



Presenting The Living Word

**Ruth,
the Moabites**

the Lord will give you insight



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The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...
 He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor...
 to heal the broken hearted... to preach
 deliverance to the captives... to preach the
 acceptable year of the Lord.

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The message presented in this booklet is written to help prepare you for the end of the age. It is offered with the knowledge that spiritual truth can't be learned through study. Truth is only understood as it is revealed by the Spirit of Truth. Therefore, "Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you INSIGHT into all this." - 2 Timothy 2:7 NIV

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Ruth, the Moabites

by Eli Miller

The book of Ruth holds much truth for us as we make the transition from one age to another. It focuses primarily around events foreshadowing a present day fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles. The setting is during the time of the judges, perhaps as early as the events of Judges 6:3-6. (This is likely because Boaz was the son of Rahab and Salmon from the Joshua era. See Ruth 4:21 and Mt.1:5)

One of the characteristics of the time of the judges was that "*in those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*" (Judg.21:25) Consequently, "*when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land.*" (Ruth 1:1) Time and again Israel's idolatry had caused God to send neighboring nations to plunder their land, causing them untold misery because of their whoring ways. (see Judg.2:11-23)

Because of the dire situation of the period, "*a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.*" (Ruth 1:1-3)

One of the tragedies of this family's excursion is that they lived in Bethlehem, which means "the house of bread"! This gives us an idea of the state of affairs in the nation when there was a famine in the very place famous for its abundance of bread.

Historically speaking, the famine at the time was literal. However, the book of Ruth is part of the canon of scripture to reveal much more than a historical account in the lineage of Jesus. Though various spiritual applications can be made from this short book, I'll look at it from the perspective of how the Lord has been restoring spiritual truth and bringing forth a firstfruits company of sons in these last days.

After the glorious light and restoration truth the Lord brought to the church through the Antebaptist and Reformation periods, whole denominational "families" of God's people went back into the mixture of "Moab," and spiritually speaking, many died there. This has been primarily because of a famine in the land — a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.

The spiritual darkness many denominations have gone into is apparent

by statements from their theologians and spokes people. Recently one of our local papers had an article by an "enlightened theologian" (sic) stating that Christians needed to get over their biased and narrow-minded sectarianism and realize that Jesus was one way to get to heaven, but not necessarily the only way.

Another example of the darkness sweeping over the world was featured in the August 25, 1997 issue of Newsweek magazine which was largely dedicated to a theme of "Mariology." It states that for some time there has been a major movement underway to elevate Mary to the status of "Co-Redemptrix, Mediator of All Graces and Advocate for the People of God."

A section of the article reads: "In place of the Holy Trinity, it would appear, there would be a kind of Holy Quartet, with Mary playing the multiple roles of daughter of the Father, mother of the Son and spouse of the Holy Spirit." A professor named Mark Miravalle stated: "Personally, I'm confident that there will be this kind of recognition of Marian truth before the year 2000." (end quotes, see pg.49 par. 3 and 4)

If this doesn't reveal a famine of truth in the land, then I don't know what would. In the very place where one would think truth should be heard, some of the most preposterous and asinine madness in being proposed to the people called by the name of the Lord. But of course, these are the Nineties and modern man has been "enlightened." (sic) We're told it's time to be "inclusive" and embrace the brotherhood of man — apparently without regard for what manner of truth needs to be compromised.

Spiritually destitute

It is noteworthy to point out something from the first few verses in the book of Ruth: Whenever "judges" rule over God's people, a famine of hearing the word of the Lord is produced in them. (see Amos 8:11-12) Judges rule primarily from the perspective of an external standard of law. Although a law is an absolute for the people, the underlying desire in the heart of God has always been, "Hear, Oh Israel...." He wants His people to relate to Him by the liberating word He gives them through a hearing relationship, rather than by an external word that keeps them in bondage and puts Him in a box.

After the death of Elimelech, and the apparent stabilizing influence he was, the two sons of Naomi took wives of the Moabitish women. But by the time the family had been in the land of Moab for ten years, the sons died as well — both dying childless.

Sometime later, word reached Naomi "that the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread," so she decided to return to her homeland.

"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." (1:7)

As Naomi prepared for the journey back to Bethlehem she revealed the unrest in her heart as she told her daughters-in-law, *"The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband." (1:9)* Although she had followed her husband into Moab more than a decade previously, apparently there had been a hope in her heart for better things. But now that her husband and sons were dead, that hope had grown dim.

Encouraging the younger women to stay with their own people, Naomi revealed that she had no hope of bringing forth any further life for them. *"Turn again, my daughters,"* she told them, *"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?" (1:11-13)*

We must remember that the longing of every woman's heart in Israel was that she would be the mother of the Messiah. That hope remained as long as she could bear children. And if she failed to bear the awaited Redeemer, her hope was that He would come forth through her sons. But now with both Naomi's husband and her sons dead, any hope that she would have a part in bringing forth that "rest" was gone.

