

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Ten : Ruth's Choosing for Her Goal, Exercising Her Right, Seeking for Her Rest, and Receiving a Reward for God's

I. Overview:

Judges is a book of Israel's miserable history, dark and foul; Ruth is the record of a couple's excellent story, bright and aromatic. Ruth is a book of rest; Christ is rest to the saints in three stages: in the church age the heavenly Christ is the rest to us in our spirit, in the millennial kingdom the overcoming saints share and enjoy His rest, and in the new heaven and new earth Christ will be the rest in the fullest. Ruth, as one who had returned to God from her heathen background, exercises her right to partake of the rich produce of the inheritance of God's elect. The genuine ministers of the New Testament are like Naomi in that they stir up the believers in Christ to love Him as their Bridegroom that they may take Him as their Husband. Ruth gaining reward for God's economy, is that she became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy to bring in the royal house of David for the producing of Christ. Every day of our Christian life should be a continuation of Christ's incarnation, with Christ being brought forth in order to be born into others through our ministering Christ as the Spirit into them.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Compare the two books of Judges and Ruth.

Judges is a book of Israel's miserable history, dark and foul; Ruth is the record of a couple's excellent story, bright and aromatic. The main character in this story is like a lily growing out of brambles and a bright star in the dark night. The book of Ruth speaks of Christ being brought into mankind through incarnation. This is the real rest. Ruth is thus a book of rest.

B. Expound how God got rest.

God rested because He had finished His work and was satisfied. God's glory was manifested because man had His image, and His authority was about to be exercised for the subduing of His enemy, Satan. As long as man expresses God and deals with God's enemy, God is satisfied and can rest. Later, the seventh day was commemorated as the Sabbath.

Day 2 —

A. Explain that Elimelech swerved from the rest in God's economy.

He was in the good land and had a portion of it, and he should have remained there. Remaining in the good land that God has promised and given is the real rest. Elimelech's mistake was to swerve from the ground, the standing, which gave him the opportunity to enjoy the rest in the good land. He swerved from Bethlehem in Judah. Bethlehem, the city of David, was designated as the birthplace of the coming Christ.

B. Explain that Naomi returned from Moab, the country of idolatry.

Naomi returned from Moab, the country of idolatry, to Judah, the land of Immanuel. Naomi returned because she had been stripped by God first of her husband and then of her two sons, leaving her and her two daughters-in-law as widows without children. Naomi returned also because she had heard that Jehovah had visited His people by giving them food.

Day 3 —

A. Expound how Ruth chose and exercised her right.

After Ruth's husband died, she had two choices; remain in Moab or go with Naomi to be a foreigner in Israel. Ruth chose to go to the land of Israel because she probably had heard a great deal concerning God, God's promise, and the good land. She had heard the good news sufficiently for her to make a wonderful choice. After arriving in the land of Israel with Naomi, Ruth exercised her right.

B. Explain that God wanted to bless the children of Israel under a condition.

God wanted to bless the harvest of the Israelites in the good land, but this blessing had a condition, which is that something would be left for the poor. The people would not be allowed to reap completely the corners of their field. However, in the ordinance of the law given by God through Moses regarding reaping, the size of the corners of the field was not specified. The size depended on the landlord's faith in Jehovah. Under God's sovereignty this ordinance seems to have been written for Ruth.

Day 4 —

A. Expound Boaz's word of grace to Ruth.

Ruth asked Boaz, "Why have I found favor in your sight that you regard me, though I am a foreigner?" Boaz replied that all that she had done for her mother-in-law since the death of her husband Elimelech had been made known to him. Boaz not only spoke kindly to Ruth but also showed generosity to her.

B. Explain what Naomi had done for Ruth.

When Ruth told Naomi that she had gleaned in the field of Boaz, Naomi said to her, "Blessed be he of Jehovah, whose lovingkindness has not failed for the living and for the dead." Then Naomi told Ruth that the man was close to them, one of their kinsmen. Naomi's heart was that Ruth would gain Boaz himself as her husband.

Day 5 —

A. Describe in the book of Ruth chapter 3 on Ruth's seeking for her rest.

We need to enjoy Christ to such an extent that we have rest. In order to have rest, we surely need a home. No place can give us as much rest as our home. In chapter 3 Naomi proposed and even pushed to gain a home for Ruth. The steps taken by Ruth correspond to our spiritual experience.

B. Why do we say that the real rest is in our home, the church?

Christ is the Husband in the church. To have a husband is not sufficient. We must also have a home. If we have Christ, enjoy Christ, and experience Christ, yet we do not have the church, we are still homeless. Therefore, we must stress not only Christ as our Husband but also the church as our home. Christ as our Husband and the church as our home are a complete unit.

Day 6 —

A. Explain that Ruth's seeking for her rest was actually for bringing in Christ.

If we consider Matthew 1:5-6 and 16, we will see that Ruth's seeking for her rest was actually for the continuation of the genealogy to bring in Christ. In Ruth 3:12 the first kinsman of Ruth's husband typifies our natural man, who cannot and will not redeem us from the indebtedness (sin) of our old man. Boaz typifies Christ to be our Kinsman, who can redeem us from our sin.

B. Expound Ruth gaining a reward for God's economy.

Ruth gained a redeeming husband, who typifies Christ as the redeeming Husband to the believers. Only Christ can be both our Husband and our Redeemer. Ruth was redeemed from the indebtedness of the dead husband. This typifies being redeemed from the sin of the believers' old man. That kinsman replied, "I cannot redeem it for myself, or else I will mar my own inheritance. You redeem for yourself what I should redeem, for I cannot redeem it"

III. Conclusion:

The Bible reveals God's selection, which is in His mercy, because He will show mercy to whomever He wants to show mercy and mercy on whom he will have mercy. But at the same time it also talks about our choosing which lies in our seeing and knowing with the will. Ruth and Orpah had the same situation; both of them were Moabitess, widows, and under mother-in-law's entreatings, then next was very important to their selection. Orpah chose to go back home and get married in an obscure and unknown way. Ruth's selection was unexpected to all. When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she ceased speaking to her about it. Ruth 1:16-17; Ruth said to Naomi, "Do not entreat me to leave you and turn away from following after you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you dwell, I will dwell; and your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Where you die, I will die; and there will I be buried. Jehovah do so to me, and more as well, if anything but death parts me from you."