

# Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God (Quality: Very good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord shall help me to direct your thoughts to the book of Ruth, chapter 1, and the last part of verse 16.

In the book of Ruth, chapter 1, verse 16, where it says this, Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Great is the mystery of God's sovereignty.

He is sovereign in all his ways, all his doings. We sometimes sing, do we not, of the sovereign decrees of God?

Do we believe it? Parents, native place and time, all appointed were by him. And our first birth, here into this world, we do not come by chance.

[ 1 : 20 ] It is appointed by God. And with the Lord's people, the day comes when they are born of the Spirit. The second birth.

The Lord Jesus, in his ministry, he says, marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again, to be born of the Spirit.

That is, to have that right religion, to be brought out of the world, and into the kingdom of grace. There is no other way. It is the work of the Spirit.

And how wonderful this is, when there is the evidence of it. When there are those marks seen, the marks of the work of the Spirit.

Ofentimes we pray, and I pray, let thy work appear unto thy servants, O Lord. Let thy work appear. And this is what we want to see in Zion. The Lord's work.

[ 2 : 21 ] The Spirit's work. The Spirit quickening. Quickening influence. The heart of a poor sinner, here and there.

And wherever the Lord will call that sinner. For his people are gathered from the four quarters of the earth.

North and the south and the east and the west. And I tell you this, my friends. That each one, each one brought into that kingdom will see and believe the truth that we have.

The Apostle's word in the second chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians. For by grace are ye saved.

By grace are ye saved. And we have in the book of Ruth. The account, a beautiful account.

[ 3 : 32 ] The most beautiful account of one who was gathered out. Gathered out of Moab. Brought out of that land of idolatry.

Brought out of that godless place. To be led by the Lord in his good providence.

Led to Bethlehem. The house of bread. Well, as the Lord shall help me, I would look, first of all, at the history that we have here in this chapter, in these chapters.

There was one named Elimelech. I had a wife, Naomi. And let us remember this, that Naomi was a godly woman.

A godly woman. They had two sons. Marlon and Killian. And there was a famine in the land. And they went down to Moab.

[ 4 : 45 ] We do not read that they laid it before the Lord. We do not read that they prayed about it. We do not read that they sought the Lord's direction in this.

But they went. They went down to Moab. And did you notice what we read? They continued there.

They went, they came into the country of Moab and continued there. Yes. They came into that place. And they continued, they remained there.

No solemn, isn't it? Isn't Moab something like the world? The world, you know, to us. What was there in Moab?

What was there for Elimelech and Naomi? I tell you what happened. It was a time of great affliction.

[ 5 : 49 ] A time of bereavement. A time of great sorrow to Naomi. And when she came back, you know, they said, why is this Naomi?

She said, call me not Naomi. Call me Mara. For the Lord had dealt very, very bitterly with me. Ah, the Lord had not forsaken her, my friends.

The Lord had not cut her off. She was still his possession. You know, the Lord deals with his people in his own sovereign way.

And there's that pathway of correction. The chastening hand of the Lord. And she felt it. For the Lord, you know, chastens in love.

The Lord surely loved Naomi. Oh, she had to walk this most painful pathway. You know, my friends, sometimes we have to walk a painful way, a painful pathway.

[ 7 : 01 ] We're not promised an easy journey, are we? To heaven. We're not promised a smooth journey.

But rather, there's through much tribulation, you must enter the kingdom. In the world, you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer.

I have overcome the world. Tribulation, work it patience. Patience, experience. Experience hope. And hope, make it not a shame. What is tribulation?

Tribulation is when the Lord, deals with his people, when there is a separation, surely. When that dross is removed and the gold refined.

Remember what we read concerning Peter. The Lord loved Peter. Peter was one of the Lord's disciples. Peter seemed to be the chief spokesman, didn't he?

[ 8 : 13 ] Ah, but you know, he had to be humbled. And the Lord had a way of humbling him. He said to Peter, Satan had to be the chief.

And Peter had to go into the sieve, to be shaken about in the sieve.

And the purpose was this, to separate the chaff from the wheat. And you read his letters.

You read the first and second letter of Peter. A different man there, isn't he? A different man. In those writings.

He speaks of the preciousness of Jesus. He speaks of the precious blood of Christ. He speaks of precious faith.

[ 9 : 15 ] The sweet and precious things of Christ. You know, we have Christ here, in this very book. You say, where is he?

