

God's overruling purposes (Quality: Good)

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Date: 01 September 1985

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[0 : 00] The Lord helping us, we will speak this afternoon for the third chapter in the book of Ruth, and the first two verses. The third chapter in the book of Ruth, verses 1 and 2.

Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, and that it may be well with thee?

And thou is not Boaz our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the thrashing-claw.

What a difference! From what we were speaking this morning, poor Naomi, in the first chapter. Coming back to a native place, almost rejecting the name of Naomi.

Well, exactly the sign in that day, as they were, would die of this text.

[1 : 36] Boaz was a kinsman then, and he is a kinsman now. It was hidden from her sight.

She had either forgotten, or, as is so often the case, in the depth of sorrow, had not considered it.

How like the exercises of those who fear God. The Lord Jesus is the same yesterday.

The Lord Jesus is the same yesterday. Your dark yesterday. Your yesterday of bereavement, loss, heavy trial.

That which you feared would be the end. That which was a treble burden to Naomi, at least, in the loss of the three breadwinners in the family.

[2 : 44] So, with those who fear God, in times of temptation, trouble, darkness, the enemy says that God has forsaken you.

And when you say, all bitter, I seldom get any sweetness, you say. And my sorrow is continuous.

The Lord's hand has gone out against me. And then, you forget that there is an unchanging heavenly Boaz.

Exactly the same as when you were in the world, an ungodly knew him not, wanted to know him not. And, determined aside, he washed all your parts.

And though you had no such inclination, and never sought his life, yet he sought yours, and worked things according to his own purpose, he may have stepped their thumbs.

[4 : 14] There may have been that prospect, so thoroughly blighted, that you gave it up. Yet, out of it all, painful, ah, that sweetness, like Samson's liar, out of the strong, painful, meat.

And I say, therefore, as we read this third chapter, what a difference. And that difference is, ah, now, a clear discovery, of, how, we do not know, nor do we ask, but, ah, the, ah, kinsmanship, the, ah, relationship, the blood relationship, was the point of the whole matter.

It was also, the point of the whole promise, and, ah, order, that God had ordained.

This was a heavenly decree. If a person fell into, hard times, and their kinsmen, was to redeem them.

And, ah, only a kinsmen. And it was a bounden duty. And, ah, this was one of the laws that God made.

[5 : 59] All see, what could happen, and did happen. The poor, you have always with you. today, the great, ah, objective, ah, in some minds, is to, eliminate poverty, but, ah, it will never be done.

It is God's order, that there shall be rich and poor, and one shall be a test to the other, and vice versa. Now, Naomi has an entirely different, ah, she remembers God's holy order, she remembers her relationship, with, ah, ah, ah, ah, and the whole scene is brightened.

It looks much different, much different, from what it once was. You don't, ah, expect her now to say, do you?

Ah, call me Mara. the bitterness, which she felt at that time, and, ah, which, ah, she, ah, said, her Lord has dealt bitterly with me.

Seemed justified. We cannot say it was justified, but we can well understand, if we were in that position, we should say it was justified, after so much family trouble, and the famine as well, and the very thing that sent them down into Moab, contrary to God's word, will, and the intermarrying with two Moabite women, all contrary to God's word.

[8 : 22] He, he, he emphatically stated in the early days of Israel's coming out to Egypt, that they were not to intermarry. But, how, how, their tongues are silenced, aren't they, and their carnal reason, when we see the Lord overrule, the mistakes, that his people make.

they may sin, and that sin is not excused, but by his very dealings with them, one can see that it is forgiven, and that he brings out of this some good thing.

so that, whereas, all part, returns to her God, the Moabite God, what a strange thing, that, Naomi should ever send them both back, and tell them to go back to their God.

You can tell her, no, she was. You can tell what type the poor dear woman was in, when she said, you go back. I could never go to you coming back to Bethany and Judah with me.

Go back. You see, history proves to us, there's no guarantee of what we're going to do in an emergency, or trial, such as this.

[10 : 11] I will never forsake thee, or deny thee, said a man once, didn't he? Though all men deny thee, yet will not I, said Peter.

He stood on his own ground, and on his own flesh, didn't he? He did deny him. And he denied him all once, he denied him thrice.

And the Lord used, a cockle, to convince him, and bring it home with thought, a hundred times, stronger than a human voice.

So, Naomi now, she says, to Ruth, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee, here, sovereign, everlasting love, and sacred heart of love, a child of God.

in such circumstances, it's almost a night. Here she is, we look upon her, as one of the heathen tribe, and worshipper of idols, we see her, as a married woman, and we see her, now brought out, the sovereign hand of God.

[11 : 54] What could we have more clear, than another proof, of sovereign grace? and if you look into your own life, I doubt not, but some of you will feel the same.

He saw me, ruined in the fall, yet loved me, notwithstanding all.

What would be sweeter, more God honouring, and glorifying. You know that, who tasted, the Lord is gracious.

You can set your seal to this, that you were once, and no invited, and in, uh, uh, idol worship.

And yet, the, uh, plucked, the brand from the burning. Oh, Naomi, now, shall I not, uh, seek rest.

