

# Gleaning in the Gospel field (Quality: Very Good)

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 10 October 1982

Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [ 0 : 00 ] The word I would bring before you this morning is found in the book of Ruth, the second chapter of the book of Ruth, and the sixteenth verse, and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.
- The sixteenth verse is the second chapter of the book of Ruth. This is a remarkable part of the word of God.
- The history of these two characters, chiefly.
- There are others, of course, in the record. But there are two main characters in this book.
- And the one is Boaz, of course, and the other is Ruth. And there are striking and instructive things that are recorded about these two characters in this part of the word of God.
- [ 2 : 00 ] Of course, the book itself is the history of the ancestry of David.
- And according to the flesh, also that of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Because this character Ruth that comes out in this book so prominently, although she was a Moabitess, a foreigner to the children of Israel, she was nevertheless chosen by God to be in that line, that human line, which eventually would bring forth the Son of God, Lord Jesus Christ.
- That in itself makes the book a wonder, blessed revelation. But there are other things in this book.
- And of those things that I want to delve into this morning, it's a wonderful type.
- [ 3 : 35 ] There's typical things in this book of Ruth. Ruth. And to be very plain and simple, there are two outstanding types.
- But they are most striking and also most wonderful. There's a type of Christ here in this book, in the wonderful character of Boaz.
- We shall try to develop that in our meditation. To see how clear and strikingly this man Boaz, in his dealings with Ruth, the Moabitish woman, represents the wonderful person of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Now, you know, no type can be perfect. Every type in the scripture must fall short of the glorious anti-type.
- Because the anti-type is so great, so wonderful, that nothing can ever really equal the greatness and the glory of that wonderful anti-type, Jesus Christ.
- [ 5 : 12 ] But it's very important to observe and follow carefully the instructive part of God's word, which would lead us to a deeper appreciation and realization of the glories and wonders of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- And also in the character of Ruth, we have the believer, the child of God that is seeking out the way that leads to life and security and blessedness and salvation.
- There's a great deal for us to closely observe in the life and attitude and character of this dear woman, Ruth.

Now, when we come to our text, you notice this little preposition in the word, handfuls of purpose.

We might almost change that and yet at the same time not destroy the wonderful significance of it. For instance, if we should put the word, the preposition, on instead of of, we should have same truth set forth perhaps a little differently, but nevertheless, it would indicate something of what is intended to be understood here.

[ 7 : 19 ] Handfuls of purpose which Boaz commanded the reapers to leave for Ruth to gather imperceptibly without her being conscious of the fact that they were being left.

They were handfuls of purpose. The purpose was in the heart and mind of Boaz. He had a great deal more than the mere gathering of a few straws of wheat or barley as the case was.

He had something far beyond this. His purposes extended to a far greater degree and measure than the plain, simple, present occupation which was occupying Ruth at the moment of gathering out of necessity for her very livelihood and that also of her mother-in-law Naomi enough to carry on for the time being.

And if we put that other little preposition into that word then purposes handfuls on purpose we get another thought or line of thought which is very true indeed.

Boaz had intentions for the well-being of Ruth. He went out of his way so to speak to see to it purposefully that she should have enough that she should have what she might require and he also knew that she was gleaning not only for herself she was gleaning also for the benefit of her mother-in-law Naomi whom she loved and with whom she dwelt.

[ 9 : 52 ] then if we put another preposition in and that of for handfuls for purpose there again there is much that opens up to our minds and thoughts.

We can see this incident in the life of Ruth and in the dealings of Boaz we may well be able to see a great deal that explains our own life perhaps and our own past pathway and some of those things that were inexplicable to us when we were passing through them but now we can see this that those incidents that were inexplicable when we were meeting with them they now have a very wonderful meaning and the meaning is that we can see a purpose in them we can see now unfolding gradually perhaps that these things were not haphazard sort of things casual matters that came just haphazardly into our lives but they were things of moment of importance of a vital significance and we can now see that there was a purpose in them and we say sometimes if it hadn't been for that small event that handful of purpose that came into our lives how very different things would be today we can hardly visualize what might have been the case if those handfuls of purpose had not come into our lives it's a good thing my friends to be able to trace the hand of God in your ways and in your affairs and although they will be and have been but handfuls in time they've been very important they've been handfuls of purpose not accidental things there's been a design in all and that design has been the purpose of God

I say what a wonderful thing to be able to trace some evidence of the handfuls of purpose in our lives these will all make up the great substance of belief and confidence and knowledge of salvation which is so much sought after by those who like Ruth seek earnestly a possession and a place among the people of God and of course that is where the purpose extended I said just now Boaz had several things in his mind when he ordered and ordained that these handfuls should be left right in the pathway of Ruth unobserved by her nevertheless left so she should gather them up without any uncertainty he had a great many purposes far beyond the immediate affording of food for