Why? The scripture is full of Christ, my friends. Full of Christ. We have a type, haven't we? In Boaz. Boaz was rich.

Boaz was kind. Boaz who was strong. Boaz who owned a field. Boaz who had a great provision.

And Boaz who manifested his kindness and his love to Ruth. She was a stranger and she acknowledged this.

I'm not like one of thine handmaidens. Why have I found grace in thine eyes? Why me, Lord? Why me? But you see, going back to what I was saying concerning Limelech and Naomi and their two sons, and Naomi was bereft of her husband and her two sons, and she was left with her two daughters-in-law, all widows.

[ 10 : 38 ] And you know, Naomi 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.

There's a provision there, provision in Bethlehem. And there's a provision, my friends, in the field, in God's field, in the house of God, the word of God.

There's a provision there. There's something there, my friends, which the world knows nothing of. And something which the world has no desire for.

Have you a desire? Have you a gracious desire? Ruth had. She had a gracious desire. It was put into her heart by the Lord himself.

And she was resolved, wasn't she, her to go with Naomi to journey with her to Bethlehem.

[ 12 : 07 ] But you know, we read that they three began the journey, Naomi and Paul and Ruth. We will surely go.

We will surely go with thee, they said. They both said it. We will surely go. Surely we will return with thee unto thy people and they went so far together.

You know, all through the word of God we see this, a separation, a separation. And there was a separation, they came to a place of separation.

They came to that place where where Oprah had to return to Moab and Ruth did forsake Moab and all that Moab contained and joined herself to her mother-in-law Naomi and journeyed with her.

Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, go return each to her mother's house, the Lord deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with they.

[ 13 : 37 ] The Lord grant you that you may find rest each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them and they lifted up their voice and wept. They both wept, they both kissed her.

With Orpah surely it was a kiss of affection. But with Ruth you know it was more than that wasn't it?

It was more than that. A kiss of love, the love in her heart which drew her to her mother-in-law.

And you know when she was put to the test when her mother-in-law said to her well now why don't you go back? Orpah's gone back to her people and to her gods.

Orpah's left me. Well why don't you go back with her? I've nothing. And it's not very likely you'll get another husband.

[ 14 : 48 ] Why don't you go back? You know Ruth was put to the test wouldn't she? She was put to the test.

Would she go back? Would she return to Moab? She knew all about Moab. She knew the idolatry there.

She knew the barrenness in the place. And she felt within her soul that life surely. She felt something why she had a spiritual attraction.

A spiritual attraction to Naomi. And she expressed her desire didn't she? To go with Naomi to Bethlehem to join herself with the people of God.

You think of this. We have a description of the people of God. A very apt description of the people of God in the prophecy of Zechariah.

[ 15 : 53 ] people of God and afflicted and poor people and afflicted and poor people and the world will look on and they will say why whatever is the matter with that person to leave the pleasures the enjoyments that are in the world and join themselves to these people poor and afflicted.

We go back to Moses Moses in his day brought up in the court of Pharaoh enjoyed all the privileges there all the privileges that were in the court of Pharaoh and we read that when he was come to years he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Wonderful thing my friends if a change has been wrought in your heart if the world means nothing to you if there's an aching void in your heart which the world can never fill if there's a gracious desire within your heart that gracious desire which Ruth had oh entreat me not to leave thee do not press me my heart is fixed my heart is fixed said the psalmist my heart is fixed I can't go back well go back go back into the world ah we read you know of those that went so far with Jesus they walked so far didn't they and they became offended and they walked no more with him they went back and walked no more with him the Lord

Jesus turned and said will you also go away Peter said to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life that's it my friends that's a secret eternal life eternal life so there's got to be a coming out of the world there's got to be a forsaking of the world and everything that is in the world repentance how do you pray for repentance have you ever prayed for repentance real repentance Ruth manifested repentance you know she manifested repentance she was made willing in the day of God's power to leave the hateful ways of sin turn to the fold and enter in to leave the world to set her face toward

Zion to set her face toward Bethlehem the house of God the place of provision you know when she when she left Moab she never thought that she never had one thought what that she would come into her and you know what an experience she had what an experience the Lord in his all wise purposes of divine grace sovereign grace overruled the the journey which Elimelech and Naomi made with their two sons down in the Moab the Lord overruled it for good for the good of one soul one poor sinner in