[13 : 06] This beautiful, word, rest. And, knowing the sequel, you can see, that it was, going to be rest.

Although, Naomi didn't know. And as I said, this morning, neither did Boaz know, when he, uh, called her, daughter, in the text, which we spoke from, this morning, the eighth verse.

And Boaz, said unto Ruth, hearest thou, not my daughter, go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens.

it was her daughter. daughter. Why, would he call her first?

Why should he, speak as she admits, uh, saying, thou hast spoken, friendly, to thy handmaid, to thy handmaid, or, as the margin has it, uh, spoken to the heart, of thy handmaid.

[14 : 27] her, and, uh, now, uh, it was the first step, we said. Now, we come to the second.

And here, it's daughter again. Daughter, of course, was, uh, in a different setting, with regard to Naomi, she was a daughter-in-law, but, uh, we believe it was a more affectionate daughter than that.

Daughter, shall I not seek rest, that it may be well with thee? So that, not only was Naomi's, uh, feelings, or, exercises, uh, brightened, but there was a prospect.

There was someone to whom she could now point Ruth and say, well now look, this is, this is where our hope lies. This is, this is the door that the Lord has now opened.

It had escaped me before. Now I see that this holy law of God, of kinship and redemption, through kinship, is the way that we are to go.

[16 : 11] And when the gospel brings such good tidings to unworthy roots, what a door of hope is open.

What a prospect is that before them in the gospel. that there is not that I speak reverently, merely, the name of Jesus Christ, but the person of Jesus Christ.

The kinsman, the one who is related by ties of everlasting love, by an unbreakable bond, upon this blessed person, the sinner is bidden to cast his hope, and there to stay his trust.

surely then, Naomi, had I that is prospect in the thought, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

Our feelings and affection, you say, were toward Ruth, our future. Naomi, without no eyes, at least had trodden much of her journey that Ruth hadn't, according to the order of nature.

[18 : 00] So what was she to do, therefore, to seek this rest? And upon what grounds was she to go forward? And upon what grounds is a sinner to go forward and venture his or her all upon the Lord Jesus, if it is the ground of God-given promise.

That he who has raised up right from the very depths of the fall and the utter poverty in which these two were a ground of hope.

Why should not a sinner hope in God? And this is exactly what happens. Oh, yes. A God-given hope is the only hope worth having.

A hope that is not God-given and flows through the channel of truth and the gospel and all that Christ Jesus is is another hope at all.

A hope must come through him and him alone. Therefore, Naomi is on firm ground and she seeks this rest to calm the troubled heart and mind of young Ruth.

[19 : 46] And how does she do it? She issues or gives to Ruth certain instructions.

And she says, among other things, that no, it's not borough of our kinship with whose maidens there was. Now, we spoke this morning of him giving instructions to both the maidens and the men that they were to touch her or interfere with her or make her feel uncomfortable in any way.

They were to give her a welcome. She was bitten to sit down with them when it was meal time and they reached her at parts cold and so on.

She was made to feel at home. It's not this one of the sweetest experiences that we can look back to our early days and you first felt a welcome among the dear Lord's people and they began to show to you not an ordinary friendship but an affection when that affection was based upon covenant promises and the foundation of God which standeth sure.

Why stop being of that? All our religion would have been natural but it was not it was a spiritual union.

[21 : 45] This is the value of youth and this is why behold us to pray for our young people to have a good beginning and be granted to know this fellowship in the gospel as Paul says from the first day until now and this is the ground which the Lord reveals as being his own way to draw his people right from the beginning when he calls them out of nowhere.

Now you were among these ladies this morning says Naomi you were gleaning among them this morning you had some sight of them though you may not have known much of them but you were with them.

They became your fellow companions they were Boaz the matins in his employ and then he gave you such a welcome as to make you say how is it that I have found grace in thy sight seeing I am a stranger well who hasn't felt to be a stranger among the dear Lord's people looking back over the days past unworthy to be among them far from it no more a stranger says the hymn writer or a guest but like a child at home this is the reality of the gospel yes and this is where the gospel finds its cement and its love and where it binds hearts together matters not what circumstances may obtain and this is the reality of the gospel of the grace of God it is not only a figment of the imagination or some pleasurable thing that nature offers it's a divine reality kinship so

Naomi brings the good news and opens up before her the prospect again she did not know what could be the outcome although we can read the story through and see the issue in several of these instances we must not think that it was known all the time by each one of them it wasn't as I said this morning Boaz did not know when he first saw Ruth in the harvest field that she would one day be as well the Lord had not unfolded his purpose it is quite clear from this third chapter that had the next kin taken up the responsibility then

Boaz would never marry Ruth but he said no he could not lest he mar his own inheritance which seems to have been a legitimate reason now seeking rest what a gospel word this is rest and what is it that a guilty sinner feels to need more than anything else if it isn't rest what from daily labour no oh dear no not a quiet easy going life no rest then where rest of conscience peace of mind rest in the Lord in his suitability his relationship rest in his promise rest in his provision now on this

