

Ruth

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[0 : 00] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the book of Ruth.

Chapter 3, 18th verse. Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, 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 book of Ruth, chapter 3, and the 18th verse.

The book of Ruth has afforded much instruction and encouragement to poor sinners who have the mercy to be made seeking souls.

And in reading the book of Ruth, there is an opening up of what we call from a theological viewpoint, foundation truths.

[1 : 28] Ruth was a Moabitess. And as she was born and grew up, she was an idolater.

And was well content to live as she was born. But when it came to pass that Naomi and her husband turned their backs on the land of promise, and Bethlehem the house of bread, because there was a famine in the land, and went down to dwell in Moab, because they had heard there was provision there, the sovereignty of God was made manifest in overruling, wherein Naomi and her husband had heard and strayed like lost sheep.

Naomi and her husband were godly people, and they knew that they should make no move in their everyday lives to go here or there, without the cloud moving, to direct them where to go.

But they failed to observe any movement of the cloud, that they should leave the land of promise, where Israel's God was worshipped, whether it was in a time of plenty or famine, it mattered not.

They turned their backs upon the land of promise, and went down to dwell in Moab. And they made a grievous error of judgment.

[3 : 42] And they found what our hymn writer says, to be a great truth. And now this was of a truth, an unwary step, of Naomi and her husband.

And so that truth is to be kept in mind in reading the book of Ruth, the sovereignty of God in all his dealings, so that even mistakes that his people make, and are permitted to make, are ultimately overruled for their good and the glory of God, and what indeed are blunders, ultimately are made manifest as blessings in disguise.

Another thought is that as Naomi and her husband dwelt there, so their two sons, Malon and Shilion, they married Moabitesses, took them wives of the women of Moab, and one of them was Ruth.

But then, as they dwelt there about ten years, the hand of God was made manifest in his chastenings, and Naomi's husband died and was laid in the grave, and then her two sons died also.

And there was Naomi. In her soul's feelings at the ends of the earth, guilty before God, and sorrowful inner soul, because of the things which had befallen her.

- [5 : 58] And the outcome was, as you all know, that she found it in her heart to return again to where she belonged, the land of promise.
- But, as she went forth of the place where she was, her two daughters-in-law with her, and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.
- And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go return each to her mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.
- And now, they both said, first of all, surely we will return with thee unto thy people.
- But Naomi stresses it, emphasizes what the outcome of it will be, if they should purpose to do so.
- [7 : 01] Turn again, my daughters, go your way. And she seems to argue the matter. And they lifted up their voice and wept again.
- And then, comes the crucial test. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, bade her goodbye, went back to Moab, where she belonged.
- And where she could live, just as she was born, having no concern to live any other life. And now, the word of God says here, but Ruth clave unto her.
- And Naomi said, follow this along, behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people and to her gods.
- Return thou after thy sister-in-law. You might wonder, you dear young people, why Naomi should be so emphatic in pressing Ruth, but underneath it all, Naomi desired that what Ruth did, she should do voluntarily.
- [8 : 22] Not through any pressure of Naomi's to return with her, but that she should do it on her own initiative.
- And here is the beginning of what was going on in Ruth's breast. Ruth clave unto her. Godly scholars tell us that this word clave has got in it the meaning of glue.
- Ruth was glued unto her. There was a wonderful bond that Ruth could not leave Naomi. And it was not just that which was natural.
- No, it was that which was spiritual. You read in the Psalms, my soul followeth hard after thee.
- The margin is my soul is glued to thee. And Ruth said, Here is most sublime language, but it is much more than sublime language.
- [9 : 39] It is out of the abundance of the heart the mouth is speaking. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee.
- For whither thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.
- Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me. when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, when she saw that what she was doing, she was doing voluntarily, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth was speaking, then she left speaking unto her.
- So they too went until they came to Bethlehem. Bethlehem. And it says that they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.
- And now that is a setting of our subject, and I would like to look at it from two or three viewpoints and say something as God shall help me to encourage seeking souls to hope in God.
- [11 : 13] I said there were foundation truths in this book of Ruth, and now Ruth, being a Moabitess, was a Gentile.