Orpha kissed her mother-in-law and returned to her people and to her gods. But Ruth insisted that she would return with Naomi, imploring her, *"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: 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." (1:16-17)*

These memorable words from Ruth's heart not only reveal a sincere commitment to Naomi, but also a deep inner longing for the God she'd heard about from her mother-in-law. Careful cross referencing of these words will reveal a parallel with the call God gave to Abraham as it's recorded in Genesis 12:1-3.

Ruth's appeal and confession put her into a position where she could walk in the steps of Abraham's faith, who is not only the father of the circumcision, but also the father of the uncircumcision who believe. (Rom.4:11-12) Although she had no natural basis to establish a relationship with the God of Israel, she found something in her heart that dared to believe for what seemed impossible.

The two women made the journey to Bethlehem and arrived in the

Passover season at the beginning of the barley harvest. Their arrival caused quite a stir among the inhabitants of the city, many of whom could hardly believe that this really was Naomi. The years in Moab, her widowhood, the loss of her hope, and the difficult journey back had all taken such a toll on her that many people asked in astonishment, *“Is this Naomi?”* (1:19)

To this inquiry Naomi responded: *“Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. 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?”* (1:20-21)

A Naomi company

Naomi represents the people in the organized churches who, over the years, followed their leadership ministry into “Moab.” In the beginning they had a vision of the Lord’s purposes that gave them a clear hope of wonderful things to come. However, as the “family” gradually embraced a mixture of the spiritual and the carnal, their spiritual “husband” ministry died.

Not only did their leadership ministry die, the “up-and-coming” leadership also were taken in by the mixture and died to the real purposes of God. This left the individuals in those churches to fare for themselves, and because many had never learned to hear and trust the Lord for themselves, they became hopeless. Although they knew God would one day bring forth a great deliverance and restoration, they lost hope that He would do it in their time.

(Moab represents a mixture of the spiritual and the carnal because of the origin of the Moabite people. Moab, the father of the Moabites, was the incestuous son of Lot and his eldest daughter. (Gen.19:30-38) The nation had not allowed Israel to pass through their land on their way to Canaan, and (Jud.11:17-19) some years later they actually hired the prophet Balaam to try and curse the Israelites. When that was unsuccessful, they used their attractive young women to entice the men of Israel into immorality and idolatry, which caused the curse of God to destroy some 24,000 of them. (see Num.24-25) These actions caused the Lord to pronounce a judgment that no Moabite male could enter into the congregation of the Lord. see Deut.23:3)

Naomi also is representative of those sincere Christians in the organized church — and in some not-so-organized churches — who have a genuine relationship with the Lord based on their past experience. They know the Lord will do some wonderful things in these last days, but whether for lack of clear teaching and understanding, or being tired of

waiting for those promises to take place, they’re tired and discouraged. Perhaps feeling they’re too old to be a part of what the Lord is about to do, they’ve listened to the lies of the enemy so long that they’ve become hopeless and just want to go “home.” Their long years of serving the Lord gives them much to offer, but in their minds, the expectant vision they once held has turned into a dream of what could have been.

Into the field of Boaz

We’re not told why Elimelech’s family had left their land over a decade earlier. Perhaps it was because of some indebtedness they incurred as a result of the severe famine, which caused them to lose temporary possession of their land. Or perhaps it was because of the continuing hassle they’d received from the Midianites. Whatever the reason, Naomi and Ruth returned in abject poverty. Both being widows, life for them was anything but easy. And with Naomi being along in years, finding the necessary substance for their survival fell to Ruth.

To remind Israel that they had been strangers in a foreign land, the Lord had given them a law regarding harvesting their grain. They were not to harvest the grain right out into the corners of the fields, neither were they to pick up what grain might have been dropped in the gleaning process. These provisions were to be left for the widows, the poor, and the strangers among them. This bit of benevolence was also to “stretch” the nation into believing for the Lord’s blessing in the harvest, in spite of providing for the less fortunate among them. (see Lev.23:22; Deut.24:18-19)

“And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband’s, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabite 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.’” (2:1-2)

Ruth had a heart to work and to provide a living for both Naomi and herself. Having arrived back in Bethlehem at harvest time, she quickly prepared to go out into a field and glean “leftovers” behind the reapers. Although she was a stranger — and a Moabite — she still believed she’d find enough grain to provide food for them.

Naomi might have told her about the harvesting law, and with the blessing of the Lord, they might be able to secure enough to last them till the following year when her land could be redeemed in the Jubilee. (It is traditionally held that the year following Naomi’s return was a jubilee year when indebted land could be redeemed from creditors.)

Ruth’s new-found faith and obedience to Naomi — a quality that would benefit her greatly as she later prepared to take the greatest step of faith in her life — was quickly rewarded as *“she went and came and*

gleaned in the field after the reapers.” The Lord was obviously leading her because she didn’t waste a lot of time searching for a place to glean. Partly because of her mother-in-law’s instructions, but mostly because the Lord was moving to meet the hunger in her heart, she quickly found herself gleaning in *“the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.”* (vs.3)

A prophetic snapshot

Right here we need to get the characters of the Book of Ruth into focus. As already mentioned, Naomi, who previously had lived in the land and had an innate inheritance through her husband, represents those in the church who’ve had a relationship to the Lord through their spiritual rebirth. But when they followed their leadership “husbands” into the bondage of organized denominations that compromised truth, they lost the meaningfulness of their relationship to the point where they were no longer candidates for bringing forth true spiritual life.