Ruth and Naomi he being a man of wisdom and understanding he had in his mind something far better for Ruth this Moabitish woman that had come out of a foreign land and a foreign religion into and settled in among the children of Israel and was prepared to acknowledge their God and their religion and their way of life Boaz had something in his mind that was far beyond this immediate necessity he had in his mind undoubtedly that this girl this Ruth should have a place established firmly and settled with all dignity among the children of

God now this then is the great background of our text this morning let fall he says also some of the handfuls of purpose you see just previously he had given her license to glean among sheaths although the law of God had permitted a person who was poor a widow or anyone that was bereft of this world's goods the law of God had provided that such might glean freely without let or hindrance in the harvest fields of Israel and they were being and any prevention was forbidden under the law of

[ 16 : 34 ] God that doesn't apply today there's no freedom today to glean the law of our land does not permit people to enter property even for the purpose of gleaning freely unless permission is given but in the days of Ruth under the law of God a soul that was in poverty stricken conditions could and might freely without hindrance glean in the fields the harvest fields of Israel therefore Ruth was there out of right privilege but Boaz extended to her a welcome and also a permission to glean among the sheaves and he says let fall some of the handfuls of purpose for her now you see the wonderful compassion

I want us to examine closely the typical aspect of this part of God's word because there's a great deal for us to observe and learn I believe in so doing we can never have too much of that which speaks of Christ tells us of his glorious character and his wonderful dealings with the children of man and we find a good deal in the character of Boaz that represents and sets forth in very striking ways and degrees the character of the Lord Jesus Christ now let us look at it very closely for a moment we see this let us look at the typical character of the words of

Boaz typical of the Lord Jesus Christ now if you look in the fifth verse we get the first time that Boaz speaks after his greetings when in the fourth verse he says the Lord be with you and they answered him the Lord bless thee that was the common greeting of a master prince as he entered into his field of reapers the Lord bless thee now that was the greeting then now what is the first word that he asked in the fifth verse he asked the servant that was set over the reapers whose damsel is this I want you just to think of that for a moment first word and who it was that was asked this question and also we look at the question itself now first of all

Boaz knew he knew who this person was he tells us little later on in the chapter that it had been fully revealed to him it has fully been showed me all that thou hast done so Boaz when he came into these fields and they were his fields he knew the people that were there and he knew this strange person that was there he knew all about her he knew where she had come from she also knew why she was there gleaning but he asked this question now mark this this is an important thing he asked it of the one who was set over the reapers whose damsel is this now why did he do this and I believe it was for this purpose he was asking this man who was set over his reapers that he might know indeed that he was observant that he was doing what he ought to do to be very observant of those who were entering into the fields and he might of course been careless and indifferent and had not perhaps noticed that there had been a stranger joining with the gleaners in the fields of

Boaz whose damsel is this now this is why I'm speaking bringing this point out this morning we take this typically and we see this as the Lord Jesus Christ addressing his church and addressing his church with the same typical language whose damsel is this you see it suggests that there's a responsibility and there was a responsibility resting on the shoulders of this man who was set over the reapers to see what kind of character entered into the fields where there was reaping and gleaning being done not to be indifferent or unconcerned and to shelve all responsibility and to take and adopt the attitude that it really does not concern us he pointedly brings it home to this man whose damsel is this you know there's one thing that a church ought to be very much attentive about and concerned with and that is this who are they that come in under the sound of the gospel we never ought to be indifferent or unconcerned we should pray chiefly that they who are under the sound of the gospel might be blessed by the gospel and we should take an interest in these persons whoever they may be no one ever should come under the auspices of a community small though it may be no one should ever come under the auspices of such a community without receiving attention and careful consideration and prayerful interest oh how many times have people been into the house of prayer and have gone out strangers and not a soul has even bothered to take them by the hand and say welcome to the house of the

[ 24 : 37 ] Lord my grandson I told me not very long ago that when he was at college he went to one of our chapels and he went there Sunday after Sunday and not a soul spoke to him no one asked him where he had come from or what he was doing they were indifferent they were unconcerned now Boaz says to the reaper whose damsel is this charging him so to speak with the responsibility finding out taking interest being concerned with such a person such a character well we find out that the servant had already made inquiries you can well believe that

Boaz would have a servant of this kind he wouldn't have any kind of servant to serve him he would have a diligent man and he had got a diligent man he says that once he had the answer ready for his master she is the Moabitish woman that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moabitish but you see there is the important question the first question I would have you observe this that Boaz when he comes into the field is this what about this damsel he could see there was a stranger there and he knew about her but did they know about her oh it's a very solemn thing if people come into our community into our society the Lord has sent them the Lord has seen that they shall be there to hear the word but we care nothing about it oh let us address ourselves with all diligence to those who may be like

Ruth gleaning in the fields of the gospel hungry needy let us not turn our backs upon them or our minds away from them but let us consider them and seek to encourage them and to know what their real purpose is in entering into the fields of Boaz well then secondly what is the first word of Boaz to Ruth then get that in the sixth the eighth verse this is the first word that he addresses Ruth don't forget he's just come into the fields for the first time he is asked this important question of his overseer now he asks

