

with 1:1-18

(1). "The Kiss of Orpah."

Introd:- (1). What I ask you to do tonight may seem to be a strange thing. Per. at first impact even offensive to some. I suggest that together we go to the THEATRE. Wait! Ushers, guard the doors! People, please remain in seats! I propose we go to theatre while still in church!

(2). Let me explain. I have visited many theatres, yes, even in recent years of my X'n life. Should a X'n go to theatres? In early church days many X'n forced to go.. often against their will! I have stood in many of those ancient theatres..great semi-circles usually carved into hillsides..lined with stone seats..marble that has endured. perfection of acoustics almost beyond belief..Open air. In those past days..people strolled in, sat down to enjoy the spectacles presented. IT IS WAS FAR FROM ENJOYABLE IF YOU WERE THE SPECTACLE! You might well be a lion's lunch! ghastly victim of gladiator..torch to lighten proceedings.

(3). Paul once tried to go to theatre..at Ephesus..when that riot took place..Acts 29-31. God had other plans then and time not come for Paul to be the spectacle. The Greek root of word "theatre" almost same as our word.."Theatron". .."A place for a public show." Later on Paul himself became the public show. c/f I Cor. 4:9...Picture of varied progra with mounting interest to climax..THE KILLING! "Last, as it were appointed unto DEATH." Last act came outside Rome. NOW! DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE THEATRE??? Call the lions! Or prefer seat in top row..nice safe place? Or put it this way..What is your philosophy of life? Where you going to sit and settle down? And why?

Thanks

Thanksgiving be manifest in thanksgiving?

Watch these

I. Well..let's begin in observer's seat on our theatre.

(a). Quite at home there..for we sit there at last part or every day. Shakespeare said "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women are players." Ev. time open newspaper..magazine..radio..T.V...we watch the spectacle.. The world stage! Actions of people, sporting events, calamities, wars, heroes, villains..each playing a part. Theatre! And we often forget this: watched by men..but also by angels and devils! Vitally concerned with how we humans play our part..from entrance on stage to exit into wings.

(b). Some play very imp. parts..Adam, Eve and serpent.. drama! Moses..David..OUR LORD, for 34 yrs..Paul..Luther. BUT..many others have BTT parts..seemingly insignif..and yet each one our one-life, one-time brief appearance. Ever think about such people? Per. so very like ourselves. e.g. Phurah..compan. of Gideon...Elder brother (prodigal)

Judge 1

LR 15

(c). And this one...Other day reading book of Ruth..and the char. on stage in that day. Well known..Ruth, Naomi, Boaz and little OBED, born to Boaz and Ruth..who became g'father of great King David. WONDERFUL SCENES..Hero's, Heroines.. BUT..I read another name..and stopped to think about ORPAH. Seemingly insignif..Named twice..in chap. 1..then? Nothing! She flitted across stage..disappeared into nonentity. And yet..God left us this record..for us to read..learn.

II. What about that woman? What do while on stage...?

(a). I see she was on stage for over 10 years, even though script so brief. Ruth 1:3-5. For ten years evidently a good and faithful wife..until young husband died. Good char. Better than some "moderns". Good to be able say good things. Secondly:- Made good start towards better life despite loss of husband..vs.6-7. Progress! "Out of the place where she was" "to land of Judah"..God's land. where Lord had visited His people..Place of blessing..Heading eventually for Bethlehem.. vs. 22. "Beth-lechem".. "House of Bread". Isn't it good to see people head that way? Back to God! *Thankfully* Growing spiritually..ahead

(b). Then as read on..we come to series of conflicting matters. Three seemingly mixed attitudes. vs. 8-13. Coming to a climax in this scene on stage of life. FIRST:- Emotion manifest in words of two girls..and actions. "Lifted up voice..wept". What crying about? Thought of parting..and unknown future. Does future scare us? Or able say:- "I will not fear.."

SECOND:- There was a resolve..vs.10. Both girls. "We will not turn back..No turning back." Good...good talk. Like in Jesus day.."Lord, I will follow thee"...BUT.....

THIRD:- A repeated warning..vs. 8 "Go return"..vs.11 "Turn again" "Why go with me?" vs.12 "Turn again" "I have no more husbands for you..No goodies ahead..Maybe TROUBLE AGAIN..Hand of Lord gone out against me." Strange! But needed. Were you BRIBED to become a X'n? "Goodies". God forbid. X'n life is *wonderful* battle..struggle..fight..Better to be warned..face same ques.. *but* "Why go with other X'ns?" Easier life back in Moab world.

(c). THEN CAME THE CRUNCH. The Kiss of Orpah! She kissed her mother-in-law. And it was the GOOD-BYE KISS! Affectionate enough..Roots of word full of this.."To catch fire..burn.. kindle..fasten upon..sieze..conquer..cling..love..desire.. delight in"..SOME KISS! 43 meanings to word!(better stop.. Here's the climax of the play of life! THE KISS. Full of affection..well-wishing."God bless..God be with you....

(d). "BUT that's as far as I go..Good bye, Naomi". for at that point Orpah stepped into wings..AND WAS GONE..vs.15a. Interesting to know that name "Orpah" means "The nape of the neck." She raced Naomi..kissed..BUT THEN ALL SEEN OF HER WAS

THE BACK OF HER NECK. "She went BACK..to her people and her old gods." Today some do just that. So far..and no farther. We see "nape of the neck".. even after seemingly good start..kiss of affection.

Conclus:- 1. God give us face-forward people! Some come so near to the Saviour..profess interest..approval.. hear Gospel..love the music, dignified ceremonies..^{church} BUT their Moab world pulls..and future afrights..and soon see only nape of neck as go BACK to sad old life...Exit

"2. God give us Face-Forward X'n people. You know other side of story. Ruth, whose name means "friend..mate.. lover", CLAVE to Naomi..Stuck with her..joined together to her..Went her way..To Bethlehem..and to fulfillment of God's purposes..SHE PLAYED OUT HER PART TO FULL..^{Thanks living}

3. Simple end of it all..in one word "WHICH?" Dangers..difficulties..problems..battles ahead...this dedicated church lies under displeasure of Evil One.. BUT IT CAN AND WILL BE GOD'S HOUSE OF BREAD TO HUNDREDS..^{many}

4. Today WE ARE ON STAGE..Our turn per. to be the spectacle. So be it. God make us like Jephthae who said. "I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I CANNOT GO BACK." Dedication - "ONE WAY" ^{by} ~~it~~ ^{Right on} Which? Orpah or Ruth? PRAY. ^{to be a Thankyou}

- (x) The Lord Jesus met people like that..A rich young ruler who turned back..went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.....Disciples who "went back and walked no more with him." He saw nape of neck. But think what they lost! & you?

Arrowood - Oct 6/79 (Thanksgiving)
Red Deer - Bethany Bap. - Nov 18/78
Beulah CMA - Edmonton - May 6/75 (same Beth Bap & Fund Bap)
Beverly Chapel - Oct 11/73
Red Deer CMA Apr 29/73
High River Bap. - Dedication - Apr. 8/73