They still have a personal faith that is based on their past experience, and they know many good biblical principles, but the vitality is gone. They’ve become dreamers instead of visionaries, and consequently, they look more to the past than they do to the present or future. Because of their “geriatric” perspective, they hold so tightly to what God said in the past that is very difficult for them to hear what He is saying in present truth.

Ruth represents those believers who were raised without any true spiritual reality. Although they might have been “married” to a ministry that should have brought forth life in them, they were still barren spiritually. So when they heard there was life available in another “land,” they willingly left everything behind and eagerly embraced those promises. Neither the personal sacrifices of forsaking comfortable and familiar surroundings, nor the pain of leaving loved ones behind can dampen the hunger and hope of the vision they embrace. They’re willing to go and glean in any field where they can find the reality of the spiritual life they’re looking for. They often have, or have had, spiritual mentors who can tell them where they can find the truth, but who themselves have settled for the status quo.

Boaz, a mighty man of wealth, represents the Lord Jesus Christ. He not only owned the field Ruth gleaned in, he is the master of the harvest. Not only that, he also has the means to redeem Ruth and restore Naomi’s possessions. Regardless of modern theological rhetoric, no one else has that ability.

We also need to consider several principles to get a proper picture of what is being foreshadowed in the story. Ruth, a Moabitish woman

with no claim to anything in Israel, was going into the field of a wealthy man and expecting to glean behind his reapers. Remember that it had only been a few generations since the enticement of her “sisters” had brought about the death of 24,000 of Israel’s men. Also, written into the laws of Israel was the account that her people had not allowed the wandering nation to cross their land on the way to their promised land. In short, Moabites — and especially the women — weren’t very popular in Israel!

You might be thinking that because Ruth had been married to Naomi’s son, she had a certain legal right to glean in the field. However, God had told Israel they were not to take wives of the neighboring nations lest the women turn their hearts to serve other gods. Whenever Israel disobeyed this commandment, God always brought judgment. (see Josh.23:12-13; Jud.3:6-8; Ezra 9:1-2 etc.) To my knowledge there was no legal provision in the Mosaic law for wives of foreign origin.

The only thing Ruth had going for her was that God looked on her heart and chose her as He had Rahab, her future mother-in-law. He wanted to show all generations that He looks on the heart and redeems according to His perfect foreknowledge, regardless of social status.

God wants us to know that redemption isn’t based on who we are or where we’ve come from: It’s based on His redeeming grace and its influence upon a responsive heart. Thank God that as early as the ninth chapter of Genesis He foretold that Japheth (the Gentiles) would dwell in the tents of Shem (Israel) and have the opportunity to partake of his blessings. (Gen.9:27) That promise reaches out and embraces you and me as part of the “whosoever will, may come.”

Gaining favor

“And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, ‘The LORD be with you.’ And they answered him, ‘The LORD bless thee.’” (2:4)

Although Boaz had set a servant (type of the Holy Spirit) over the reapers (type of a restored spiritual ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) in his field, he also went into the field to see how the gleaning was going, and to keep communication open between the reapers and himself. He soon noticed a stranger shyly following a group of the poor and the widows gathering what had been accidentally dropped by the reapers.

“Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, ‘Whose damsel is this?’” (vs.5)

“It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab,” the servant replied, and then proceeded to tell Boaz

that she had asked his permission to glean in the field behind the reapers. He told him she had been about her task faithfully except *“that she tarried a little in the house.”* (vs.6)

His heart touched with the young woman’s faith and dedication, Boaz approached the Moabitess and told her *“not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast”* by the maidens that were known to him. (vs.8)

Apparently having other fields as well, he then told an apprehensive Ruth to let her *“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.”* (vs.9)

Overwhelmed by his grace and her good fortune, Ruth *“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?’”*

Boaz proceeded to tell Ruth that he had been made aware of her love for Naomi and how she had laid down her life to serve her. He also acknowledged that he knew she had left her own people in search of the people who knew the God of Naomi.

Then, seeing her faith and revealing that he knew where her heart was, Boaz told her: *“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.”* (vs.12)

Ruth could hardly believe the prophetic promise she was hearing. *“‘May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,’ she said. ‘You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant — though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls.’”* (vs.13 NIV)

Ruth continued gleaning and pondering these things in her heart. It was difficult to imagine why she, being a stranger, should be shown such favor by this prominent and wealthy man. Here she was, a poor, widowed Moabitess woman gleaning in his barley field.