Naomi was an Israelite, and better still, an Israelite indeed, and yet Ruth felt this wondrous healing within, which made her cleave to Naomi, and though she was of Gentile race, yet she was welcome to return with Naomi, and it is a kind of setting forth that in the fullness of time God would send forth his own son, made of a woman, made under the law, and that he would break down the middle wall of partition, and that Jew and Gentile alike would be one in Christ Jesus, and if the time allowed, it could be worked out, because when

Ruth was at length brought to be united to Boaz, the mother of Boaz was Rahab the harlot, and she was one who was a Jerichoite, and a Gentile too, and yet you read that Rahab the harlot was one who was taught of God, and in that beautiful record in Matthew's gospel, you see her name down, you see Ruth's also down, as being in the genealogy from whence Jesus Christ was born, as to his being verily man, born a babe, by birth mysterious.

These things are good to ponder in our hearts, but now here is Ruth, she has turned her back on Moab, she has left her own people, and I thought as I looked at this subject a little, there is a word in the Psalms which seems applicable, and I have no doubt that Ruth had somewhat of this experience an exercise of mind in her own soul, hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear, forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy lord, and worship thou him, in that which the word of

God declares concerning Ruth, is a fulfillment of that word penned by the Salmist later on, and now, Ruth has arrived at Bethlehem, the house of bread, she has returned with Naomi, and our next thought is to remember that Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a mighty man of wealth, and his name was Boaz, strength, he was a mighty man of wealth, but then, you must remember in reading the book of Ruth, that a greater than Boaz is here, even Jesus Christ has the sinner's friend, he is our heavenly Boaz, and what shall we say of him, as regards his might, he is almighty

[15 : 21] God, maker of heaven and earth, and he is much more than that in being almighty God, almighty God, side human breath, the Lord of life experienced death, how it was done we can't discuss, but this we hope was done for us, and what shall we say, not only of our heavenly Boaz, as to his being almighty, what shall we say, I say, of his riches, the unsearchable riches of Christ, and so, it is good to be helped to remember there is a deep that couches beneath, and now, let us go back in our minds to Bethlehem, the house of bread, try to picture root there, as she goes now to glean ears of corn, and her hat was the word of God says, how beautifully that is worded, her hat was to light on a part of the field, belonging on to Boaz, do you know, dear friends, do you ever sit down and say thank you to God, and ponder how it came to be that you should be where you are in the attitude of worship, and under the gospel, and listening to it, and that you should be found, many of you, as a gleaner in the field of the heavenly

Boaz. It was not by chance, Rapazard, that you should be where you are this Sabbath afternoon, and if you weigh matters up before God, you will see much wherein you can thank him and take courage that you should be where you are, and what you are, and that you should be a gleaner under the gospel, desiring to glean some ears of comfort, or hope, or help, or instruction to get some token for good to assure you that matters are right between your soul and God.

If you were to ponder in your heart these simple things I am just setting before you, you might find you have got more religion that God has wrought in your soul than you are aware of.

You must remember it is not by chance or apacet you were found worshipping God as you are. Many of you are coming, if to be, you can get in touch with God and find in him all your salvation and all your desire.

And now there is a sign of the favour of God in which you have participated, that you should be led to where the gospel is preached, and that you should be found a worshipper, a gleaner, I said, in the field of him who is a much greater than Boaz, referred to here.

[18 : 51] And she said, let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. how evident it is that something was living and moving in Ruth's breast which she could not define and remember she could not give any account of what would be sound doctrine, she would not stand anything in the nature of a theological test, but it does not alter the fact that the Spirit of God was her guide and he was leading her into his truth, here a little, there a little, and working out eternal purposes on her behalf.

When Ruth a gleaner went, Jehovah was her guide, to Boaz field he led her straight, mark that word in, he led her straight, and she became his bride.

You should say thank you to God, that you are what you are, and where you are. And now, let us come back to Ruth, where she is, and remember she was at Bethlehem.

