

Ruth's Romance of Redemption

by Edward Boone

~ 1936 ~

Fifth Edition

The Boone Publishing Company

Des Moines

Iowa

STUDY THREE

THE DAMAGE AND THE RECEPTION

"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? And she said unto them, 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? 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" (Ruth 1:19-22)

The third study of the book opens with the words, *"So they two went until they came to Bethlehem."* Two, Ruth and Naomi, were returning. As two, referred to in study one, is the number of testimony, this study is a testimony of the damage and loss of ten years of wasted life in Moab. There are various places in Scripture where two walked together.

First, in the case of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, we find that their conversation was about the crucifixion of CHRIST: *"And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him"* (Luke 24:19-20). In this case, we have the testimony of two men regarding the condemnation and crucifixion of our Saviour.

Second, in the case of Elijah and Elisha. Having crossed the Jordan River after its smiting and dividing -- typical of the death and the resurrection of CHRIST -- Elijah asked Elisha what he could do for him before he was taken away. *"And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."* (II Kings 2:9). Here we have the testimony of two men relative to the double portion, typical of Pentecost.

Third, in the case of Enoch and GOD, who had walked together in the unbroken fellowship for the long period of three hundred years: *"And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters"* (Genesis 5:22). The conversation in this case, no doubt, was the translation of Enoch, for he was *translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him"* (Hebrews 11:5). Here we have the

testimony of the rapture of the saints. Thus, in these three cases we find that the conversation was about the crucifixion of CHRIST, the descent of the HOLY SPIRIT and the rapture of the saints. Likewise, in the returning of Naomi and Ruth to Bethlehem, we have the testimony that the way of the transgressor is hard, that the way of the backslider ended in widowhood, want, and woe. Such is the danger taught in this lesson.

However, there is an encouraging thought to those who may be backslidden or to the man or woman out of complete victory that there is a reception for the wanderer who will return to the Father's house. The fifteenth chapter of Luke gives us a blessed picture of the reception of the prodigal son. The father was more willing to receive his son than his son was to be received. If the reader may have wandered from GOD, return at once to the Father's house. He wants you home. You will find a welcome not only from the hand of your Heavenly Father, but His children also will welcome you to your former place of worship. The devil will try to make you think that no one loves you, that there's no use to try, but the following lines should encourage your heart:

You may say I'm unworthy,
There's no use for me to try
I have always been rebellious,
In my sin I'll have to die,
Though your state may be appalling,
Hear the Saviour calling,
Saving grace is falling,
Just for thee.

If the Father could forgive the prodigal and feed him at His table, if GOD could forgive David and set him on the throne, if GOD could forgive scores and scores of backsliders and write their names in the Book of Heaven, He can forgive you. In studying this lesson let us notice:--

I. THE GREAT SURPRISE
II. THE GRIEVOUS SORROW
III. THE GRATIFYING SUPPLY

I. THE GREAT SURPRISE.

The conversation that took place on their journey from Moab to Bethlehem is not recorded. Some may wonder why, but the reason is that it pictures the road of repentance, and that is a matter that lies strictly between the soul and its GOD. The idea of having to confess to a priest or preacher for forgiveness of sins is unscriptural, for our repentance is toward GOD and our faith should be in the Lord JESUS CHRIST alone. This was the message that was preached by the early apostles: "*And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Acts 20:20-21). There is nothing mentioned relative to the hardship of the journey, the weather conditions, or the mode of travel, which was probably by foot. But Naomi, no doubt, talked much of the country of Bethlehem just as we would in leading a sinner to CHRIST. In considering the return, let us note: --