Boaz interrupted her private thoughts when mealtime came around and invited her to join him. *“Come here, that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar,”* he said. *“So she sat beside the reapers; and he served her roasted grain, and she ate and was satisfied and had some left.”*

“When she rose to glean, Boaz commanded his servants, saying, ‘Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not insult her. And also you shall purposely pull out for her some grain from the bundles and leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.’” (vs.14-16 NAS)

Ruth continued gleaning in Boaz’s field until evening, then beat out the grain she had harvested before returning to her mother-in-law in the

city. Naomi was pleasantly surprised to see how much Ruth had harvested in just the one day. After learning that she had worked in one of Boaz’s fields, *“Naomi said unto her daughter in law, ‘Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead.’ And Naomi said unto her, ‘The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.’”* (vs.20)

She then instructed Ruth to continue gleaning in Boaz’s field and not look elsewhere for a better and more profitable place. *“So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.”* (vs.23)

A Ruth company

For several decades a “Ruth company” of believers have left the familiar surroundings of the denominational “country” they were born in. Through God’s unique economy they heard He was visiting His people with spiritual bread and the famine of hearing His word was over. They went out in faith, not knowing where their journey would take them. All they knew was that they’d received a summons from the Lord and a vision of what He could do with a company of people who would deny themselves and serve Him without reservation.

One of the elementary principles they learned was that to hear the voice of the Lord they needed to be in the field He was visiting. When first arriving in His field, they were content to glean the various stalks of grain (truths) left behind or dropped by the reapers of other generations. It was so wonderful to finally find something of sustainable substance that they searched diligently day after day. Many hours were spent searching the scriptures under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. He lovingly lead them line upon line into a deeper understanding of spiritual reality than they could have previously imagined.

Soon they began finding and understanding truths that would forever change their perspectives and lives. Sometimes what they found was fragmented and incomplete, while at other times there was enough to share with brethren of like mind. Some of the truths they found had been discarded by earlier reapers, and some had even been trampled under foot as being irrelevant for “the modern era.”

The first time the Lord spoke to them personally was pretty overwhelming! To think that He was interested in them as individuals! And to realize that He knew everything about them — their secret longings and desires; the emptiness of the life they’d been used to; the pain of leaving loved ones behind; the passion to know Him — was almost too much to bear. But just a word from Him put everything into focus and made their treasured promises believable.

As they continued in their pursuit of truth, they found that the Lord had raised up reapers (ministry) who weren't interested in "touching" them by labeling them with their own names, opinions, or pet doctrines. Neither were they interested in making disciples after themselves. Their entire focus was to reap the full harvest (the body of Christ) the Master had planted and see it come into a mature relationship with Him. What a relief it was to learn that it wasn't necessary to endorse a particular creed or hierarchical doctrine to stay in the newly found field. All that was required was that they continue to hear the voice of the Master and follow His directives.

And then the Master brought them right to His own table and personally fed them in meetings, conventions, and other gatherings! It was like nothing they had ever known before. Suddenly the few stalks of grain they'd gleaned for themselves began to fit into the panorama of truth the Lord set before them. Oh the glory they beheld as they looked upon His face! And just a short visit into His house changed their perspective forever: Finally they understood their destiny.

And the reapers! Never before had this Ruth company been afforded the privilege to get to know any reapers by spending time with them. In the lands they'd been acquainted with, the reapers lived in out-of-reach and sterile worlds that seemingly weren't in touch with mundane reality. But here in Boaz's field, they could sit at the same table with them and commune together over the same glorious and fulfilling meals. They could see the humble dedication and commitment of the workmen in spite of a few noticeable flaws.

And then whole handfuls of truth began appearing as they gleaned! It was though they had been dropped purposely for them! Wonderful, fully orbed principles that pierced the darkness of unbelief and stretched the spirit to believe for dimensions previously unimaginable began to be their portion. These were wonderful and glorious restoration truths that space and time doesn't allow for exposition here.

However, if you're part of this "Ruth company" I'm describing, you know the life changing truths the Lord has been revealing over the last few decades. If you're not part of it, then what I've just described probably sounds like double-speak to you. If it does, then the rest of this article will likely appear to be even more so!

As with Ruth of old, this company isn't interested in gleaning grain just for the sake of having more information and revelation knowledge. They "beat out" the truth they've gathered and look to make it applicable to their daily lives. Neither do they hold it selfishly, but they're ready to share with others who are also hungry for it.

Threshing and winnowing

The first two chapters of Ruth dealt with truths that pertain to the barley and wheat harvests, that is, truths relating to the feasts of Passover and Pentecost. God's restoration has already brought the church through the fulfillment of these feasts and many of His people have experienced what was foreshadowed in them. The third chapter takes us into the preparation and beginning fulfillment of Tabernacles, which is where we are in present truth. The chapter reaches ahead and foreshadows some "uncharted waters" as we head into the next millennium.

"Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, 'My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

"Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." (3:1-4)

Threshing of the grain in Bible times was hard work, but it was accompanied with great joy and thanksgiving for the harvest. (Remember that this setting was soon after a famine had caused hard times for many in Israel.) A flat and slightly elevated area of a field was cleaned and packed hard until it resembled a floor. Then the stalks of grain were scattered around upon it. To thresh the grain, a team of oxen pulling a cart was repeatedly driven over it to break up the stalks and separate the grain kernels from the husks. This was a time consuming process and usually done by servants.

