

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 31

Ruth Part 2

Tuesday Night Bible Study, July 21, 2009

--OUTLINE

- INTRO: "BE PREPARED TO GIVE AN ANSWER...FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU"
- THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL IN THE PASSOVER AND FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
- ADDITIONAL SYMBOLISM IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

--INTRO: "BE PREPARED TO GIVE AN ANSWER... FOR THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU"

--1 Peter 3:15: "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. ..."

--Jesus and the apostles gave us an example of a key principle in how to give an answer for our hope in Christ...

--when the apostle Paul stood on trial, accused of being the "ringleader" of a new cult, he said that all he was doing was "saying no other things than those **which the prophets and Moses said would come.**" (Acts 26:22)

--he pointed to Old Testament prophecy as the sole proof that the gospel of Christ is truly from God.

--Christianity is set apart from all other religions by the way that Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecy!

--Acts 26:6-7: at the beginning of his trial Paul said, "And now it is because of my hope in **what God has promised our fathers** that I am on trial today."

--Jesus met two people after His resurrection who were confused about why He died and said to them, "'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' **And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,** He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:25-27)

--and not only did the life of Christ fit like a puzzle the outline given in the Old Testament, but the course of world history has also fit like a puzzle the outline given in the Old Testament (most notably in the book of Daniel).

--only God could orchestrate the life of Jesus and the course of history like this – and the very purpose of history, the only reason God has preserved the world throughout history, is to bring salvation to the world through Jesus! (whose name means "The Lord is Salvation!") see Acts 17:26-27

--the apostles also gave us an example of a key principle in how to be most effective in sharing the gospel...

--we must maintain a close walk with the Lord and as a result be sensitive to the leading of His Spirit, as the first sentence in 1 Peter 3:15 affirms – "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord."

--THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL IN THE PASSOVER AND FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

--when Jesus "expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" He no doubt talked about the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

--the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread memorialized the essence of the gospel for 1500 years before Christ was born!

--the essence of the gospel is "repentance and forgiveness of sins".

--after His resurrection Jesus told His disciples, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled **that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms**." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and **repentance and forgiveness of sins** will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:44-47)

--"forgiveness of sins"...

--Romans 6:23 states that "the wages of sin is death."

--our sins are forgiven when we trust in Christ to pay the penalty for our sins (the sentence of death) and die as a substitute in our place.

--the Passover memorialized the concept of forgiveness of sins through a substitutionary death.

--the Passover was first instituted right before Israel's exodus from Egypt when the blood of the Passover sacrifice sprinkled on their doorposts protected them from the plague of death that swept through Egypt.

--the death of the Passover sacrifice literally protected them from the death plague!

--in 1 Corinthians 5:7 Christ is called our Passover – "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."

--the death of Christ as our Passover protects us from the "second death" in eternity!

--speaking of those whose sins are forgiven through the death of Christ, Revelation 20:6 states: "over such the second death will have no power."

--in other words, when we trust in Christ He literally dies the second death in our place so that we can have eternal life!

--when John the Baptist first introduced Jesus he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

--it was on the very weekend of the Passover when families from all around Israel were bringing lambs to Jerusalem to be offered as their Passover sacrifice that Christ Himself died as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!"

--the prophetic description of Christ in Isaiah 53 states: "He was wounded for our transgressions... He was led as a lamb to the slaughter... He was cut off from the land of the living... He bore the sin of many."

--for 1500 years before Christ was born the annual Passover Festival memorialized the meaning of Christ's death!

--"repentance..."

--repentance essentially means to turn away from sin to follow God.

--the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was celebrated right after the Passover, memorialized the concept of repentance.

--The Feast of Unleavened Bread was first instituted during Israel's exodus from Egypt.

--this feast memorialized Israel's quick departure from Egypt when they didn't have time to wait for leaven to make their dough rise.

--leaven was also symbolic of sin... just as Israel ate unleavened bread after being set free from bondage in Egypt, so we too, after being set free from the eternal consequence of our sin, begin to live "unleavened" lives – lives that are free of old patterns of sin (although it is a gradual process of removing old patterns of sin).

--the apostle Paul explained this concept in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

--ADDITIONAL SYMBOLISM IN THE BOOK OF RUTH (including recap of points from part 30)

--review of symbolism we looked at in part 30...

--Boaz redeemed Ruth's property (paid the price to buy back her family property) so that she could be his bride.

--Christ redeemed us (paid the price for our debt of sin) so that we could be His bride... and enter an eternal marriage relationship with Him!

--the book of Judges gave us a picture of Israel's downward spiral and how they would quickly become extinct without God's supernatural preservation... in this context, the book of Ruth is a beautiful, refreshing illustration and foreshadow of the reason God is preserving Israel – to fulfill His plan of salvation through Christ whose birth and second return are prophetically linked to Israel's existence!

--symbolism in Boaz and Ruth's son...

--Boaz gave Ruth bread and wine when she gathered grain in his fields near the time of the Passover... he would give her a child who became a link in the genealogy of Jesus who became spiritual "bread and wine" at the time of the Passover...

--Mark 14:22-25: "And as they were eating [*the Passover meal*], Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, 'This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.'"

--soon thereafter, during the time of the Passover, Jesus' blood would be shed and his body killed as the "lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." (John 1:29)

--Boaz and Ruth's son was born in Bethlehem, and they named him Obed which means "worship" ... Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and the wise men came there to worship Him! (Matthew 2:1-2)

--Ruth (a Gentile Moabites) symbolized Gentile people and Naomi (a Jew) symbolized Israel...

--it was through Naomi that Ruth learned about the concept of being redeemed in marriage to Boaz, and it would be through Israel that the rest of the world would learn about the concept of being redeemed from our sins through Christ...it is through Israel that we learn about all the Old Testament prophecies that point to Christ.

--furthermore, Naomi was first in line to be redeemed by Boaz (as she was a nearer relative) but she let that right pass to Ruth... Israel was first in line to be the ambassadors of the gospel for the entire world, but they rejected Christ as a nation; and therefore the role of being the ambassadors of the gospel was taken from them and given to Gentiles.

--Matthew 21:43: Jesus declared to Israel as a nation, "the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation [Gentiles] bearing the fruits of it..."

--in conclusion, following Matthew 21:43, may we continue to put God first and bear spiritual fruit as we serve as His ambassadors of the gospel to the world!

--2 Cor 5:20-21: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

--FURTHER INFO:

**the following article gives an overview of 10 key Old Testament prophecies of Christ:
www.lettersofchrist.com/christ_old_testament_prophecy.htm