEM!

Naturally, they call me absurd at that point, completely blind to their own absurdity. Unfortunately, some people are so stupid they don't even know they are stupid! Well, if crying tears is repentance for them I think they should know how many tears are required. These people are ALWAYS very legalistic anyways; so, I would think that THEY would want to know when they have met God's requirement. See, if a dozen tears are required for genuine repentance then, if you only squeeze out eleven tears, you better muster up some more emotion or you have failed God! Again, they call that absurd – and it sure is! No, repentance means to go in a new direction; it means to turn around! Today, all the repentance that is required of us just happens to be all wrapped up in faith – genuine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. See, if you turn to the Lord Jesus in honesty, friends, you are going to repent of something, because you just cannot turn to Christ without turning away from something.

That is how Paul explained it to the Philippian jailer; and Paul also lifted up the Thessalonians by telling them they had “turned to Christ from idols.” That’s how the church at Thessalonica came to serve the True and Living God as they waited for the return of the Son of God from Heaven. When Paul preached Christ in Thessalonica, they were only familiar with worshipping at the pagan temple of idolatry. Turning to Christ is faith – turning FROM the idols is true repentance. Neither comes first and neither supersedes the other in importance – you can argue that all you want to – but – you simply cannot have faith without repentance. See, if you haven’t turned away from something, then you haven’t turned to God, my beloved.

So, Orpah kisses Naomi good-bye and exits the pages of Scriptures stage left; never to be heard from again! She disappears into the silence of the centuries, and we can only assume she returned to her people and joined them in their filthy perversions and false gods the Moabites loved so dearly. I’m sure she remarried and had more children....

***15 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.***

***16 And Ruth said, Intreat 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:***

***17 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.***

***~ Seven points in the decision Ruth made to go with Naomi; and these are CRITICAL to comprehend:***

***(1) Ruth decides to go wherever Naomi was going – period!***

***(2) Wherever Naomi came to live in Israel – that’s where Ruth was going to be found! This was not just a convenience to get into the land.***

*(3) Ruth wanted Naomi's people to become her people. Ruth was prepared to be ostracized in Israel.*

*(4) Naomi knew God and Ruth wanted to know that God – the True and Living God – not the heathen and pagan idols of Moab. I think she knew them; and they were unsatisfactory.*

*(5) Wherever Naomi was to die is where Ruth was also going to die. This is very important as it begins to develop truth number six; it furthers the hope for the Old Testament saint that we closely examined in Genesis. Remember, Jacob insisted on being buried in Israel – NOT in Egypt. The same was true of Joseph who insisted his bones be taken up from the land of Egypt and not left there.*

*(6) Ruth was determined to be buried where Naomi was laid to rest. The future of the Old Testament saint rests upon being resurrected into the land that will ultimately be the Kingdom of Heaven established here on earth at some point in our future. Israel. That's Ruth's hope.*

*(7) A vow unto death is made by Ruth to Naomi by saying if anything but death do them part then the Lord should forsake her.*

Those are seven tremendous truths to grasp and hold tightly, safari friends. Naomi knew Ruth was sincere and serious now....

***18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.***

***19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?***

~ Naomi had left Israel so long ago a prosperous woman, having a husband's arm to hold, and two sons she loved at her side. Now, these people who knew her way back when just can't believe the state she is currently in. The men in the family are all dead, and she has a little foreign

girl tagging along to a place she didn't belong! I can see them all scratching their heads now and asking themselves what happened? The poverty of this stricken pair is more than apparent....

***20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.***

~ Alright, "Mara" means "bitter" – but God hadn't dealt treacherously nor bitterly with Naomi; it was Naomi who had ventured out with the prodigal family, and she is now returned from her whipping in the far country. The whole family took a severe beating down there in Moab, and here they are beaten – but not altogether destroyed. God was still faithful – even though disobedience had been the family plot. Well, Naomi has no one to blame but herself, but she ISN'T placing the blame on herself - and she sure isn't confessing her sins. Well, you don't have to be an expert in mathematics to make the calculus of the next verse. There is a wide divergence everyone knows between "full" and "empty!" Naomi left with everything a woman could want. She returns now with NOTHING a woman wants. Everything was utterly lost in the far country of Moab....

***21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?***

***22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.***

~ The bright spot in this account is the Spirit of God refusing to accept her self-appointed name. See, we can mope around crying about the consequences of our sins, but God isn't going to change anything as a result. When we get away from God, we will become empty – every time. Remember, God told Joshua, who was crying for his nation, "stand up, Israel has sinned." However, as we move along in Ruth, we are also going to see some wonderful things in store for both Ruth and Naomi. At this time, the beginning of the barley harvest had begun; and that's a good time to

return home, too. The famine that caused Naomi to flee in the first place is over and the land has a good crop coming out of the ground. After this harvest, there's going to be a wheat harvest. That lovely interlude brings us to chapter two where we find ourselves in the fields of Boaz....

## II

***1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.***

***2 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.***

~ As our safari continues with Ruth from here, we're going to get an insight into the depths of dire poverty these two women were facing as they returned to Israel. Four strange laws will become our focus. We have examined all of these laws before, but we have not seen them in action; and we cannot know them until they are impressed upon us in action.

Verse one tells us Boaz is a kinsman, which is a principle we developed in the Mosaic Hebrew law "Goel" – the law of the kinsman redeemer. Boaz was a mighty man of wealth, which also means he was a mighty man of the law. Boaz knows the Levitical Law quite well, as we shall see. Boaz was also a mighty man of war and was likely away fighting when these two women first rolled back into town from Moab.

Verse two can be summed up as, "... they were pretty poor!" Ruth, of course, is a poor stranger in the land. Gleaning in the field was only permitted in the poverty program of God which He wrote into the Mosaic Law to prevent strangers in the land from starving to death.

*Leviticus 19: 9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. 10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou*



*gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God ~*

*Leviticus 23:22 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 gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God ~*

God requires His people to be generous to the poor and to the stranger. However, the poor and the stranger didn't line up for a charitable hand-out; they had to go out there and get it themselves the hard way. They would be taken care of by working. Well, we're going to leave Ruth looking for a place to glean today. The field she just happens to pick and turn into determines her destiny from here. If Ruth doesn't choose the right field, the wise men won't be coming to Bethlehem because Jesus won't be born over a thousand years later. This section of Scripture just happens to be of utmost importance ~

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