A. THE EFFECT. "*Is this Naomi?*" (v. 19).

You will notice that she is greeted with a question. Why should they ask, "Is this Naomi?" There must have been a reason. No doubt, she bore the marks of Moab. Ten years spent in the land of death and formality had removed from her the blush of spiritual youth, the might of spiritual power, the radiance of spiritual glory, the quietness of spiritual peace, the harmony of spiritual fellowship, the covering of spiritual garments, and the blessings of spiritual joy." Have you ever seen people who once enjoyed these splendid spiritual qualifications, drift to a land of spiritual Moab and come back looking more like Broadway Avenue flappers than like a stranger and a pilgrim? They are dressed in the latest fashions, their cheeks are covered with rouge, their lips have the appearance of a setting sun or a June evening, from their ears are hung ornaments making them look much like the heathen of Moab, and I speak to their shame, some finger-tips are well tinted with brown from the constant use of cigarettes. Such has been the case of some who have left Bethlehem-Judah because of chastisement and correction; the effect has been so great that many have exclaimed, "Is this Naomi? Is this the one who attended the prayer meetings, blessed the congregation with her prayers and testimonies that exalted JESUS CHRIST? Is this the one who loved Divine truth?" It is a picture which should make an angel weep.

Robbed of all the pleasantness that grace provided; stripped of all the glory that His SPIRIT brings; living in the deepest depths of worldliness and sin -- such is a picture of some who have joined the ranks of the backsliders. Included in these ranks, you will find evangelists, pastors, class leaders, Sunday School superintendents, Sunday School teachers, Bible School students, and young people who were brought up in godly homes. What a dark picture! What a sad story! Nevertheless, it is true. After studying the effect, let us notice: --

B. THE SYMPATHY. "*All the city was moved*" (vs. 19).

As the two wayworn strangers marched through the dusty roads of the city, some of the citizens are seen gazing, with a look of interest, through their windows, from their fields, or other places of occupation. When they finally arrived at their destination, "*All the city was moved about them.*" Soon a large company gathered around them. "*Is this Naomi?*" one old lady asks. "Are you the one whose wedding I attended years ago?" She replies in the affirmative. No doubt, they ask, "Where is Elimelech?" And she tells the story of his sickness and of his final departure. A middle-aged Israelite comes up and questions her regarding Chilion saying, "We were schoolmates." When Naomi is asked about the welfare of Chilion, more tears flow down her cheeks as she tells the story of his sickness and his last words. Then comes the rabbi, whom she remembers as the one who blessed the congregation of the Lord in which her family was numbered. As he recalls the ceremony when Mahlon was circumcised on the eighth day, he questions Naomi, who, amidst her sobs, relates the sad story of his lingering illness, his farewell gaze, his last words, and his final departure. As she tells of her loneliness, of her visits to the graves in the village ceremony, of the sleepless nights, the deepest poverty, the homesickness for Bethlehem, it arouses her old community and neighbors to sympathy, and they weep with her who weeps as she describes her life of sorrow, suffering, and separation.

The city is moved as the news of her loss, loneliness, and return spreads from door to door.

However, Bethlehem is not the only city that has been moved by the return of the backslider, for all Heaven rejoices more when one sinner repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. The Lord of Heaven has made it known that the whole City, whose BUILDER and MAKER is GOD, is moved to shouts of joy and gladness when one sinner forsakes the life of sin and wandering and returns to the house of bread -- Bethlehem. Though the citizens of earth may be little interested in a HOLY GHOST revival, or in the conversion of a sinner, yet the City without foundation, eternal in the Heavens, is interested and is acquainted with the results of the efforts put forth for lost men. Sympathy! Yes, there is lots of it for the wanderer who will humbly and wholly return. First, there is sympathy from the hand of His Father; second, from the citizens of Bethlehem, who portrays the church; third, from all Heaven itself. Let us now consider: --

C. THE WELCOME. As Naomi had no way of earning her livelihood, she probably would have to be a city or community charge. As far as she knew, there was no kinsman to redeem for her the lost estate, where she once resided, and to provide for her the necessities of life. Neither was there one to restore the seed-line, which was destroyed by their trip to Moab. This was a reproach in itself even to those who remained in Bethlehem-Judah. What made it still harder was that she had the responsibility of the Moabitish damsel -- a Gentile, forbidden to gather in the congregation of the Lord, a stranger, and an outcast who could only stand in the far-off place. Would there be a welcome for those who represent the Jew and Gentile? Yes, thank GOD, there is under the dispensation of Grace, which the Book of Ruth so wonderfully pictures.