Long years afterward, not so long really when you weigh it up, godly David tended his father's sheep there, much longer afterwards, at Bethlehem, the angels sang in the silent night, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.

And there they sang that wondrous anthem, here you see, hundreds of years before, somewhat of that goodwill being demonstrated to Ruth, a more bitess, and she is brought on Israelite territory, brought into the land of promise, to be an inhabitant, live the rest of her life there, amongst people taught of God.

[21 : 17] There is just another thought I turn aside to make a comment on. Although Naomi, as I said earlier, with her husband, they had erred and strayed like lost sheep in doing what they did to go down into Moab to live, yet they took their religion with them, and they remembered what they were when they pitched their tents in Moab to dwell there, and when later on Ruth was to do with them in their family circle, there must have been something in Naomi's life, something in her conduct, her conversation, that must have been wonderfully attractive to Ruth, and it wrought within her breast, so that she had a concern, thy people shall be my people, thy God shall be my God, and that must have been very encouraging to

Naomi in later life, when matters worked out so well, and when Ruth and Boaz were brought together, and united, as husband and wife, and I thought as I read this scripture, here again is a foundation truth, when she said, blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living, and to the dead, and to the dead, and now that means that Elimelech had often sent up petitions, while he dwelt in Moab, and maybe when the dear man was on his dying bed, he sent up some very special petitions, that God would appear on behalf of Naomi, and make crooked things straight, and rough places plain, and his redeemed spirit was in the realms of bliss, all that was mortal of him, was awaiting the resurrection morn, in Moabitish territory, but here his prayers are being answered, blessed be he of the

Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living, Naomi was the living, and had sent up her petitions, and Elimelech was the dead, and he in his lifetime sent up his petitions, and now they are answered, although he has gone the way of all the earth, and now does not that emphasize what the word of God declares, blessed are all they that wait for him, I believe thousands of petitions have been answered, after those who sent them up heavenward, Godward, have gone the way of all the earth, they are registered in heaven, and when the time comes, then the answer to prayer is forthcoming also, this is a great truth, and it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered, and sometimes deliverance may be wrought, when he or she who sent up the petitions are no longer dwelling under the sun, but are in the realms of bliss above, love, and now that is another foundation truth, answers to prayer may be delayed, as you feel, but they will never come too late in their fulfillment, they may be delayed, they shall never be denied, do remember that, let us come more to our subject,

Ruth has been gleaning in the fields of Boaz, she has been wonderfully successful, and it is well to remember, while she has been gleaning there, Boaz himself has come into the harvest field, and he has spoken kindly to Ruth, and there is no doubt whatever, that Ruth was attracted to Boaz, and there was a going forth of her affections toward him, and now, many of you, some of you dear young people, you have been somewhat favored, some more, some less, some open, to be more favored yet, but when you think of Ruth, gleaning in the fields of Boaz, have you not, some of you, been favored to glean under the gospel, here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept, these things stand out in the dealings of God with Ruth, it was

Ruth's concern that matters should work out well for Naomi and also on her own behalf, and she was instructed by Naomi how to deal with the matter, which was to be straightened out on her own behalf, and now Ruth had gleaned in the harvest field of Boaz, Boaz had spoken to her, she had experienced his kindness, not only so, she had received gifts from Boaz, I like this immediate context where Ruth said to Naomi on her return from meeting with Boaz, and she said, these six measures of barley gave he me, for he said to me, go not empty unto thy mother in law, what can you say, some of you,

[28 : 23] Ruth's brothers and sisters here before God, has he given you a measure of the blessed spirit's teaching, it may not be a large overflowing measure according to how you feel, but the heavenly Boaz does give to every seeking soul, shall I say, a measure of conviction of sin, the eyes of the blind are opened, he gives a measure too, of the spirit of prayer, I will pour upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of prayer and of supplication, and he gives also, does the heavenly Boaz, a measure of hope, you are not here without God and without hope, are you?

