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“And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”

Isaiah 60:3

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Dear Brethren and Fellow Laborers,

The Bible is full of symbolism. Symbols mean something. The book of Ruth is read by the Jews around Pentecost because of its symbolism. Let's look at the symbolism of Ruth as it applies to the New Covenant Church.

Ruth 1:1-7

“Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah 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 Bethlehemjudah. 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. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread. 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”

Elimelech and Naomi were from Bethlehem and belonged to the tribe of Judah.

Because of famine they went to Moab, a Gentile country, where the sons married Moabite women.

¹ All scriptural references from the KJV unless otherwise noted.

After her husband and sons died, Naomi decided to return to Israel.

This passage of scripture is full of symbolism. Naomi is symbolic of the Church. The Church is to leave the comforts of home and go and preach the Gospel to all the nations. For the New Covenant Church, the emphasis is now on preaching the Gospel to the NON-Israelite nations.

Jesus told his disciples to go first to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, then to go to the Gentile nations.

Matthew 10:5-7

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

That is exactly what these men did. Then Jesus expanded the commission, first through Peter and then through Paul. Now the Gospel would go out to the Gentile nations.

Acts 11:1

And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

The apostle Paul and his companions went first to the Jews. But when many of them rejected the Gospel message, he understood that the Lord wanted him to go further afield.

Acts 13:46-47

Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, 'I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles², that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.'"

The Gospel of the Kingdom is for all peoples, even those who live at the ends of the earth and do not share our customs and language. The Gospel has always been and always will be—for all peoples.

² Isaiah 42:6

Isaiah 66:19

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

Galatians 3:8

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Naomi is symbolic of the New Covenant Church. The Moabite daughters-in-law are symbolic of the Gentile nations.

In the Book of Ruth, the Church (symbolized by Naomi) is to bring the Gentile nations back to the "bosom of Abraham."

Matthew 8:11

And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

When God told Abraham that all the nations would be blessed through his "seed" or covenant descendants, He was talking about the Work of Jesus and the Church.

Isaiah 11:10

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

Today, to be a covenant child of Abraham, is not an issue of blood, but an issue of faith. This is as much true today as it was in the Apostle Paul's day.

Quoting Paul:

Romans 9:25-26

As he saith also in Osee, "I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God."

Jesus told us in Matthew 28 to go to **all the nations** of the world and preach the Gospel. Have we accomplished that assignment?

The commission to you and to me to PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE NATIONS is far from finished. We have only just scratched the surface.

If you look at the story of Ruth, you see a wonderful symbolic story of the purpose of the Church. Naomi took Ruth back with her to Israel. The other daughter was given the chance, but did not follow through and go with her mother-in-law. Remember, only one daughter followed Naomi. The other one stayed in Moab. Not everyone who hears the Gospel will accept and repent. But they need to be given the chance.

Also, it is not reasonable to say that the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentile nations will be done in the Millennium—so we should not worry about it. If that were true, then why did Jesus give the Church the job of taking the Gospel to ALL THE WORLD?

Ruth was serious about going with Naomi and she demonstrated that conviction by refusing to leave her mother in law.

When they reached Bethlehem, Ruth went to glean in the fields of a near relative to Naomi named Boaz. Boaz was the field owner and Lord of all the workers. Boaz represents Jesus Christ. Boaz was very kind to Ruth, a Moabitess, and she sought his favor.

When she lay down at his feet while he slept on the threshing floor, this was not some sort of risqué encounter. By lying down at his feet, she symbolically asked to be placed under his care, in effect, to become his bride.

When Boaz placed part of his blanket³ over her, it was symbolic of spreading wings over her.

Ruth 2:12

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.

Those among the Gentile nations who repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and King come under His protection and His care. They, as Paul says in Galatians 3:29, become the children of Abraham and FULL heirs of the Kingdom of God.

³ Ruth 3:9

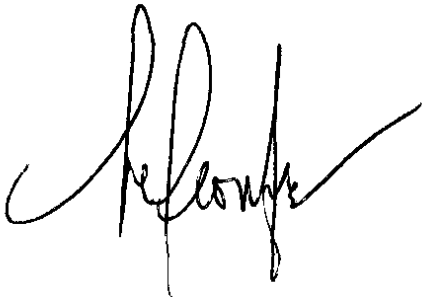
It is truly a wonderful story, rich with symbolism for the Christian today. Ruth married Boaz and had a son named Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, the father of King David. Jesus Himself was of the line of David, and Ruth was His ancestor. The Gentile nations, too, have a chance to be the children of Abraham by being brought to Christ.

Who is going to bring them?

The Work of the Church, the Naomi sent by God to the Gentile nations, is far from over.

The Work of Preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles has only just begun. We have a lot of work to do. Let us all "be about our Father's business."

Serving Our Lord Jesus, the Boaz of God's harvest fields,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', with a stylized, flowing script.

T. Leon Sexton

Notice: Feast of Tabernacles in Chiang Mai, Thailand

Plans are underway for the 2011 Festival of Tabernacles in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The Thailand Feast is mainly for the benefit of local brethren, but international visitors are always warmly welcomed. Services are held all eight days and are in English, with Thai and Burmese language translations. For further information, please write to us at the address at the top of this letter or email us at: **mail@legacyinstitute.org**.

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