However, it was customary for the owner of the grain to do his own winnowing, and because of the festivities accompanying the joyous occasion, he would often spend nights with the grain he had winnowed instead of returning to his home. To do the actual winnowing, he'd wait for the late evening breezes to blow across the area. Then he'd take a winnowing fork and pitch the broken stalks, husks, and debris into the breeze so the lighter chaff and straw could blow off the floor. The heavier grain would fall to the ground where it would be gathered and piled up on the side of the threshing floor for the night. It would then be taken to the owner's granaries later. The entire threshing and winnowing process would be repeated until all the harvested grain was cared for.

Being aware that Boaz would be winnowing the grain from the harvest of his fields, Naomi knew it was time for Ruth to take the boldest step of faith she'd ever considered.

Preparation for the threshing floor

Ruth needed to wash and anoint herself and be clothed in proper garments for this special occasion. The burdens and concerns that motivated her to gather the provision that she and her mother-in-law needed for daily maintenance must now give way to a completely different focus — it was time to prepare for marriage. The garments of her widowhood must be laid aside, and even the garments she wore for working in the field weren't appropriate now.

When Ruth had made the preliminary preparations, she was faced with the boldest and most faith-stretching challenge of her life: she was to go to the threshing floor and lay at Boaz's feet! Although her actions could be misunderstood as a wanton act of misguided passion, Naomi told her she would get the final instructions for her redemption in that vulnerable position. Boaz would have to personally instruct her from there because past experience and precedent had just run its course.

Although challenged to very core of her being by Naomi's instructions, Ruth responded with, "*All that thou sayest unto me I will do. And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.*" (vs.5-6)

Some generations later another young woman would utter similar words in the face of an unprecedented challenge: "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word....*" (Lu.1:35, 38) May this also be the confession of all who hear His voice today.

Get down to the floor

A Ruth company of believers has been in the process of being washed by the water of the word for some time. (Eph.5:26) It has been a liberating word that is washing off the smell of the field (world) and preparing them to come before their heavenly Boaz. Although "Naomi" could instruct them about their need to be washed and cleansed, she can not do it for them: They must wash themselves by submitting to the voice of the Lord and His fullers' soap. (Mal.3:2)

Then comes the anointing: the sweet, precious anointing. The anointing of the Lord is essential in preparation for His presence. And like the hair on one's head, the fragrance and strength of the anointing grows slowly over time. Separation from worldly ambitions, dedication to the purposes of the Lord, and complete consecration to Him are required

to cultivate and mature it. As it matures, the anointing destroys the yoke of all natural limitations. (Isa.10:27) Again, "Naomi" can tell this Ruth company what was needed, but she can't provide it for them.

As the twilight of this age closes in around us, it's now time to make our way to the threshing floor and to the Lord's feet. Those who are spiritually alert know that already the servants of Boaz (the anointed spirit ministry of the Lord) have been busy threshing barley and now the time for winnowing has come.

(Note that barley was on the threshing floor that night in spite of the text implying the wheat harvest was at least underway if not finished. - see Ruth 2:23)

The "barley" truths of salvation have been in the refining process for some time. The Spirit of Truth has anointed an apostolic revelation ministry to "cross the t's and dot the i's" of the essentials and pertinent understandings of our so great salvation. Truths that had been blurred during the years in "Moab" about Christ's provision and our personal responsibility for that provision, as well as our positional inheritance in Christ in contrast to the actual possession of our inheritance, are just a few of the kernels the Lord has been "threshing" in recent years.

But now the evening of the day (age) is upon us. Already the breeze of the Spirit is blowing on the refined truths and those who hold them. We can expect some dust and chaff to fly as traditions and "pet doctrines" are blown away by the spiritual visitation coming upon God's people. It will be a time of both great rejoicing and great sobriety as the spirit of repentance and humility begins sweeping across the church.

It's time to get to the threshing floor and to the feet of Jesus. There will be times when the Spirit of God will rest so heavy on His people that we'll literally be on our face before Him. But don't wait for such a specific visitation to bring you to the floor: get to the floor in your heart. Wait upon Him in your prayer closet with a passionate focus for redemption's culmination in the marriage.

The final truths of redemption will only be heard from the Lord Himself as we humble ourselves at His feet. Those truths will equip and release us into a the "greater" ministry Jesus spoke of in John 14:12, and prepare us to overcome death and put on immortality. The words heard there will be hidden manna in which will be "*a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*" (Rev.2:17) The garments of salvation and praise will then be woven into a new garment that is just like our Lord's.

No anointed ministry can give you those revelation truths and you'll not find them on a tape somewhere. Neither will you find them in a book, nor can you draw on past experience for them: Those final words of instruction will only come from the Lord Himself as you prostrate yourself

at His feet. So if you want to hear those significant words, you must be where they'll be spoken.

