

RUTH, A TYPE OF CHRIST'S GENTILE BRIDE

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : Ruth 1:8, 14-22

LESSON 15 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16)..

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

Ruth 1:8

⁸ And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

Ruth 1:14-22

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

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.

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?*

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

²¹ I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again

[BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

I Naomi's Return

1 Naomi purposed to return to the land of Israel when she heard that the Lord had visited His people again,

Ruth 1:6

⁶ Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.

Psalm 111:5

⁵ He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

John 6:31-35

³¹ Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

³² Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

³³ For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

³⁴ Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

1 Timothy 6:8

⁸ And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

2 The two daughters-in-law of Naomi resolved to go with their mother- in-law,

Ruth 1:7

⁷ 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.

3 Naomi tested the intent of her daughters-in-law for going into a strange land, Ruth 1:8

II Steadfastly Minded

1 Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and returned to the land of Moab, Ruth 1:14

Exodus 18:27

²⁷ And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

Matthew 19:22

²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

2 Timothy 4:10

¹⁰ For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

2 Ruth cleaved to Naomi, though Naomi tried to persuade her to go back, Ruth 1:15;

Deuteronomy 4:4

⁴ But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God *are* alive every one of you this day.

Proverbs 18:24

²⁴ A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a

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.

brother.

John 6:66-69

⁶⁶ From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

⁶⁷ Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

⁶⁸ Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

⁶⁹ And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

3 Ruth answered with an outstanding statement of fidelity to Naomi and her God, Ruth 1:16, 17;

2 Kings 2:2-6

² And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said *unto him*, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

³ And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

⁴ And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

⁵ And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

⁶ And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

Acts 21:12-14

¹² And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

¹³ Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁴ And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

4 When Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go, she left speaking about the matter, Ruth 1:18

III The Reception at Bethlehem

1 All the people of the city were moved with wonder when the pilgrims arrived, Ruth 1:19;

Matthew 21:10-11

¹⁰ And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

¹¹ And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

2 Naomi recounted the things that had befallen her during her stay in Moab, Ruth 1:20, 21

Psalms 119:67

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

Hebrews 12:9-11

⁹ Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

3 The barley harvest was just beginning when Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem, Ruth 1:22

NOTES:

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34, 35). These were the words that Peter addressed to the household of Cornelius, a Gentile; but they could have been spoken just as truly of Ruth, the Moabitess, over a thousand years before Peter's declaration. God saw the spiritually hungry heart of Ruth in the land of Moab, far away from the people of God; but a means was found whereby she could hear the story of Israel's God, and her heart could be fed with the "true bread from heaven" (John 6:32). When Ruth heard of the way to serve the true and living God, she received it with willing heart and left her own ways and people to follow that true God. Thus Ruth became an early type of the Gentile Bride of Christ.

Return to Israel

The family of Elimelech fled from the land of Israel because a severe famine had come upon the land. They came to the land of Moab to sojourn; but within a few years, Naomi, the wife of Elimelech, found herself left alone. Soon after her husband's death, Naomi's two sons had married women of Moab; but the sons did not survive their father very many years. This country that the family of Elimelech had desired to be a haven had suddenly become a sepulcher to them.

Naomi was truly the shining light in the family of Elimelech. Though in a strange land, she held her integrity and confidence in God. Without doubt, she told her daughters-in-law the stirring history of the Children of Israel, and the mighty acts that God had performed in behalf of His people. The call of God's Spirit was presented to the hearts of these two women, and when Naomi determined to return to her homeland, they seemed willing and eager to journey to the land of Israel and to the worship of Israel's God in answer to that call.

In answering the call of God to her heart, Ruth was among the first of the Gentiles who came to, God. Today the ambassadors for Christ are commanded to go into all the world and preach the Gospel and witness to the truth of God's holy Word. No nationality or race is barred from God; all may come to Him, because Jesus "hath broken down the middle wall of partition" between the Jew and the Gentile (**Ephesians 2:11-22**)
¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; ¹² That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; ¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; ¹⁶ And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: ¹⁷ And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. ¹⁹ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the

household of God; ²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; ²¹ In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: ²² In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.). All living men, everywhere, are called to become members of the Bride of Christ; but, sad to say, not many are heeding that wondrous call. Ruth was saved because she was willing to forsake all else in order to win Christ.

The Pilgrim's Pathway

As these women went on their way toward Naomi's homeland, Naomi began to consider the consequences of the choice her daughters-in-law were making. They were Moabites; would they really be welcome in her land? Naomi had no sustenance with which to support them; would it not be easier for them to find food and shelter in their own land and among their own kindred? Naomi very tenderly brought these things to the attention of her daughters-in-law, and urged them to return to their own place. Both repeated their intention of going with Naomi to the land of Israel, but Naomi brought other things to their notice that had not been mentioned before. Orpah, the wife of Chinon, decided that the land of Israel did not offer all that she had expected; so she returned to her land and to her people. Ruth, however, had another spirit, and could not be persuaded to turn back. The Bride of Christ will never be deterred by the temporary hard places encountered, or by the seeming attractions or comforts of a temporal world.