Let your conscience tell you if you are, and I leave that between you and God if you are in such a case, oh, it is a very solemn case for you to be in, but there are many of you before God who are not here without God and without hope, you cannot say much as to your religion, as to the deep things of God or ascending into the heavenly heights, but you must tell the truth that he has given you a measure of conviction of sin and a measure of the spirit of prayer, he has given you a measure of hope, it was hope that brought you, I seek and hope to find a portion for my soul, and you must admit he has given you a measure of faith, so that you have felt and you have said like

Ruth, thy people shall be my people, thy God shall be my God, you have said, O Lord, I would be thine alone, and wholly live to thee, O may I hope that thou will own a worthless one like me, God has given you also a measure of love, love to the house of prayer, so that whereas in early life's mourning, you went because parental discipline drove you there, now you go on your own initiative, and you have sometimes felt in going, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the

Lord, we love the place, O God, wherein thine honour dwells, the joy of thine abode, all earthly joy excels, and he has given you such a measure of love, that you have declared, I would rather be adored keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness, and how you have looked on the people of God, as you mingle amongst them, how glad you are to go to your own company, and that company to be the people of God, and how you have said, with them numbered I would be now, and in eternity, yes, God has given you, when you weigh it up, a measure of encouragement in the things of

God, and although as yet you cannot say some things, which you hope another day God will help you to say, and out of the abundance of the heart for the mouth to speak, you do draw some encouragement, even while you wait upon him, wait for him, O Lord, if thy covenant design, no blessing of mercy for me, O tell me how is it I find some sweetness in waiting for thee, and now, if you find sweetness in waiting on God, waiting for God, the sweetness does not arise from what you are by nature, for such a thing is impossible, it can only arise because God has wrote a miracle in you, a new heart will I give you, a new spirit will I put within you, I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh,

[33 : 24] I will give you a heart of flesh, but let us come back to Ruth, and now, godly Naomi, now matters are adjusted between her soul and God, oh she gives good counsel, then said she, sit still my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall, for the man will not be in rest until you finish the thing, this day, you see dear friends, underneath all this, there was a relationship existing, between Naomi and Boaz, and according to the law, as you may read in the early Old Testament books in the Pentateuch, that when a husband died, and his widow was left childless, then if the husband had a brother, it was for him to take the widow as his wife, that there might be still children, and that they should have the first husband's name, also, that his name might not be blotted out of the earth altogether, that was a law which God in his infinite wisdom ordained in those far back

Old Testament times, and here is Boaz as the near kinsman, although Boaz did tell Ruth there was yet a nearer kinsman than he was, but that kinsman failed to do the part of a kinsman, so that it fell upon Boaz, and Eve delighted to do the part of a near kinsman, the margin is, speaking of a near kinsman, do think on it, one that hath a right to redeem, and so Boaz according to the law did all that was necessary to fulfill it, that he might be united in marriage to Ruth, and they were brought together by God in fulfillment of his eternal purposes, it must have been a wonderful consideration for Ruth as she went on in life's journey to look back to her childhood life in Moab and how

Naomi and her husband came into her life and then how her own husband one of their sons should be united to her and how matters fell out that born a Moabitess she should now be living among Israelites and by the grace of God made to be an Israelite indeed she could ponder it all in her heart and declare what hath God wrought and she could say by the grace of God I am what I am and now following this along sit still my daughter until thou know how the matter will fall this was good counsel but I have thought this is one of the most difficult things to do in the things of God as you journey on through life when there are matters that are so complicated and you have got a feeling you would like to be doing something if so be you could sort out a few of the tangled skeins therein and untie some of the knots and then to be told even as

Ruth was leave it all with Boaz to attend to sit still my daughter for that is the good counsel that was given to Ruth and remember it is good counsel to give to you and that is as regards the things of God and what will be for your soul's eternal good you will have to relinquish all your own doings in regard to it and be still and sit still and just wait on God until he in his infinite kindness appears on your behalf that is the meaning and it is a deep down doctrine you need divine aid to do what the psalmist says he did not many people seem to me nowadays to be able to do it and he says