The middle wall has been broken down. Paul describes this in Ephesians 2:14. Dr. Edersheim in his book, "The Temple, Its Ministry and Services" writes, "The great Court of the Gentiles, which formed the lowest or outer enclosure of the Sanctuary, was paved with the finest variegated marble. According to Jewish tradition, it formed a square of 750 feet. Its name is derived from the fact that it was open to all -- Jews or Gentiles." He continues, "Within a short distance, in the court, a marble screen 4 1/2 feet high, and beautifully ornamented, bore Greek and Latin inscriptions, warning Gentiles not to proceed (beyond this wall) on pain of death." By this wall and inscription, the Gentiles were barred outside of the Holy place, but with the salvation of JESUS CHRIST, the middle wall was broken down, and we are invited to come boldly to a throne of Grace by the new and living way which CHRIST has provided for us, that whether we be Jews or Gentiles, we will find a hearty welcome.

II. THE GRIEVOUS SORROW

All Naomi could bring back from the land of Moab was the remembrance of her fate and folly. Those ten years -- ten years of wasted life -- could never be recalled or re-lived. Her sad condition is a picture of the evil and bitter result of departing from the Lord. This should be a warning to all not to turn from the Grace of GOD to a life of formality, worldliness, or sinfulness. What havoc her departure had brought, and she is now forced to acknowledge the reason for her sad state. Let us notice the following three items regarding her return:

- A. THE SPIRIT**
- B. THE STATE**
- C. THE SORROW**

A. THE SPIRIT IN WHICH SHE RETURNED. "*Call me not Naomi, call me Mara.*" (v. 20). You will notice she completely surrenders the name Naomi, which means "*my pleasant one,*" and is willing to take the name Mara, meaning "*the bitter one.*" She feels she is no longer worthy to be called Naomi. She is like the prodigal son, who said, "*Make me one of thy hired servants.*" The further we study the Book of Ruth, the more we see the parable of the prodigal son portrayed. It does not infer that she retained a bitter spirit toward the ALMIGHTY, but rather that her heart was grieved over her own condition. It is a picture of a broken and a contrite heart. There is many a child of GOD whose name was Naomi, but who has lost that sweet name. It is no longer "*my pleasant one,*" but now she is called Mara, "*the bitter one.*" Moab is the land of bitterness to the child of GOD, but Bethlehem is the land of bread. This spirit of bitterness often exists in backsliders, who return to GOD. Although GOD has forgiven them and their wanderings are all under the blood never to be remembered against them, seemingly they are unable to forgive themselves and thereby remain under a certain amount of bondage. Beloved, if that is your case today, remember if GOD has forgiven you, your sins will never be brought up again. Lift up your head, go forward, for GOD is able to restore the years in which the locusts have destroyed the results of your efforts.

B. THE STATE IN WHICH SHE RETURNED. "*I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.*" (v. 21). Again we see a likeness in the parable of the prodigal son, who said, "*Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.*" He went out full and, as Naomi, came back empty. Paul in writing to the Corinthians said, "*Ye are full*" (I Corinthians 4:8). That is the privilege of every believer.

(1) As Barnabas, we should be "**full of the Holy Ghost.**" (Acts 11:24). This gives us the thought of Divine power. What a contrast between this and elocution, oratory, psychology, emotions, and human efforts which are being used so extensively these days in place of the HOLY SPIRIT to do the work of GOD!

(2) As Stephen, we should be "**full of faith,**" (Acts 6:5), which speaks of steadfastness, always abounding in the work of the Lord. This is the privilege of every one providing he is filled with the HOLY SPIRIT. A carnal believer is never faithful or steadfast. "A double minded [carnal and spiritual mind] man is unstable in all his ways." (James 1:8).

(3) As strangers and pilgrims, we should be "**full of glory**" (I Peter 1:8). This denotes Divine presence which these persecuted sufferers of Pontus, Galatia, and Cappadocia possessed. It is the right of every believer to have the sacred presence of His Glory to aid him through every test and trial, but he can also have it in testimony and prayer. There is very little praying in the HOLY GHOST today and little testimony and exhortation given by speakers upon whom Divine unction rests. May GOD keep us full of glory.

