

RUTH/THREE FUNERALS AND A WEDDING

Week 5 – The Marriage Relationship in the Bible

2/16/16

Ruth 3:1-4 - *Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?”² Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.³ Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.⁴ Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do.”*

Prophetic picture of Ruth 2: Ruth, the Gentile woman, is introduced to Boaz, one of Naomi’s close relatives, considered a redeemer. Ruth is introduced to Boaz, a redeemer, through His unnamed servant (John 16:13). Ruth, the Moabitess, the Gentile, has already come to the LORD God of Israel, under Whose wings she sought refuge (Ruth 2:12). Ruth finds grace in the sight of Boaz and was told by him that she was to *only* in His field with His workers. She stays with Naomi, the Jew, until the end of the harvest time encompassing both the barley and the wheat harvests.

In Scripture we see the covenant relationship between God and Israel. That everlasting covenant relationship is rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant (unconditional/unilateral). Gentile believers are grafted into the blessing aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant (all the families of the earth will be blessed [Gen. 12:3] through the Messiah). How can we describe this covenant relationship between God and Israel? It is depicted in Scripture as marriage. The Hebrew word for Passover is Pesach. The root meaning for Pesach is “to spread the wings over” which is indicative of protection. This speaks to God’s covenant relationship with Israel. Israel has been referred to as the “Wife of Jehovah”. There is no specific verse stating that verbiage. Let’s look, however, at Scripture which supports such a relationship:

The Lord set His love on Israel:

Deut. 7:6-8 - *For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.⁷ The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples;⁸ but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. The oath mentioned is the Abrahamic Covenant – an unconditional/unilateral covenant. It’s a one-sided covenant and the fulfillment is based on God alone (see Heb. 6:13).*

God brought Israel to Himself:

Ex. 19:3-4 - *And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of*

Israel: ⁴ *'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.*

NOTE: when we read of Ruth coming under the wing of the God of Israel, we understand that as her salvation. Salvation is unconditional; it's based on God! Salvation is not by works.

God's language of love:

Eze. 16:8 – *'When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine,' says the Lord GOD.*

Israel rebelled and became an adulterous wife!

Eze. 16:32 - *You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband.*

Israel worshipped other gods. She was the wife of God (noted here in this verse [and we'll see elsewhere]); therefore, by worshipping other gods while married to the one true God, she engaged in adultery. She remains married to God, based on the Abrahamic Covenant. In the book of Hosea, God depicts His relationship w/ His wife, Israel. Hosea married Gomer and she became a prostitute. This is a picture of the adulterous nation of Israel.

God called out to Israel in her adulterous condition:

Jer. 3:14 – *'Return, O backsliding children,' says the LORD; 'for I am married to you.'*

When Judah disobeyed God and was carried into exile, God described her condition as her widowhood – stating that He is married to her because this relationship is based on the unconditional, unilateral Abrahamic Covenant:

Isa. 54:5 - *For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.*

You need to know that “Maker” and “husband” are both in the plural to correspond with Elohim – “God”. Elohim is in the plural form (“im” is the plural ending). We see in the Hebrew language a plurality in the Godhead!

Israel's condition is described as “widowhood” as she wanders among the nations, in exile:

Isa. 54:4 - *Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore.*

In Isa. 54:7 we read - *For a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you.* The Hebrew word for “forsaken” is *asav* — to restore, to repair, to fortify!! In this sense, “forsaken” speaks to purging, refining, and the Refiners’ fire about which we read in Mal. 3:2-3 - *But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like launderers’ soap.* ³ *He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness!* In the book of Malachi, the prophet laced into the corrupt priests of the day. They were offering polluted sacrifices/corrupt sacrifices. Following the purging of the Tribulation, the Time of Jacob’s Trouble (Jer. 30:7), they will be able to offer an offering of righteousness to the Lord during the Millennial Kingdom – in the Millennial Temple (Eze. 43).

How many will be purged during the Tribulation?

Zech. 13:8-9 – *‘And it shall come to pass in all the land,’ says the LORD, ‘That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it:’* ⁹ *I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; and each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’*

God has chosen Israel for HIS purposes. He is setting the stage for the end times around Israel. But Israel, as a nation, is not yet restored, and, thus. . .

Eze. 20:33-34 – *‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you.’* ³⁴ *I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.*

Eze. 22:17-22 - *The word of the LORD came to me, saying,* ¹⁸ *‘Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me; they are all bronze, tin, iron, and lead, in the midst of a furnace; they have become dross from silver.’* ¹⁹ *Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Because you have all become dross, therefore behold, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.’* ²⁰ *As men gather silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into the midst of a furnace, to blow fire on it, to melt it; so I will gather you in My anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there and melt you.* ²¹ *Yes, I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you shall be melted in its midst.* ²² *As silver is melted in the midst of a furnace, so shall you be melted in its midst; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have poured out My fury on you.’*

Please take special note of. . .

Ezekiel 36:20-28 - *When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name—when they said of them, ‘These are the people of the LORD, and yet they have gone out of His land.’* ²¹ *But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.*

²² *“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.”* ²³ *And I will sanctify My great name, which has*

been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD,” says the Lord GOD, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. ²⁴ For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. ²⁸ Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

UNTIL - used to indicate the time when something will happen, become true, etc. In Hosea 5, God speaks of pouring out His wrath on Judah and Ephraim. We then read. . . Hosea 5:15 - *I will return again to My place **TILL** they (Judah/Israel) acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.*

UNTIL they repent of their sin – as a nation – Jesus will not return.