How many people have started out in the Christian way, and in the first burst of enthusiasm have gone a long way toward Heaven. Like the meteors of the night sky, they run very swiftly, shine very brightly, and leave a great trail of light in their wake; but they are soon gone. Meteors soon burn themselves out; and people who trust in their own resources, rather than in the power and might of God, soon find themselves "burned out" — without power or will to continue in the Gospel way.

As Naomi pointed out the worst things that her daughters-in-law could expect in the land of Israel, so Jesus would have all His disciples carefully consider the hardest things that they might encounter in the way of holiness, and be prepared to meet those things. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Death or Life

The words that sent Orpah back to her people and her gods only strengthened the determination in the heart of Ruth to go all the way to the land of Israel, and to the worship of the true God of whom she had learned through the words and actions of her mother-in-law. The words that became "death unto death" for Orpah, were "life unto life" for Ruth, who counted not the natural things of life dear unto herself; but with a willingness to forsake all to win the love of the God of Israel, she found the life that was more abundant on earth; and at the end of life here, she found life eternal on the other Shore. The true vision of the Celestial City and the rewards of the Bride of Christ make it easy for the Christian to say, with Paul, that the things of this present life are "weak and beggarly elements."

Orpah did not lack in consideration and love for her mother-in-law. She lifted up her voice and wept at the thought of parting; she kissed her mother-in-law with affection; yet she did not place enough value upon the true religion to leave the false ways of her Moabitish relatives, friends, and gods. She thought only of the immediate future, and did not consider the end of life at all.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). The Bride of Christ must necessarily have the mind of Christ (**1 Corinthians 2:16** ¹⁶ For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. **1 Peter 4:1** ¹ Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin). Jesus had very little in common with the world, and calls His Bride to separate herself from the world. The price of forsaking worldly associates, pleasures, and ambitions may seem high to some people, only because the devil blinds them with his lies and beautiful mirages. The devil cannot produce reality; the wages of sin is death.

Declaration of Fidelity

How beautiful is Ruth's declaration of love and fidelity to Naomi and her God. Ruth's first admiration possibly stemmed from the personal character of Naomi, but later Ruth became a partaker of the righteousness of the God that Naomi served. That love for God developed to such an extent that she rebelled at the thought of returning to Moab and its idols, even though Naomi suggested that she do so. Ruth quickly disposed of the temptation, if indeed it can be called that. She burned the last bridge of any probable return to her native land, and thereby widened the gulf that separated her present position from the past loves and associations. She had not the least thought of returning to her former ways, and was very loath even to hear the suggestion. Ruth's firm resolve was like bolting the door against the thief.

Ruth, the type of Christ's Gentile Bride, listened to and was led by the Spirit of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The Bride of Christ today is heeding every request of the Spirit and putting on the robe of fine linen, clean and white: "for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8).

Souls for God

When Naomi saw that Ruth was "stedfastly minded" to go, she left speaking to her about it. Probably this declaration was the very thing that Naomi was searching for from the very start, but Naomi wanted Ruth to really count the cost and come of her own free will and volition. Naomi knew the mission of Israel was to proclaim the message of their covenant with God to the nations round about them and win converts by bringing them into the nation and heritage of Israel. God did not intend that the families of Israel should circulate among the heathen as Elimelech did; but God did intend that the people of Israel should have such a happy relationship with their God that it would attract the peoples of the world to the land of Israel, and then into the same covenant with God that Israel enjoyed. The winning of Ruth, the Gentile, was very much in order and shows the willingness of God to receive the "whosoever," even at that early date.

Winning souls for the Gospel follows very much the same plan that God had for Israel. He does not intend for the Christian to become a part of the world in order to save some; He wants His people to remain separated from the world, and to live such exemplary lives that all who come in contact with them will be compelled to realize that there is a Savior in Heaven who gives power to live the Christian life.

An Awakened Heart

Ruth was received with open arms by the people of Israel and was taken into the family of Judah. She became the wife of

Boaz, and is counted in the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ (**Matthew 1:5** ⁵ And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;). She did everything that was necessary on her part to fulfill the call of God that was presented to her. The Spirit of God came into the heart of Ruth and gave her power to bring forth the fruits of the overcoming life that are indispensable to the life of the Bride of Christ: "love, joy, peace, long- suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23).

Ruth did not receive this change in her life just by chance or through a series of fortunate happenings. She was awakened to the possibilities of serving Israel's God and was determined, in spite of all persuasions to do otherwise, to follow her guiding star to the source of the Light. It can be said of Ruth and of every other Gentile who answers the call to be the Bride of Christ, "Thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree" (Romans 11:24). That good olive tree is our Lord Jesus Christ. "Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:23, 25-27).

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why did the family of Elimelech go into the land of Moab?
- 2 Name the several things that happened to this family while they were in Moab.
- 3 When did Naomi decide to return to the land of Israel?
- 4 Who wanted to go to the land of Israel with Naomi?
- 5 Did Naomi encourage or discourage their going with her?
- 6 What answer did Ruth give to Naomi's words?
- 7 What sort of reception did Naomi and Ruth receive at Bethlehem?
- 8 Why does Ruth stand as a good type of the Gentile Bride of Christ? 9 What people are being called to be the Bride of Christ today?