(4) As Dorcas, we should be "**full of good works.**" (Acts 9:36). This indicates fruitfulness. It is as natural for the new life in the believer to produce the fruits of righteousness as it is for water to flow down stream. It is not necessary to force ourselves to live righteous, we just can't help but do it. Twice-born men do not quit their swearing, their blaspheming, or their meanness because they have to, but it is removed from their lives by the power of GOD. Twice-born men are filled with fruitfulness today as well as on the day of Pentecost.

(5) As the apostles, we should be "**full of new wine.**" (Acts 2:13). This is typical of joy. When JESUS turned the water into wine, it was typical of how He would turn the lives of spiritual emptiness into lives of victory and joy. JESUS gave the lesson of the vine and the branches to show the disciples that the consecration of their lives would result in fruitfulness and in fullness of joy. "*These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*" (John 15:11). "*The joy of the Lord is your strength,*" said Nehemiah to Israel. In these days not many are so filled with the Spirit that they are charged with being drunk on new wine; not many act like a man intoxicated. Often a man under such an influence is generously liberal, willing to give the last cent away, but how much different they are from some of the professors of this age. When the subject of tithing is brought up, they try to find some excuse for not paying it or call it a subject of law. What we need is Pentecostal experiences, then we will have Pentecostal results. Our storehouses will be full, and no commercial methods or begging will be needed to continue the work of GOD.

(6) As the Romans, we should be "**full of goodness.**" (Romans 15:14). This gives us the thought of benevolence. Although Christians are not saved by good works, they will produce them after they are saved. What a blessing good people are to a home, to the church, and to a community. Oh, that we might have more plain old-fashioned goodness! To be good to ourselves, good to our families, good to our church, and good to our neighbors is our privilege if we are where we should be in grace.

(7) As the seven deacons, we should be "**full of wisdom.**" (Acts 6:3). This expresses the thought of soul-winning. "*He that winneth souls is wise.*" It requires wisdom to be a soul-winner. The same method cannot be used in dealing with various individual characters. It requires tact and sometimes righteous scheming to bring some people to GOD. The word "*wisdom*" in Acts 6:3 is from the word "*sophia*" meaning "*skill*." It was wisdom JESUS used in reaching the woman at the well. How carefully He approached her and gradually He revealed to her her lost state and condition. There was nothing rude or unkind in His manner of reaching the soul of this wayward Samaritan. To the man who lacks this wisdom, James urges him to ask of GOD, who giveth to all men liberally, (James 1:5), that he might be supplied with the patience which is so often required in bringing men to JESUS CHRIST.

Notice the sevenfold list I have given you -- full of the HOLY GHOST, full of faith, full of glory, full of good works, full of new wine, full of goodness, and full of wisdom. All these are found in the New Testament and should be manifested in every Christian's life. As Paul, a Christian can say, "**I am full.**" (Phil. 4:18). This speaks of an adequate supply, for in this chapter he reminds the Philippians of the provision and gifts sent by Epaphroditus to him in the Philippian jail. He declares, "*My God shall supply all your need*" (v. 19). This refers to spiritual as well as physical needs. After JESUS had fed the five thousand, the disciples took up the fragments that were left, and they found them to be twelve basketfuls, one basket for each apostle. It was a disgrace for a Jew to go to a Gentile for his provision. Likewise, GOD has provided each of us with a basketful of rich provisions (spiritually speaking) so that we need not go to the world and beg for any of our supplies in order to be spiritual people. Figuratively speaking, He provided us with a basketful of power, faith, glory, good works, new wine, goodness, and wisdom in order that we may say with Paul, "*I am full.*" Naomi's confession was "*I went out full.*" How many have gone out full of the above qualifications but have come back empty.

One profitable thought is seen in this lesson: she took the blame upon herself. She did not blame her deceased husband, her two boys, or the Lord, but she took the blame upon herself by saying, "*I went*." She got the "I" in its proper place. The responsibility came back on Naomi. How often a backslider will blame someone else for his downfall when in reality no one is to blame but himself. Often the cause can be traced back to days and months previous, to the hour of his breaking with GOD when he neglected secret prayer or failed to walk in the light.