Ruth himself this question hearest thou not my daughter hearest think of that first word then that Boaz speaks to Ruth is about hearing how many times did the Lord Jesus when he was here on earth in his earthly ministry say this word or similar words like this he that hath ears to hear let him hear what an importance Christ ever placed upon hearing the word of the Lord you'll find it in all places where he exercised his ministry you remember you remember people were to be raised up from the dead they will convince these present day unbelievers of the truth he says they have

Moses let them hear him if they hear not Moses neither will they hear if one were to be raised from the dead the most important thing my friends is hearing the word of the Lord now do we hear oh you say of course we do we come every Lord's day ah that's a very different thing coming and hearing a man preach is not hearing necessarily the word of the Lord hear is thou not my daughter Boaz knew that she could hear but had she taken in what had been spoken had she recognized the importance of the word that had been spoken to her hear thou not my daughter now you won't be hearing perhaps every time you come but you will hear there will be times when you will find you cannot deny or escape from the fact that you have heard something that has arrested your thoughts and attention and made a great difference in your outlook and condition and your desire and expectation and if the

[ 30 : 37 ] Lord should come to you this morning and say hearest thou not my daughter you would be able to say reverently and earnestly and truly to him I have heard I heard thy word it has spoken volumes in my poor heart and especially if that word has said something like this sinner thy sins are all forgiven when you hear a word like that you will know it there can be nothing compared with a word to a poor sinful soul who mourns their sin and longs to be free from it from its guilt and its power and its wretchedness there's nothing that can be heard so precious so heavenly so sweet as thy sins be forgiven thee so then we find the first word then that he speaks to

Ruth is this hearest thou not my daughter I see my towel is nearly gone I was going to speak about Christ as the way and the truth and the life that is so clearly brought out here but let me just conclude with a few more observations about this wonderful case let fall he says also some of the handfuls of purpose handfuls wonderful thing I wonder whether Ruth realized as she went to gleaning that she was getting far more than she expected you know there's a tremendous hard life and work the work of gleaning no one would do it unless it was an absolute necessity and that is why

Ruth was here in this field because of necessity and no one ever comes into the field of the gospel and really gleans in those fields except they come out of sheer necessity they don't come out of interest or pleasure or entertainment they come out of absolute necessity because if they do not come they will perish perish all that they need however slender it may be lies in that field and they must therefore go forth and glean whatever is to be gleaned and as Ruth went forth into these fields she may have wondered how there was so at times unexpectedly more than she could ever imagine handfuls instead of just picking a straw here and then going bending along hard heavy work another straw a dozen feet forward and so on or to the right or to the left grabbing eagerly a straw here and a straw there she suddenly finds a handful oh what a find what a discovery how much pleasure there would be wrapped up in that how many surprises there would be filling the heart and mind when a handful came into her sight and into her reach it was a handful of purpose purpose now that's just how poor seekers go on in the fields of

Christ in the fields of the gospel you go on perhaps you only pick up one straw and you say to yourself this isn't enough this doesn't show that I'm anything at all or will get anything but go on my friend you may find there's a handful a handful of purpose the Lord never leaves gleaners without some wonderful purpose and the purpose is that he will provide sufficient for their needs and when Ruth comes to the end of the day and beats out what she had gleaned she was amazed and I can only imagine that she must have laid up a great deal of the gleaning she couldn't possibly have carried it all to the bitter end of the day she must have laid up here a little there bound them up perhaps collected them at the end but when she came to the end and beat out what she had gleaned there was an ephah of barley or in other words there were ten omas and an omas was regarded by God as being one man's one daily portion sufficient for one man for one whole day and Ruth had ten ten omas which make up an ephah now there's a great deal more

I may be able to bring out more tonight and you be here tonight once at the Lord's day is not sufficient if you're a gleaner if you're a real gleaner you will be here in your place tonight you won't find you won't get enough on one occasion to satisfy a longing soul so be here if you can of course there's some of you who cannot possibly be here and we recognize that but if you can you be in your place and we shall make a further attempt to unfold the wonderful parts of God's holy word Amen, 519

[ 37 : 56 ] When Ruth the bleeding went, the encoder was her guide. The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry. It saved her five hundred thousand feet.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

And she made her cry, and she made her cry. It is the last of the road that she is, The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

It is the last of the days, the world shall see.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

[ 39 : 52 ] The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

[ 40 : 52 ] The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry. The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry. The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry. The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

[ 42 : 04 ] The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry.

The Burbank field led her straight, and she made her cry. A prayer to the Lord O Lord, we would thank Thee for the great encouragement Thou hast placed in Thy holy word for those who are real gleaners.

May we be among such, and may we know the handfuls of purpose that are left by Thee for us to gather. And may it be to our souls food, and life, and salvation.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God the Father, fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, be with us now and evermore.

Amen.