The midnight hour

Ruth waited until Boaz was finished with the festivities of the evening and laid down to rest for the night. Then with her heart throbbing in anticipation, *"she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down."* (vs.7)

"Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet." (vs.8 NKJ) *"And he said, 'Who art thou?' And she answered, 'I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.'" (vs.9)*

These verses are pregnant with spiritual truth for the time we're in — much more so than time and space will permit me to get into here. But suffice it to say that we, like Ruth, must come to the floor discreetly. We're not to make a big deal about how we're humbling ourselves before the Lord, nor are we to publicize what's in our heart. We need to "come softly" without fanfare, motivated only by our deep longing to bring the boldest request we've ever made for His life-changing mercy and grace.

We're not told how long Ruth waited before Boaz turned in his sleep and was startled to find her at his feet. Naturally speaking, most of us would likely be startled to find someone lying at our feet in the night if we weren't expecting it. But there is much more than just a natural story here.

Notice that it was at midnight when Boaz discovered Ruth at his feet — it wasn't an hour before nor 30 minutes after. Midnight is significant in scripture because it points prophetically to much of what will take place at "midnight" in the night of the transition of this age.

It was at midnight that God broke the power of Egypt's resistance to the exodus by smiting the firstborn; at midnight Gideon's small band of mighty men were given victory over the Midianites; at midnight Samson took off the gates of the Philistine city of Gaza and carried them to Hebron; Job spoke of the wicked being suddenly brought to judgment at midnight; the Psalmist spoke of rising and praising God at midnight because of His righteous judgments; a cry is made at midnight that the Bridegroom comes; at midnight an earthquake opened the prison doors where Paul and Silas were being held. (Ex.12:29; Jud.7:19; Jud.16:3; Job 34:20; Psa.199:62; Mt.25:6; Acts 16:25)

Surely you don't think all these incidences taking place at midnight are just coincidental and without significance?

But why does scripture mention that Boaz was startled that a woman lay at his feet? With Boaz being a type of the Lord Jesus, could this be a foreshadowing of what Jesus referred to when He spoke of God avenging those who cried out to Him day and night? And then asked the provocative question, *"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"* (Lu.18:8)

Will the Lord be surprised that a spiritual woman has actually pressed through and made her way to His feet? Of course not — He knows all things. But remember that a type in scripture is a metaphor for our benefit, not His.

Yes, in spite of the darkness settling over the land; in spite of it not being considered proper dignity in modern Christianity; in spite of every conceivable reason not to, there will be a Ruth company who'll press through every natural hindrance and pharisaical opposition and get to the floor to be at the Lord's feet at midnight. And as in instance of the woman in Luke 7, their tears will refresh His feet at His coming.

No longer a stranger

Boaz asked the woman at his feet, *"'Who art thou?' And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman'" (vs.9)*

When asked to identify herself, notice that Ruth did not refer to herself as a Moabite, but reached out in faith and called herself Boaz's handmaid. And in the same breath she made the bold petition that he cover her with his garment. Boaz knew exactly what she meant by her request: She had reached beyond the emptiness of her widowhood and the stigma of her barrenness, and had asked him to marry her so she might come fully under his provision and covering!

The boldness of Ruth's request is hard for the Western mind to comprehend. There she was, a stranger and a Moabite, uninhibitedly throwing herself upon the grace of Boaz! Regardless of the consideration that she might have had an ambiguous legal right to expect a favorable response, at that moment she was completely vulnerable and at his mercy. He could have brushed her aside without a second thought, or he could have speculated that she was making a brazen attempt to seduce him and tap into his well-known wealth.

Boaz responded favorably to Ruth's request and commended her, saying, *"Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman."* (vs.10-11)

Boaz blessed Ruth and praised her for not going after younger men, whether they were rich or poor. Briefly, this typifies the various spiritual activities presently going on in the church. The "rich" speaks of the recent highly visible phenomenons to which thousands are flocking as they look for some spiritual manifestation and experience to effortlessly provide them with a "quick fix." The "poor" speaks of the those who don't feel it's necessary to meet together with others of like faith at all, but think rather that they and Jesus have it all together.

Boaz also commended Ruth's courage for pressing in to him with her bold request. (The King James says he called her a virtuous woman, but the word could be more accurately translated a *courageous woman* or *woman of valor*.) He then promised to honor her appeal and fulfill her heart's desire. But first he had to provide an opportunity to a nearer kinsman to legally redeem her.

There is much to be learned in these verses. First, as with Ruth, we can no longer identify (be in agreement) with who we were while in "Moab," but we must identify completely with who we are now in Christ. Our nationality and past can no longer be used as an excuse for what we can and cannot do. We must forget those things which are behind us (whether good, bad, or indifferent) and reach out to those things that are before us. (see Phil.3:13)

We can't be double minded, nor halt between two opinions, but must focus completely on the business at hand. Neither can we allow ourselves to be tricked into wandering after "younger" men with flashy anointings. God has those ministries for others of His flock, but for this company, the focus must be to come to the feet of Jesus and wait for His final instructions.

