

### Plan and Purpose Bible Lesson #III-29—Ruth

(Read the book of Ruth) The book of Matthew in the New Testament begins with **“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”** Then follows a genealogy of Christ which includes the genealogy of Pharez that we find in the last five verses of the book of Ruth. The story we find in this book provides the link that we need to make the genealogy that we find in Matthew complete. There are some other things that we find in the genealogy in Matthew that we have to go to other Scriptures to get the complete picture, but the book of Ruth gives us the lineage of King David that we need.

Not only does this book give us actual facts that we need to understand the whole Bible, it also gives us a prophetic picture, that if understood, will also help us to a greater understanding of the whole Bible. As we study Scripture, we find that the Bible repeats the same theme in several different ways, yet is consistent in telling the basic story of God’s plan and purpose for all mankind. The book of Ruth is helpful in telling us the story in a little different way than we might have heard it before.

I believe we can say that the God’s ultimate purpose of creation is to bring forth a corporate Son in His own image, i.e. a son made up of the people glorified as He is glorified. This was the real meaning of the command given to Adam in Gen. 1:28, **“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it.”** Had Adam and Eve had children before their sin, the children would have been brought forth in the image of God. But since they had no children until after they sinned and had lost their glorified bodies, the children were born mortal, carnal and imperfect. However, this did not mean that God’s purpose had been thwarted, for He had a plan of restoration to bring His purpose to fruition. That plan is the story of the Bible.

The story of the Exodus from Egypt is symbolically a basic outline of this plan of restoration. As the people traveled, God instituted a series of feast days to commemorate, or to remember certain aspects of that journey. These feast days can then also represent this restoration journey. This journey is not a journey from earth to heaven, but rather a journey from death to life on earth, from corruption to incorruption, from the image of the first Adam to the image of the Second Adam. We don’t as yet know for sure what that image really is. Even the apostle John admits that he did not know what it would be. **“<sup>2</sup>Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”** (I John 3:2)

The important thing for us to know is that Jesus Christ was begotten from above, that he was the exact image of His Father in heaven. As Christians, we too have been begotten from above as well that we also might bear the image of the heavenly. **“<sup>49</sup>And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.’** (I Cor. 15:49) Jesus, being the pattern Son, showed us the path that we must all follow to achieve His image. However, note that in the story of Jesus, it did not start with His birth. It started with His conception. In John 3:3 Jesus told Nicodemus, **“<sup>3</sup>Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”** We need to look at the term “born again.” The word “born” is from the Greek *“gennao.”* Though translated into several different words or terms, it is translated “beget” 49 times and “be born” 39 times. Young’s Concordance says that it means “beget.” Dr. Bullinger, in a note concerning this word, says, “When used of the father—to beget or engender; and when used of the mother it means to bring forth into the world.” Men engender, women give birth. To exemplify this, in

Matt. 1:2, we're told "**Abraham begat Isaac.**" Obviously Abraham did not give birth to Isaac, but rather engendered Isaac in the womb of Sarah and Sarah gave birth to Isaac.

From his book "The Laws of the Second Coming: Dr. Stephen Jones had the following to say on this subject: "In Matthew 1:20, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take Mary to be his wife, even though she was pregnant and thought by many to be an adulteress. The angel explained to him, "*for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*" The Greek word translated "conceived" is *gennethen*, from *gennao*. It is apparent that Jesus had not yet been born in Bethlehem. We see that the word is used here of conception, rather of birthing. The Holy Spirit had acted as the Father to beget, or engender, an embryo within Mary.

So what does this all mean to us? How does this apply to John 3:3, where Jesus told Nicodemus that he had to be "born again?" It shows that when the Spirit of God indwells us, we are begotten from above. We are not yet technically "born." The term, "born again" is not fully accurate, for it implies that we have now been made fully in the image of our Father. The fact is, an embryo has not yet taken full shape. It is yet being made and formed into the image of its father and mother. The teaching that Christians are now "born again" has caused many to think that they have now arrived at the final goal of life on earth, and that there is little else to do except wait to go to heaven. Meanwhile, the only real purpose the Christian seems to have on earth is to witness to others and to support their church with their presence and with their presents.