She also acknowledged a blessed fact when she said, "*The Lord hath brought me home*" (v. 21). The **Lord**, the covenant GOD of Israel, had brought Naomi home. She called it **home**. Truly it is home to the backslider when he, like the prodigal son, returns. When the backslider gets back to prayer meeting, Christian fellowship, Bible Studies, and Worship, he finds himself back home. A man in his own home may take special liberties. He may say, "Praise the Lord" or "Amen" right out loud when he feels like it because he is at home. The cupboard is always open to those at home; we have privileges at home we do not have elsewhere. So my advice is to stay at home. I have no objection to people visiting and enjoying the services of another likewise-minded church, but that can become such a practice that there will be no responsibility whatever. They finally become spiritual tramps, sometimes being forced to get their supplies from Moab's cupboard. I have often noticed when members of my congregation go elsewhere and neglect their own services, they come back with the confession that the services which they attended were very dead. The Lord brought them back empty, but the Spirit of the Lord visited our place of worship in a mighty way in the salvation of sinners, showering a special blessing upon the congregation. Let us consider: --

C. THE SORROW IN WHICH SHE RETURNED. Naomi's sorrow is expressed in the threefold confession which she makes to the inhabitants of Bethlehem. A confession without sorrow is not true repentance. Let us notice the threefold confession.

1. "The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." (v. 20). The word "*bitter*" comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to embitter or make bitter." GOD had to get Naomi into a condition of soul bitterness before she would return. This was not a bitterness caused from unkind dealings of an earthly friend, but it was the chastening hand of GOD, shaping the folly of her way. She recognized the hand of the Almighty in it all.

2. "The Lord hath testified against me." (v. 21). The word "**testify**" is from the Hebrew word meaning "*to answer or respond*." According to Robert Young it is the same word found in Isaiah 59:12 where Isaiah in speaking to the Lord says, "*Our sins testify against us*." The same Lord Who brought her home was the Lord Who witnessed against her. When our lives are obedient and righteous in His sight, the manner in which He deals with us is the testimony that we are pleasing Him. It was so in the case of Abel, who offered "*a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts*." (Hebrews 11:4). So we see that GOD responded (which is the meaning of this word "*testify*") to Naomi, but it was in a chastising manner.

3. "The Almighty hath afflicted me." (v. 21). The word "*afflicted*" means "*to do evil*," as in the case of Moses when he said, "*Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?*" (Numbers 11:11). The Lord has a method of dealing with His children and with backsliders, yea, even with sinners, to

get them to a place where they are in subjection to Him. Sometimes the method is very severe; it may be loss of property, health, loved ones, or of reputation, but He has a way of afflicting mankind in the spirit of love to bring him unto Himself. So here we find GOD's dealings, GOD's testimony, and GOD's affliction against Naomi. Let us now study: --

III. THE GRATIFYING SUPPLY

As this couple journey to Bethlehem, they beheld the waving fields of barley, and they found that the message they had received in Moab was true -- "*That the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread*" (Ruth 1:6). They would now have the opportunity to provide for themselves bread for the coming winter. Thus, it reminds us that there is a time to sow and a time to reap. If we would reap in the ages of eternity, we must sow in the dispensation of time. Let us note: --

(1) **She came back in the right manner.** This has been described under the division, "*A Grievous Sorrow.*"

(2) **She came back to the right place.** It was Bethlehem - the house of bread. If I desire to live in a warm climate, I must of necessity go where a warm climate prevails. Likewise, if I desire spiritual bread for my soul, I must go where spiritual bread may be obtained. The reason so many of GOD's people are living on half rations is because they are not willing to go to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest. Some of these remain under the influences of modernistic teaching or in a cold dead spiritual atmosphere while only a few blocks from them is a spiritual place of worship where their souls could be blessed and their testimonies would be welcomed. But rather than humble themselves and worship with people who are less popular and who have a more radical standard, they prefer to die in Moab with the Laodicean worshippers. GOD's plan for them is to come back to the right place, and anything short of that will leave the soul starving and in dire want.