And in spite of what it might look like to others, or how it could be misconstrued, we must exercise *"boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us."* If we're to petition the Lord with the bold request that we want to leave everything behind that has been familiar to us and lose our identity in Him, we must *"draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."* (Heb.10:19-20, 22) Anything less than "going for broke" at that crucial moment will cause us to draw back in unbelief and miss the most significant opportunity of the ages.

The new day dawns

Boaz then instructed Ruth to stay with him until the dawn of the new day. *"And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, 'Let it not be known that a woman*

came into the floor.' Also he said, *'Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it.'* And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city."

"And when she came to her mother in law, she said, 'Who art thou, my daughter?' And she told her all that the man had done to her. And she said, 'These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, 'Go not empty unto thy mother in law.'" (vs.14-17)

These verses hold a lot of wonderful prophetic truth for us as we approach the dawning of another age. It would be speculation for me to try and express how long we'll need to stay on the floor at the Lord's feet. However, we'll need to stay there through the darkness of the night, however long that will be! Then in the early dawning hours of the new day, before there is enough light "for one to know another," we'll be sent back into the city. And as with Ruth, we'll not return empty handed, but we'll carry "six measures of barley" to an awaiting "Naomi." (see Rom.8:19-21)

According to my resource material, several of the older manuscripts render the last phrase of verse 15 as *"and he went into city."* The use of the masculine verb in this verse apparently confused the translators because it's obvious that the text refers to Ruth going back into the city, not Boaz. (Boaz went into the city in the beginning of the fourth chapter.) But because they didn't understand the typology of the reference, they put "she" into the text instead of "he." (Several Bibles have "he" in this phrase, including the NIV and ASV.)

This is very significant to the typology in the story of Ruth. As the new millennial day dawns, the "Ruth company" which spent that fateful night at the feet of Jesus will be sent back into the church denominations with a completely restored message of salvation. They'll not go back in the weakness of a woman, but as a company of sons, the "brethren" of the Lord, (Heb.2:11) doing the "greater works" Jesus spoke of in John 14:12. Their message will be the full scope of the "six measures of barley" truths God unfolded through a 6000 year redemptive plan since Adam's fall in Eden.

That sonship ministry will fulfill the second half of the week mentioned in Daniel 9:24-27. Daniel said the Messiah would be cut off in the middle of the week (the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry on earth). That week must be fulfilled before the millennial reign is established when the new "day" fully dawns. Their "predawn" ministry will not be the full manifestation of the Lord's coming because they'll still be clothed in the "sackcloth" of mortality. (see Rev.11:3) (The Lord will be fully manifested in a firstfruits company when immortality is put on at the end of the Tabernacles feast.)

Neither shall they return to the "city" empty as Naomi had when she returned from Moab. They'll minister in the power of the Spirit with

a word of truth that will accomplish everything it is sent to do. (Isa.55:11) The same spirit of repentance that took them to the threshing floor will also bring great deliverance and a renewed hope to all of God's people who hear and respond to their liberating message.

After Ruth gave the good news to Naomi about all Boaz had done to her, anticipation continued building in the older woman and she told her, "*Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.*" (vs.18)

In the prophetic pattern of the creation account, the Lord ended His work early in the seventh day and then rested. (Gen.2:2) This corresponds perfectly with Naomi's response that Boaz would settle the matter of their redemption before the new day passed. As the dawn of the seventh millennial day stretches from horizon to horizon, the Feast of Tabernacles will be completed and all who have partaken of its glory will enter into the "rest" of their redemption.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'" (1 Cor.15:54) At that time redemption will be finished and a firstfruits company will have entered completely into their eternal rest.

A nearer kinsman

Being an honorable man, Boaz sought out the kinsman who was more closely related to Naomi's deceased husband than he was and gave him the opportunity to redeem Elimelech's mortgaged land. When the kinsman heard there was land to be redeemed, he was quite ready to purchase it. But then Boaz told him there was one little catch to doing so — he would also have to purchase Ruth the Moabitess, and according to the Mosaic law, "*raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.*" (4:5)

When the kinsman heard that requirement, he quickly replied, "*I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.*" (vs.6)

I've pondered who this nearer kinsman represents for some time. As I begin to write about him I feel a little like the Apostle Paul when he wrote, "*and I think also that I have the Spirit of God*" in the matter. (1 Cor.7:40) However, I'm still waiting before the Lord to completely settle a few points regarding him. But for the sake of this article, I'll briefly venture into what I see at this time.

The nearer kinsman was eager to lay claim to what Naomi had to offer, but he would not involve himself with a "Moabitess" woman to obtain it. He was too concerned with how that might look and perhaps

it would even cause complications regarding his own inheritance. He therefore passed his "opportunity" back to Boaz.

The kinsman could represent the law and spiritual legalism. Remember that the entire account of Ruth is a story of God redeeming a Gentile woman and bringing her into covenant relationship with Him. The Lord gave the law the first opportunity to bring man into a right relationship with Him, but "*what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.*" (Rom.8:3 NKJ)

"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." (Gal.3:21)

"For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God." (Heb.7:18-19 NKJ)

The law would like to take credit for the quality of spiritual life in this "Ruth company," but it can't identify with the life she has. Neither can it bring forth any new life in her. Only the heavenly "Boaz" has the ability to redeem and bring forth life in her.