One of the major goals in this book is to challenge that mindset and to show people that they must progress through the stages of development revealed by the feast days of Israel in order to arrive at the final destination.

The other word used in John 3:3, which we have not yet explained, is *anōthen*, translated "again," as in "born again." Vine's Expository Dictionary says that "*it signifies from above, or anew.*" If John had meant to imply "again" or "another time," he would have used the Greek word, *deuteros*, as he did in John 9:24,

<sup>24</sup> **So a second time [deuteros] they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner."**

We conclude, then, that John 3:3 instructed Nicodemus (and us) that we are to be "begotten from above," rather than to be "born again." First things first. We must first be begotten before we can be brought to full birth."

The feasts that God commanded the men of Israel to observe could be looked at as portraying this conception (Passover—justification), development (Pentecost—sanctification) and birth (Tabernacles—glorification). In the normal gestation period, we normally consider it to be 9 months and though it is only 7 months from Passover to Tabernacles, in the normal development of a child, the child is pretty much fully developed at the end of 7 months and can survive if born prematurely.

My understanding of the word "soul" is that this is the person, the animation of the body, the real you, so to speak. It is not something separate from the body that continues to live after the body dies, but rather is life itself within the body. But the Greek word for "soul" is "*psuche*" and is a feminine word. Thus when God created man a "living soul", He created him female in the sense that man was to be impregnated by the Holy Spirit of God to bring forth Christ, "the hope of glory" in him. Man's "soul" then is the womb of God by which he reproduces Himself in the earth.

When a child is born, he has the genetics of both his father and his mother. In the case of God impregnating man to bring forth His child, Adamic man is **“of the earth, earthy.”** (I Cor. 15:47) God the Father is a Spirit. How do the two mate. This is beyond our imagination, but we already have an example in the begetting of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary. We’re told in Luke 1:35 as the angel answered Mary’s question as to how this could happen: **”<sup>35</sup>And the angel answered and said unto her, 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.”** It is in the same manner that the Holy Spirit must overshadow us and beget Christ in us. This is a great mystery, not only to the world, but within our own selves as well. We cannot explain this marriage of God and our souls or lives. It is a marriage between God and man, between Christ and His bride. The purpose is to bring forth the **“Manchild.”**

The apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians considers himself to be somewhat of a mid-wife to them in this process and says to them in chapter 4:19, **“<sup>19</sup> My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.”** The Holy Spirit had come upon the people of Galatia and had engendered Christ in them. Christ was now being formed in them as they matured in Christ. The problem Paul was dealing with here is that the people had begun to put their trust in fleshly circumcision, a sign of the Old Covenant. Paul reminds them that it is heart circumcision that is the sign of the New Covenant and if they were to put their trust in the Old Covenant it would effectively abort the Manchild in them.

We find that **“corporate Son in God’s own image”** spoken of in different ways throughout Scripture, being referred to the most as the **“Sons of God”** in the New Testament. In this lesson we want to refer to Him as the Manchild. The law of the Manchild is in Deut. 25:5-10:

**“If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.**

**<sup>6</sup>And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.**

**<sup>7</sup>And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.**

**<sup>8</sup>Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her;**

**<sup>9</sup>Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.**

**<sup>10</sup>And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.”**

So if a man died childless, having no heir to his inheritance, it was the duty of the man’s brother to beget an heir through her in his brother’s name. The story of Ruth shows us the order of how this took place.

Elimelech and Naomi had apparently been forced to sell their property in Judah and move to Moab due to a drought in the land that had put them in debt. Remember that Moab is across the

Jordan River from Judah to the east. Remember the law that would allow them to redeem the land or a kinsman redeemer could redeem it up until the Jubilee. But they would have to stay off the land until the Jubilee if they could not redeem it themselves.