I waited patiently for the Lord and inclined his ear unto me and heard my cry I have told you before the margin reading is in waiting I waited equivalent to this sit still if you leave it all with Boaz matters will be sorted out for your good is glory but you must not put your own hand to it the doings of the great eye have not to come into it the Lord will appear in such a way that you shall get the good and he shall have the glory sit still until thou know how the matter will fall it might be some of you have got matters that concern you burden you maybe they keep you wake at night time some of them matters to do with you it may be matters to do with those belonging to you in your family circle oh what matters there are that arise along life's way wherein every day you feel your need of the wisdom which is from above yes he that handleth a matter wisely shall find good you read in the book of proverbs and what is it to handle a matter wisely the other half of the text in the proverbs tells you who so trusteth in the lord happy is he leave god to order all thy ways and trust in him what e'er be tied you'll find in each evil day he will be your strength your guide who builds on god's unchanging love builds on a rock which naught can move you may have matters to do with your own never dying soul and the welfare of it you hope god has begun his good work you do hope too he is carrying it on but you cannot say much about anything clear cut or definite in your soul's experience you do want to be able to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our lord and saviour jesus christ and now what can you do but wait on god and wait for god regarding it wait on the lord be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart wait i say on the lord it may be some of you are seeking souls want to meet with boaz in the gospel field realize his love shed abroad in your heart and that you might find him to be your god your father and your friend and it says then shall we know if we follow on to know the lord good it is to have it in your heart to desire to get in touch with boaz the heavenly one good it is for you to be found where you are in the gospel field where you may glean ears sometimes you glean

[42 : 22] what is sound doctrine as i said earlier on you glean ears of instruction but remember this whatever you glean under the gospel as ears of corn as it were going back to ruth as she gleaned in the harvest field what does it say at the end of the day when she returned home to Naomi so she gleaned in the field until even and beat out that she had gleaned and it was about an ephah of barley you see the ears of corn alone would not do for food but they must be beaten out and then made into food which means that there is much to do when the sermon ends and the amen concludes it which reminds me of what

I read in one of the puritans where a godly man having been up to worship returned home and his wife was not able to go and he returned home early and his wife said my dear is the sermon done already no my dear it is not the sermon is ending and now it remains to be done and that is bedrock truth be not hearers of the word but doers also but these matters that burden you harass your mind wherein you find it so difficult to leave it all with god to arrange you will never feel as you want to feel about these matters until you do and it might be well to be more urgent and earnest to get grace to do it if any man lack wisdom let him ask of god who giveth to all men liberally and afraid it not and it shall be given him you want to see matters fall out for your soul's peace and profit you want to be inside that beautiful scripture we know that all things work together for good to them that love god to them who are the called according to his purpose you want to be able to say the lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad sit still my daughter until thou know how the matter will fall and regarding

Ruth Naomi tells her the man will not be in rest until he has finished the thing this day and the heavenly Boaz will not rest until he has brought to pass whatever he purposes concerning you he which hath begun the good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ but you may have to realize how much more grace you need to sit still and watch the hand of God at work on your behalf the vision is for an appointed time though it tarry wait for it in the end it shall speak and not lie it will surely come it will not tarry matters did fall out for Ruth and for her good for the rest of her life she found it to be good for time and eternity too and so the

Lord will not fail to order all things in our lives whatever matters however complicated they may be befall us it is for us to wait on God wait for God not dictate but supplicate Lord help me O Lord I am oppressed undertake for me and he will not fail to make his goodness pass before us in the way every state our distressing shall be prophet in the end every ordinance a blessing every providence a friend sit still my daughter until thou know how the matter will fall and how will it fall I say again it will fall out to glorify God and it will fall out for your good and it will so fall out that when you consider it and the workings of it you would not have one detail of it altered for as you look on you can only feel he hath done all things well and he cannot do otherwise blind unbelief is sure to earth and scan

God's work in vain God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain then said she sit still my daughter until thou know how the matter will fall for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day dear friends young and old all I have been trying to tell you is just a few truths very simple truths yet profound also in their depths but they all center in this rest in the Lord wait patiently for him and he shall give thee thine heart's desire amen for to see again in details in your then we have to see you you