

Maranatha Newsletter – July/August 2022

From Ken: A note from an inmate which I have known for several years, although he had not contacted me in quite a while. He was at the medical institute at Lake Butler because of health issues, and as of now is back at another institute. He states: "Satan is hard a work to make it as difficult and inconvenient for God's people to communicate." The Fla.DOC has implemented new regulations so personal mail, and Bible studies, cannot be sent directly to any inmate. It all must go through a central office in Tampa and they scan it, then it is sent to the inmate on his tablet. He further states: "I have always thanked God for putting your ministry in my life. The teachings have given me understanding and knowledge about God's Word I probably would not have ever understood otherwise. It seems to clarify life for me." I submit the following not as something you do not know, but as a reminder not to forget about it. Repetition is always a good thing. I am speaking of the blood of Christ and its importance, something which is rarely mentioned in the preaching of Christendom today. It is quite impossible for any preacher using one of the modern versions of the Bible where the blood is omitted, to include it in their messages. When studying the Scriptures the importance of the shed blood of Christ is very evident. The importance of the blood for the children of Israel is seen on the night of the Passover. The last plague in the judgments on Pharaoh was the death of the firstborn when the death angel passed through the land. The children of Israel were told to slay a lamb and put the blood upon the two side posts and on the upper door post. **Faith and obedience** was their salvation from the death angel, and God said: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). We see then that the blood is for God to view. This remains true in the writings of Paul as well: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption (shed blood) that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (satisfaction) through **faith** in his blood, . . ." (Romans 3:24,25a). The blood of Christ is for atonement and has to do with our standing before God, i.e., we are justified and declared righteous in His sight: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, . . ." (Romans 5(a)). It is through the blood of Christ that we Gentiles, that were afar off, were made nigh. It is through the blood of Christ that we have peace with God: "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, . . ." (Colossians 1:20a). It is through the blood of Christ that we have eternal redemption: ". . . but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12b). Peter reminds us that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ: "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). We have to believe that the blood of Christ is precious to God because He says it is so. The shed blood of Christ satisfied God, and we must also believe it to be so. What is our estimate, or what value, do we place on the blood? Is it precious to us? What worth do we place on Christ Himself? Is He precious to us? By His Grace, Ken

From Fidel: Gleaning from the Book of Ruth

The Holy Spirit teaches in the Book of Ruth the principle of salvation by grace through faith in the Death, Burial and Resurrection which should result or lead to union with Christ. The remarkable marriage/union in the Old Testament of Ruth and Boaz beautifully portrays the very important aspect of salvation missing in today's modern Christendom i.e., the identification or union with the Death, Burial and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Redeemer. The very characters in the book are used by the Holy Spirit to lay down the background of the great redemption that was foreordained to save His elect.

Elimelech means "God is my king", the name Naomi signifies "pleasant". Her two son's names mean "sickly", and "pining". Ruth means "beautiful". Last of all Boaz whose name means "in him is strength". The family of Elimelech who believed in God as their King has forgotten that their God is also their Provider even in the midst of evil and famine during those times. They fled to go down to Moab to search for food instead of trusting God to supply their needs. This led to an affliction God used to call back His chosen and teach them His way (Psalm 119:67, 75). The result is Naomi lost her husband and two sons. Such is the case when a believer trusts the world for help. He/She loses her God given wisdom, strength, and life. Naomi whose name "pleasant" turned "bitter" for she forgot to trust God. Only Ruth whose name means "beautiful" which refers I believe to her being "a virtuous woman" (Ruth 3:11) believed in the LORD God of Israel and under whose wings she came to trust" (Ruth 2:12). Boaz as a type of Christ in this beautiful story of redemption had all the strength to redeem, for all are without strength. Naomi, widowed, childless and poor, set out to return home with Ruth who trusted in the promises of God. The time of their arrival in Bethlehem is during the "barley harvest" which happens during the feast of Passover. And it signifies the "Death, Burial, and Resurrection" of Christ which brings with it the gift of eternal life and daily sustenance of grace pictured here in the abundance of gleanings Ruth had received from Boaz. The gift of eternal life we received in salvation and the many other gifts attached to it are precious to the believer. But a deeper desire and a higher experience is needed to complete the fulfillment of Redemption. And that is to be occupied with the GIVER rather than His gifts. Union with Christ in His Death, Burial and Resurrection and consequently union with Him in one body, His Church is the only thing that can complete him/her and be able to say with Apostle Paul "Christ is all in all" (Col. 3:17).

"The greatest blessing any believer can experience apart from saving grace is to know He is one (in union) with Christ in one body, all that Christ is the believers are, and all that Christ possess the members possess" (K. Brandt). By His grace, fidel

From David: Dear Fellow Believers, Solomon was the last king to reign over a united Israel. The Lord blessed him with great wisdom and tremendous wealth and power. Even today most people have at least heard of King Solomon. The proverbs of Solomon are still a great source of practical wisdom for anyone to live by, even today! "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. Hear, O my Son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many." (Prov. 3:13&4:10)

In today's world believers need practical advice about personal conduct in order to remain at peace, while surrounded by the constant turmoil, division, and strife which exists in society. Consider these words from Solomon. "Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. Let thine eyes look right on and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil. My son, attend unto my wisdom." (Prov. 4:24-5:1a) (see also Prov. 6:12 -14& 8:12-13) These words provide a great amount of practical advice, repeated several times throughout the sayings of Solomon. First do not delight in finding fault with others, and avoid thinking maliciously about them. Remember, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate. (Prov.8:13) Pursue your own affairs, without concerns about the ways of others. "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. (Prov. 21:23) Continuously pursue after good and avoid evil. "That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous." (Prov. 2:20) I think Solomon's words, even in today's world, are still great advice for personal conduct. Paul gave this advice to the Thessalonians who lived in a city surrounded by people of vain pursuit. "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." (I Thess. 4:11&12) I think Paul is telling them to be quiet, mind your own business and keep busy, which is always good advice! Doing this will present an honest and godly life toward men without faith, "that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without." Paul wrote this to the Ephesians, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice...let everyman speak truth with his neighbor." (Eph. 4:25; Rom.15:2; Gal.5:14; Heb.8:11; James 2:8) In Luke chapter 10, our Lord answers this question from a lawyer, "And who is my neighbor?" We are all familiar with the parable of the good Samaritan. Remember, in those days the Samaritans were hated and despised by the Jews. The answer discovered by the lawyer was that our neighbor is the one we show mercy to. Mercy is undeserved favor. Anywhere the word neighbor is used in the New Testament, and the Old for that matter, it means our fellowman. (Luke 10:27,29; Matt. 5:43,12:31,33 & Matt.19:19) Today it seems that the world thrives on argument, division, and disunity. As believers, we must practice godly behavior toward all men, especially unbelievers, which for the most part are our neighbors. Paul wrote these words to Titus. "...speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing meekness unto all men." (Titus 3:1-5) In His Peace, David

From Dale: Unfortunately, Dale is unable to provide a submission for this newsletter. due to Tanya's recent illness and hospitalization. We are thankful that she is recovering and returned home on August 7th. Praise ye the LORD, O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Ps 106:1