Though Elimelech and Naomi had two sons who might ultimately be able to take control of the land again at the Jubilee, not only did Elimelech die, but both of their sons died as well before they were able to go back to Judah. The two sons had married women from Moab, so when the two sons died Naomi was left with just the two daughter-in-laws, Ruth and Orpah. When Naomi decided to return to Judah, Ruth determined to go with her. As we have read, when they returned Ruth went out to glean behind those who were harvesting the barley. Again recall that the law required that the farmers were to leave the corners of their field and let the poor glean the corners and anything that was missed or dropped in the course of harvesting. In the process of the harvest first of the barley and then of the wheat, a landowner named Boaz fell in love with Ruth as she gleaned his fields. Boaz was apparently a younger brother to Elimelech, or at least a close relative. Apparently, since Ruth's husband would have inherited the land that Elimelech and Naomi sold, she became a part of that possession. Boaz wanted to marry Ruth, but it meant redeeming the land as well, i.e. she went with the land. However, there was a closer relative, perhaps an older brother who had first right to redeem the land. When he realized that he would have to marry Ruth as part of the purchasing or redeeming the field, he refused since he apparently was already married and had children. Josephus provides us a confirming account of what happened in his book Antiquities, V,ix,4. "Now about noon Boaz went down into the city, and gathered the senate together, and when he had sent for Ruth, he called for her kinsman also; and when he was come, he said, 'Dost thou not retain the inheritance of Elimelech and his sons?' He confessed that he did retain it, and that he did as he was permitted to do by the laws, because he was their nearest kinsman. Then said Boaz, 'Thou must not remember the laws by halves, but do everything according to them; for the wife of Mahlon is come hither, whom thou must marry, according to the law, in case thou wilt retain their fields.' So the man yielded up both the field and the wife to Boaz, who was himself of kin to those that were dead, as alleging that he had a wife already, and children also; so Boaz called the senate to witness, and bid the woman to loose his shoe and spit in his face, according to the law; and when this was done, Boaz married Ruth, and they had a son within a year's time."

While this story illustrates how the law we read in Deut. 25 works, it is also prophetic in illustrating how the Manchild is birthed. Hebrews 2:11-15 tells us that Jesus Christ is our elder brother:

**<sup>11</sup>For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,**

**<sup>12</sup>Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.**

**<sup>13</sup>And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.**

**<sup>14</sup>Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

**<sup>15</sup>And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

**<sup>16</sup>For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.**

**<sup>17</sup>Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.**

Christ came as a descendant of Abraham that he might be a kinsman redeemer to the house of Israel, but He also came as flesh and blood—not as an angel-- that he might redeem all mankind back to Adam.

Christ died childless. He was not married. He did not have any physical children but more importantly, he did not have any spiritual children as well as no one had come to the point of spiritual birth at that time. Hebrews 11 gives us a long list of Old Testament saints of which it is said in verse 39, **<sup>39</sup>And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.** "The promise is the "glorification", "the fulfillment of Tabernacles", "birth as a Son of God", "the birth of the Manchild company", "the inheritance of the Kingdom."

We, as Jesus' brethren, are raising up seed unto our older brother so that His name is not blotted out of Israel, so that He does not lose His inheritance in the earth. Our "soul" or "life" has been overshadowed by the Holy Spirit that it might bring forth Christ in each of us.

A Scripture that has bothered me in the past is I John 3:9, **<sup>9</sup>Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.** The word "born" in both places in this verse is again from the Greek word, *gennao*. As we have mentioned already, this should have been translated "begotten". This "seed" that is within each true Christian cannot sin because, like Jesus Christ, it does not have Adam as his father. This holy seed is in the womb of our soul or life and is growing and maturing until the time of full birth. This seed is the real you, what you are becoming. It is not of our flesh. Paul makes the distinction between our flesh and the spiritual Seed within us in Romans 7:18-20, **<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.**

**<sup>19</sup>For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.**

**<sup>20</sup>Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."**

Paul likens our Christian life to running a race. If we are not willing to raise up seed unto our older brother, Jesus Christ, we can end up trying to run the race minus a shoe in accordance with the law in Deut. 23 and the example in the book of Ruth. JRL