[ 20 : 06 ] Moab one who was appointed to eternal life one who was among the elect one who was appointed to life eternal before the foundation of the world isn't that a wonderful thing that God before he made this world did separate to himself a people to be his own eternally he set his love upon them why we cannot explain it but we can say this because he would because he would what was there in me to merit esteem or to give the creator delight he would he would save his people he would bring them out and he gathers them out and I said you know matters not where they are and we know they're in every place in every nation kindred tongue and tribe he has his own dear people they're all taught this as I've reminded you all taught this that salvation is of grace why have

I found grace in thine eyes said she to Boaz why have I found grace in thine eyes why me she said you know to her mother-in-law entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee for whether thou goest I will go and where thou lodgest I will lodge thy people shall be my people thy God my God and you know in thinking about this and this word which she spoke to Naomi thy people well Naomi was the only one the only one of God's people that she known and lived with but what an example she was what an example Naomi was to her daughter-in-law what a gracious example in a life in a conversation a conduct a walk

I thought you know and I'm pondering over this I thought you know of the days of my youth in the early days in the 1930s when I was still at school and going to that chapel in Croydon and a huge congregation there huge congregation good pastor and we used to sit down in the front seat and I used to watch the saints of God coming into the chapel you know young people children are very observant young people are very observant aren't they I used to watch these people coming in how they sat in the pew and bowed their heads and even in those

I think ah these are God's people surely these people are different to the world much different to the world tell you see the difference by the way they walk by the way they dress by their conversation and so on this people have I formed for myself they shall show forth my praise and the Lord will have a people we mourn the low state of Zion we mourn don't we because so many pews so many seats in the house of God are vacant and I found myself you know praying praying more and more Lord fill those empty pews with mourners real mourners spiritual mourners mourning over their sins and after thee oh to have those mourners in Zion

Ruth was she was a mourner she mourned over her sins I say she had repentance and yes repentance toward God and she was helped she was enabled to turn her back upon Moab and turn her back upon the world and everything in it and to join herself with Naomi the child of God do not press me she said do not press me I can't go back I'm not going to leave you I'm not going to leave you it's a sad thing you know I mentioned just now there were those who walked so far with the Lord Jesus and they went back and walked no more with him and the apostle Paul speaks of one named Demas Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world we've known it in our own experience haven't we pastors and ministers you know they experienced this there were those who worship with them for a time and then they go on they leave don't they they turn their back they want something different you know it's a great question isn't it we hope we do hope that someone will be brought back we do hope that the time of love will come when they shall clearly see not only that he shed his blood but each to see for me the Lord

[ 26 : 50 ] Jesus you know he spoke many parables and he spoke the parable of the sower that went forth to sow and some seed fell upon the wayside and some fell upon stony ground and some fell among thorns but some fell into good ground the root was there the root was there and we read of Job that the root of the matter was in him the root was there and it's a very blessed thing my friends if the root is there we read of that seed that fell upon stony ground and it sprang up it sprang up but there was no depth of earth for the roots to grow into and it withered away and died and I believe it's in Matthew where we read this dureth for a while dureth for a while and some people's religion is like that it endures for a while my friends when things are going when things are going well when they prosper when the

Lord deals with them in his sovereign way when perhaps he removes something that he has blessed us with and remember this that what you have in this world and what I have is lent to us it's not our own is it you're not your own we're not our own are we bought with a prowess yes ah but the secret is this if the root is there if the root of the matter is there then it will endure one day it will continue the Lord Jesus said to his disciples shortly before entering into that pathway of suffering and death ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations and I appoint unto your kingdom as my father hath appointed unto me endure he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved does it mean he'll be saved because he endures unto the end no he endures unto the end because he saved my friends and is this one of the fears that the child of God has

Lord do keep me enable me Lord by thy grace to endure unto the end to continue to hold on hold up my goings in thy path that my footsteps slip not keep me Lord keep me day by day help me to live Lord as I should as I should you're a chosen generation a royal priesthood a holy nation a peculiar people that you should show forth the praises of him who have called you out of darkness into his marvellous light peculiar people and I thought you know pondering over this just before we came out and I thought of that word peculiar people and some of them may look upon us as being peculiar in that sense we're odd they're not peculiar that way only why the Lord's people are a peculiar people they have peculiar exercises and peculiar prayers and peculiar answers to their prayers and they have peculiar songs which they can sing before God in praise to him what I mean by this well it is peculiar to the people of God and the world knows nothing of it they have no exercises within their heart do they to be right to be made right no exercise in prayer they may say prayers but saying prayers and praying are two different things a sort of Tarsus would have said many prayers as a