In the overall redemptive plan, God gave the law because Israel did not want to hear His voice. (see Ex.19-20:21) However, as we saw in the above verses, the law could not redeem mankind. All the law could do was serve as a schoolmaster to show the need for a better covenant. Only Jesus can raise up the seed that a dead-letter law could only hope for.

The irony of this is that we usually tend to identify more readily with something that is external rather than internal. Consequently, we put more confidence in a structured external standard than we do a walk of faith. We consider what we can see to be "nearer" than what we can't see and have to take by faith. However, an external structure is always a substitute for an internal reality.

Much more could be said about this nearer kinsman and how he also typifies the spiritual legalism of familiar and "safe" traditions and external dogmas. As the breeze of the Spirit blows through the church in the days ahead, many would like to take credit for the life coming forth, but they won't want to embrace the radical people it's coming forth in! It will be a repeat of the attitude among traditional denominations when Pentecost broke out at the turn of this century.

A son is born

Boaz and the kinsman finished the legal and customary requirements to make the transaction giving Boaz the right of Ruth's redemption and

marriage. The witnesses of the proceedings spoke prophetic blessings to them, calling on the Lord to make their marriage union fruitful.

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

"And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

"And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, 'There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.'" (4:13-17)

These verses point to that time at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, the last great day of the feast, when "Ruth" will go into the marriage with her heavenly bridegroom. Their union will produce a son in which Ruth will completely lose her own identity, and the curse of widowhood and the stigma of her barren womb will be behind her forever. Her life will be consumed in the immortal life of the son she brings forth!

(Notice that the moment she bears her son, Ruth passes off the scene and is not mentioned again until Matthew 1:5! This is significant in that it typifies that her life is caught up in the life of the son she bears.)

It's also interesting to note that it is traditionally held that the year Ruth gave birth was a Jubilee year! This also points to the time we're in because of the great deliverance coming in its present fulfillment.

Read these last verses carefully and see who is given credit for bringing forth the son: *"There is a son born to Naomi!"*

Wait a minute. Naomi didn't give birth to this son — Ruth did. Neither did Naomi go to the threshing floor, nor lay at the feet of Boaz, nor carry the six measures of barley into the city: Ruth did all of these things.

So why did the neighboring women say Naomi gave birth to the son? Because the "onlookers" of this great mystery will not acknowledge Ruth as an entity in herself, but will see her as part of the whole church. And not only that, the son Ruth bears will remove the stigma of barrenness the church has carried for 2000 years.

If you're part of the "Ruth" company, don't think that ultimately you will get recognition from the spectators of the world for your dedication to the Lord. But then who needs recognition when your redemption has been completed and you have the incorruptible life of your Beloved forever flowing through your being?

Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. ☐

MARTI'S MINUTE

Dear Insight Family,

We bring you greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who plucked us from the miry clay and set our feet on the Rock to stay!! Bless His Holy Name!

How blessed and fortunate we are to be living in these exciting days. People are saying all over how they feel like "something" is about to take place. Even some unsaved ones are having a sense that "something" is about to happen. We'll only know what that "something" is as we spend time with Him and seek His presence daily for our life. As Moses said in Exodus 33:13-16: *"How will we know that we have found grace in Your sight except Your presence is with us."* It's expedient that we spend the time before the Lord to know His presence in our life.

Our summer has come and gone. We've still had some beautiful weather the last while, but the forecast says it's coming to an end. I guess that means our rainy season is on it's way. Hopefully it won't turn to snow like we had last year.

Eli and I were away for three and a half weeks in late October and early November. We went to the Bowens Mill convention in Georgia, and then visited several groups. We ended our trip in southern Ontario where Eli performed a wedding, and of course weddings are always joyful occasions. But as is sometimes said, "the best part of going away is coming home!" Don't get me wrong, I really enjoyed our time away, and seeing so many loved ones and friends is always refreshing. I just happen to be a home-body!

Luke, our second son, is home again from his job on the cruise ship in the Mediterranean. He is very glad to be home. It wasn't as glamorous working on the ship as he thought it might be. As he says, being on the ship twenty four and seven wasn't his cup of tea. The last five days before coming home he spent in Israel. Seeing the places where Jesus lived and died made quite an impression on him!

Loni, one of our daughters, is taking a Long Term Care training course which will enable her to work in Senior Care Homes. She's had that on her heart for a long time and the opportunity recently opened up for her. She's doing well in the course and looking forward to giving the care.

The grandchildren are doing well and growing — I can't believe how times flies. Bradley is scheduled to have tubes put in his ears again November 28th. Please pray for him as the Lord brings him to mind.

We're looking forward to having most of the family here during the holidays. We were hoping all the children could be home, but it doesn't look like Nathan and Verna will be able to make it this year.

We appreciate your prayers and faithfulness to the Lord on our behalf. We remember you as well.

Blessings,
Marti