(3) **She came back at the right time.** "*In the beginning of the barley harvest.*" (Ruth 1:22). According to the Jewish calendar, that takes place in the spring of the Jewish year. When a person reaches Bethlehem, it is springtime for his soul. The spiritual birds are singing; the lilies-of-the-valley are blooming; the waving fields of golden grain are testifying that it's harvest time.

It also speaks of joy. Isaiah writes of the joyful worshippers. "*They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.*" (Isaiah 9:3). JESUS tells of the joy that comes to the three classes of people when the lost sheep is found. (Luke 15:3-7).

First, the shepherd rejoices, "*He layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing*" (v. 5).

Second, He calls his friends and neighbours together, typical of the church, and invites them to rejoice with him, for the sheep that was lost is found. (v. 6).

Third, he goes a step farther and says, "*Likewise, meaning just as JESUS and the Church rejoices when a lost soul is found, "Heaven unites in rejoicing over the rescue"* (v. 7).

It also gives joy to the sheep that is restored to the fold, for it knows that now it is to be safely nestled on the shepherd's breast, a place of affection; and to be supported by his shoulders, a

place of strength. The barley harvest, which indicates new life, is a producer of joy. It removes the sorrows that were produced through a life of sin, and it fills the spirit with holy joy and rapture.

THE BARLEY HARVEST

According to Exodus 9:31-32, barley was the first of the grain; flax was second; wheat was third. When they arrived at Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest, it is evident that there was still more to follow which is revealed in Ruth 2:23. This teaching leads us to deeper truths in grace which are taught in the two divisions of the book -- First, "**Find Grace**; Second, "**Find Rest**." There is a soul rest that must be found by the believer; this is typical of the wheat harvest. This subject will be treated later, when we study chapter three.

The seven feasts of the Lord, which are recorded in Leviticus 23, are as follows:

(1) **The Feast of the Passover** (v. 5). This speaks of redemption, through blood, from the land of Egypt, which is typical of our redemption from a life of sin. The lamb slain points forward to the LAMB of GOD, JESUS CHRIST.

(2) **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** (v. 6). Leaven in the Scripture is a type of evil and carnality and was not to be used for holy purposes: "*Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel*" (Exodus 12:15). Paul speaks of it as malice and wickedness: "*Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*" (I Corinthians 5:7-8). Leaven removed from the bread gives the thought of separation, and it is also typical of a separated life in holy communion with our Lord.

(3) **The Feast of Firstfruits** (v. 9-14). This points forward to JESUS CHRIST, the first-fruits of the resurrection of the dead: "*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christs at his coming*" (I Corinthians 15:22-23).

(4) **The Feast of Pentecost** (vv. 15-22). This took place exactly fifty days after the feast of firstfruits (v. 16). The two wave-loaves typify the union of the Jew and Gentile in the Church. They were made of fine flour, which speaks of the products of Calvary. The leaven within them denotes the sin or carnal life within the believer, which must pass through the purging and purifying process of the first when the loaves were "baken." It was at this time, fifty days later than the barley harvest, that the full ingathering of summer grain and summer fruits occurred. How nicely GOD in Providence taught that the spring harvest brought to us the graces of justification but the more abundant harvest, a multiplied harvest of wheat (not barley), is received fifty days later in the baptism of the HOLY SPIRIT. From this we see that Nature, Providence, and Scripture all picture the religious experience for the believer.

(5) **The Feast of the Blowing of Trumpets** (vv. 23-25). This occurred on the first day of the

seventh month. The reader will note there was a great interval between the fourth feast, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of Trumpets. This is typical of the long interval of grace, this dispensation in which the HOLY SPIRIT is gathering out the two loaves, the Jews and Gentiles, to form His Church. The feast of trumpets refers to the time when GOD will call Israel back to their own land, Palestine. Matthew speaks of the time when the "*angels with a great sound of a trumpet, shall gather together his elect from the four winds*" (Matthew 24:31). Following that verse is the parable of the fig tree, teaching us that when the Jews take on new life as described here by "*putting forth leaves, we should know that summer is nigh,*" or the time is at hand for the blowing of the trumpets.