Pharisee many prayers but it wasn't until the Lord met with him on that Damascus road and brought him down into the dust of self abasement they began to pray the Lord sent Ananias to seek him out behold he prayeth he's a chosen vessel unto me behold he prayeth prayer how sweet prayer is the soul's sincere desire uttered or unexpressed the motion of a hidden fire trembles in the breast prayer the burden of a sigh the falling of a tear the upward glancing of the eye when none but God is near entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee for whether thou goest I will go and whether thou lodgest I will lodge thy people shall be my people and thy

God my God thy people the people of God these people these people that the world look upon as being most peculiar you see the world are in there the worldlings in his place we were there once weren't we in the world we know what it's like to be in the world we know what it's like to hear their conversation and to see their ways we believe we are in a different place now Ruth was in a different place she'd been brought out by the Lord himself in providence yes along that pathway which he had appointed and the time came I say the time of separation when all went back to her people and her gods and Ruth clave to her mother in law she clave to her mother in law wonderful religion my friends if you've got a religion a religion that cleaves cleaves to the people of God cleaves to his own dear people and cleaves to Christ wonderful religion that these people know the people of

[ 34 : 15 ] God will not claim to be perfect in any way they have their peculiarities they all declare I nothing am my all is bound up with the lamb ah when my friends when we can look above men when we can love all defect supplies makes great obstruction small tis prayer tis praise tis sacrifice tis holiness tis all to look away from men to look to him to look to Christ ah you know surely Ruth could see this in Naomi the spirit of Christ the spirit of Christ is this something you pray for the spirit of Christ oh to have that oh to manifest the spirit of

Christ you know we mourn over our feelings we mourn because we come so far short and we mourn because we so often are found in our own spirit ah there's a desire isn't there that the fruit of the spirit be made manifest now the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians he speaks of the works of the flesh and I'm not going to list those out to you because you know what they are the works of the flesh but the fruit of the spirit love joy peace long suffering gentleness meekness goodness faith against which there is no Lord fruit of the spirit you pray

Lord oh that I might bring forth more of the fruit of the spirit love love love you think of the Lord Jesus and his life and the way he walked thy God shall be my God thy people shall be my people thy God my God thy God name is God my God there's a great claim you know for a poor sinner to make isn't it my God my God my Lord my Saviour David you know and he said didn't he the Lord is my shepherd the Lord is mine

I am one of the sheep in the fold and the Lord is my shepherd and he will provide he will provide for me the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want he maketh me to lie down in green pastures he leadeth me beside the still waters he restoreth my soul he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake the Lord is mine my God my God oh you know we read in the song of Solomon where the church where the spouse where the bride said my beloved is mine and I am his and perhaps there's a poor soul here this night who wants to be honest and cannot say that my beloved is mine but there's a desire isn't there a desire in the heart a longing desire in the heart oh to be found among his people oh to be found walking with these people walking in that heavenly road walking to the celestial city remember that

Moses spoke to his brother in law wasn't it he said we are journeying we are journeying to a place which the lord has promised we are journeying on come there with us and we will do the good will you come with us and there was no no response was there he wanted to stay where he was he didn't want to journey now he didn't want to journey with the poor afflicted people of God he didn't want to journey with them through this world to go to that place which the lord had promised to give to his people and it's real you know it's real the lord has promised to give to his people his own dear people a dwelling place let not your heart be troubled ye believe in God believe also in me and my father's house and many mansions if it were not so

[ 39 : 53 ] I would have told you I go to prepare a place for you if I come and go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also heaven and dear Ruth you know she was journeying on Bethlehem the place of provision the house of bread and you see how the lord went before her and directed her footsteps open the way didn't he open the way so she became a gleaner in the field and the field belonging to Boaz not another field it was the right place wasn't it it was the right and it was the place where she would be fed and she became a gleaner went into the field as a gleaner following the reapers gathering up that which he had gleaned a beaten out ah would you be a gleaner in Zion would you be a gleaner in the house of God say when you go up to the house of

God Lord there is a provision there how to be a gleaner how that I might glean something oh something Lord this night something from the ministry something from thy word perhaps when you sit quietly and you turn to the word of God ah do you pray do you pray Lord open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law speak to me Lord through thy word the word it is thy word divinely inspired divinely given divinely preserved down through the ages of time and that word which is divinely applied thy people shall be my people and thy God my God may the Lord add his blessing to these few thoughts for his name's sake

Amen