[26 : 51] Naomi was positive the last verse gets us this without going through the chapter even for the man will not be at rest until he has finished the thing this day how did you know that Naomi see the positiveness contrast again for Naomi spirit their sorrow and see how the Lord is able to lift these people up out of their lowest strength and bring them up to feel their firm ground and give them a stronger fight on the promises which he has made it is the fact that they've overlooked or forgotten these promises that brought them low very often and disobedience mingled in with it and he proved to them that he can overcome it all and forgive it all though they are not in any way justified in what they do so this strange third chapter shows us the way that

Naomi Malkuth guides Ruth now to us it seems strange it isn't really it's only the matter that was in accordance no doubt with custom in those days but she had one great fact in mind and that was that Boaz was winnowing barley that night and that was like it is in this country very often the harvest home and I rejoiced in some of us can remember can't we the last load being brought in after working hard as we watched our grandparents and then even when it was dusk the last load the harvest home and the rejoicing and it is of course still spoken of as such although modern machinery and the like have rendered it less enjoyable and alas the fear of God has departed much from the field of the harvest and our forefathers lived watched the clouds and the weather and the sunshine and the rain until the success the quality of that which was harvested was known now here the winnowing was very similar gathered in it had to be winnowed the chaff had to be separated from the wheat or the barley in this case and then when it was finished was the time for eating and drinking and

Naomi sees in this an opportunity for Ruth to venture upon forbidden ground or venture upon ground that she wouldn't have ventured upon had she not been advised by so a noble a person as Naomi and she is told what to do and Naomi hits her as we have read and as you know so well to wait until Boaz is asleep and then uncover his skirt at the bottom and lay there passive obedience passive obedience who could tell what would happen but Naomi was sure what would happen and the gospel promises he that has begun a good work in you will carry it on he will it's his promise he will not leave his work unfinished there is a sort of heavenly hope a positiveness about this which is the inner realities of vital godliness the world knows nothing of it the professor knows nothing of it a formal religion is a stranger to such a thing as this that the work of grace wrought in the heart brings a sinner to Christ take your case to him there he is is anything too hard for the

Lord so Naomi is now a different person and she is able to give sound advice and this advice must need to be followed now let us suppose for a moment that Ruth has said I can't do that I don't do that I haven't got enough courage to do that supposing somebody finds me there supposing somebody says what are you doing here sends me away puts me too shy no we have the evidence of Ruth's complete obedience as strange as it may be to us and I doubt not as strange to Ruth she does exactly as she is told now

Naomi's right she's right in every detail and not only so Ruth comes away with six measures of barley and that was a lot more than she'd gleaned she'd had to work hard for those handfuls that she'd gleaned the handfuls of purpose even now before she passed from this the line her kinsman he admits to it and now it is true that I am thy near kinsman how there is a kinsman nearer than I for the man hadn't finally settled even now you see you've got to go in the next chapter which you'll probably want to read again for yourselves later on you've got to go before the judges so to speak and now what did she do she lay at his feet until the morning and she rose up before one could know another and he said bring the veil that thou hast and hold it and when she held it he measured six measures of barley and laid it on her and she went into the city

[36 : 42] I say he that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on we know handfuls of purpose under the gospel when the word comes with savour and sweetness to your soul this precious and you wouldn't be without them and you can look back to the times when you had them but is this all no there's more there's more and what is this more why six measures of winnowed barley they wouldn't give up a house would it it was the final gift before the final step was taken now how sweet are these times when the

Lord draws near and encourages your hope strengthens your faith draws out your affection but what is in between if it isn't obedience strange as it may seem to us Naomi was positive that what she bid Ruth do would be the right thing in no way did she mislead her and though it came so close to things which might look suspicious it was far from it and therefore when she comes home Naomi says to her who art thou my daughter and she told her all that the man had done to the man had done to her and she does you know thinking back a little that when

Simeon was held by Joseph in Egypt and Jacob refused to let them go and take them you know they waited and waited and waited until they got no food hardly left and Jacob says if it must be so which it had to be the empty cupboard if I could use that word made it a downright necessity but he said to him this if it must be so then take the lad and go again to the man he didn't know who the man was he didn't know that it was his beloved

Joseph go again to the man and when we are taught by grace who the man is the man Christ Jesus and when our hopes are brightened and our fears quelled and we venture to a precious Christ is there not that same joy as dear Jacob had my son Joseph is yet alive I will go down and see it before I die thus does God unravel the mystery of life at the end of life we want some of our mysteries unraveled when we are young and they are some of them but the great mystery and the sacred truth of the forgiveness and pardon of sins is often reserved for the latter days for the time when flesh and heart begin to fail and earthly things recede and there is that opening up of that new prospect and

Naomi finds her Ruth with six measures of barley and she said sit still my daughter sit still until thou know how the matter will fall for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day the six measures of barley you see were a sure precursor of what the man would do and as the story unfolded so it came to pass and so God would glorify and his dear people comforted by the mysterious workings of his spiritual dealings with them even when they are brought low as the psalmist said

[42 : 57] I was brought low and he heard me Amen a offering a preacher João 1 psalmist também ■■■ Jill è son 1 Paul Psalm 1 psalmist John