(6) **The Feast of Atonement** (vv. 26-32). This is the time when reconciliation will be made between GOD and the Jewish people. "*They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him . . . , and shall be in bitterness for him*" (Zechariah 12:10). "*There shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness*" (Zechariah 13:1). Thus, it shall be a national atonement; a nation shall be born in a day.

(7) **The Feast of Tabernacles** (vv. 33-43). The final feast of the Lord, which is to last seven days in the seventh month of the year, pictures the earthly millennial rest. Clarence Larkin has beautifully described this in the following words: "What the '**seventh day**' or Sabbath, is to the week, a day of rest, so the '**seventh month**' to the other six months of the 'cycle,' typifies a period of rest -- the '**Sabbatic Rest,**' of the '**Millennial Period**' in relation to the other six thousand years of the world's work day."

But you will notice that a holy convocation is to take place on the eighth day, and this gives us the thought of the new beginning when the new Heavens and earth will be ushered in, time and dispensations will have ceased, and we will be forever with the Lord. These seven feasts give us a prophetic picture in typical teaching of the plan of grace from the fall of man until the consummation of redemption when face to face we stand before the REDEEMER in the unending age.

Let us now go back to the feast of firstfruits and see how that is connected with the barley harvest.

The feast of first-fruits was the third of seven feasts. Three is typical of resurrection. "*As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*" (Matthew 12:40). It, being the third feast, will give us resurrection truth. This feast marked the beginning of the harvest, announcing the death of winter. The cold winter with its severe winds and hardships is past, and spring has arrived. In the same way, CHRIST's resurrection announced the death of the old dispensation, the law and the beginning of the dispensation of grace. It announced that the law with its cruelty and sternness had passed, and grace had begun. Likewise, the resurrection life in the believer announces that his life of cruelty and sternness, winter with its cold hardships, is past, and new life, light, and love is now reigning in his being.

A further proof that this feast speaks of resurrection is seen in the word "*first-fruits.*" The very name given to the sheaf which was waved before the Lord is the name given to Him as the One

"risen from the dead -- CHRIST, the First-fruit: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Corinthians 15:20).

We notice in the study of the feasts of the Lord that the beginning of the barley harvest was marked by the waving of the sheaf of the first ripe grain, announcing the death of winter and the arrival of spring. Likewise is the beginning of this church age, which is marked by the resurrection of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. It is springtime to the soul to every one who is risen with CHRIST and is made partaker of His Divine life. This sheaf was to waved in the land *"which I give unto you,"* says the Lord (Leviticus 23:10). This land of Canaan was the land of plenty. The Lord called it *"a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass"* (Deuteronomy 8:7-9).

It was a land in which they should lack nothing. In the same way, the believer who enters on resurrection territory should lack nothing. He can say with Paul of old, *"Christ is all -- all he has and all he needs is found in CHRIST.* His pardon, his union, his new life, his joy, and new desires all come through JESUS, but the claims of Jehovah must first be recognized in obtaining all this prosperity and blessing. GOD must come first in the believer's life. This is found in Leviticus 23 verse 14 where it reads, *"Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God."* If we will remember GOD first, we can have the parched corn and the green ears in abundance.

By the waving of this sheaf, it was also a pledge to Israel that many sheaves were to follow, a type and foreshadowing of a future resurrection in which the saints who die in the Lord rise and go forth to meet CHRIST. Moreover, every Naomi and Ruth of this present dispensation that come back to the Father's house will come (spiritually speaking) in the beginning of the barley harvest. There every Christian will find a Gracious Supply -- a supply of forgiveness, of life, of peace, of joy -- in fact all that he needs for body, soul, and spirit. Although in the Book of Ruth there's no suggestion to the Cross of CHRIST, yet it lacks no hint that leads us to the blessed truth of death and resurrection. This hint is found in the words *"in the beginning of the barley harvest."* There could be no harvest of grain without the death of the kernel, neither can there be any resurrection without the crucifixion. This study concludes the first chapter of the Book, the main thought being Naomi's affliction.

Our next study will enter into the thought of Ruth's activity.

~ end of chapter 3 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