Matt. 23:37-39 - *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more **TILL** you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ ”*

Zech. 12:10 - *And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

God’s restored relationship with Israel:

Isa. 62:1-7 - *For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, **UNTIL** her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. ² The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name. ³ You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. ⁴ You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called Hephzibah,^[a] and your land Beulah; For the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. ⁵ For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. ⁶ I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, ⁷ And give Him no rest **till** He establishes and **till** He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.*

Israel's restoration comes under the New Covenant:

Jer. 31:31-34 - Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke (Mosaic Covenant – which was conditional – Israel was told by God that they needed to obey this covenant), though I was a husband to them, says the LORD (THROUGH THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT).³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

Salvation – OT/NT is always through the New Covenant based on Jesus' death – His shed blood - and His resurrection. How can that be? REMEMBER – God's plan of salvation is ETERNAL – Rev. 13:8.

Even today, though not restored, Israel remains a nation before God (Jer. 31:35-37), even into the new heavens and the new earth (Isa. 66:22-23).

Gentile believers in Jesus have been grafted into the blessings aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant (Rom. 11:16-21).

The New Covenant is the salvation aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3:14).

Regarding the continuing marriage backdrop, the Church comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus are in the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:24, 27) and are awaiting a marriage ceremony in heaven.

Eph. 5:25-27 – Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

II Cor. 11:2 - For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

The Church is currently separated from her Bridegroom at this time since Pentecost and until the Rapture of the Church. The Church's responsibility during the betrothal period is to be faithful to Him.

JEWISH WEDDING FEAST

THE ARRANGEMENT:

The father of the groom arranged to pay the bride price.

- Eph. 5:25 – Christ loved His bride and gave Himself for her.
- John 3:16 – God gave His only begotten (unique; one of a kind) Son
- I Cor. 6:20 – we were bought with a price

The bridegroom traveled from his father's home to the home of the bride.

PREPARATION – BETROTHAL:

Symbol of betrothal – cup of wine.

- The Bridegroom poured a cup of wine for his beloved and offered it to her. If she took the wine, she accepted his proposal.
- He would then leave – but before he would leave, he would say, “Let not your heart be troubled. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” WE SEE 2 COMINGS OF THE BRIDEGROOM TO THE BRIDE’S HOME!

Betrothal time was at least nine months to ensure that the bride was pure. The Bridegroom would depart for his father's house and build extra rooms onto his father's home – in preparation for his family. The bride had to prepare and ready herself. She would engage in daily tasks which she could carry out joyfully as she was in love and expectantly awaiting the return of the Bridegroom. The Church is in the process of being perfected for the Bridegroom (II Cor. 11:2).

Eph. 5:26-27 – *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,* ²⁷ *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.* We are going to be presented to Jesus without outward defilement or inward defilement because His righteousness has been imputed to us (Rom. 5:18).

THE FETCHING OF THE BRIDE:

At the command of the father (Matt. 24:36).

THE CEREMONY:

Rev. 19:6-9 - *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!”* ⁷ *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”* ⁸ *And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

THE MARRIAGE FEAST:

Rev. 19:9 - *Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’”*

Isa. 25:6 – *And in this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all people, a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of well-refined wines on the lees.*

The feast occurs at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom:

Matt. 8:11 - *And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven*

Gentile and Jewish believers will eat of the marriage feast.

JEWISH WEDDING FEAST:

- The Father of the bridegroom negotiates a price for the bride.
- The bridegroom travels to the bride's house.
- Betrothal symbol – drink from a cup of wine.
- From that moment the bride was declared sanctified or set apart
- Bridegroom would leave the bride's home and return to his father's home. The Bridegroom would speak these words to the bride before his departure: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . I go to prepare a place for you. . .and. . .I will come again". We note two comings on the part of the bridegroom.
- The bride did not know the exact day or hour the bridegroom would return. She needed to be prepared at all times.
- Bridegroom would add onto his father's home – bridal chamber.
- At the father's command, the Bridegroom and the groomsmen (Judges 14; John 3) would travel to the bride's home. The Bridegroom himself didn't know the exact time. Note Matt. 24:36.
- The bride would be beckoned from the street by a shout.
- The entire bridal party traveled to the father's home for a marriage feast (Mat. 25:1-6).
- The Bridegroom and bride went into the bridal chamber to consummate the marriage (Judges 14:12).
- When the marriage was consummated, there was a seven day marriage celebration during which time the bride remained hidden in the bridal chamber
- At the end of the seven days, the Bridegroom brought his bride out for all to see

QUESTIONS

Had you been aware of such an emphasis on marriage in Scripture as it relates to a covenant relationship with God?

What do you think about that emphasis?

How might it be significant?

What are your thoughts regarding the suggested marriage relationship as the backdrop/one of the backdrops of Scripture?

If you agree – why?

If you don't agree – why?

If you agree – how is this impactful to our understanding of the Bible? How is this impactful to you personally?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Review your handout for week 5

Begin sharing what you're learning from the book of Ruth with others.

Read your handout for week 6 when you receive it