Ruth

Part 1

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[00:00:00] Shall we pray?

Our God and our Father, we turn to Thee this afternoon.

How thankful we are that in this, the day of Thy grace, we can gather together with Thy precious Word in our hands.

We thank Thee that we have the freedom and the liberty in this land to gather together to read Thy precious Word.

We thank Thee that when we read Thy precious Word, we can say the entrance of Thy Word giveth right.

We do pray this afternoon as Thy precious Word is read, that Thou wouldst take the words that are spoken, that they may apply to our hearts and to our consciences. We acknowledge, Lord, that if Thou art not working, there will be no blessing this afternoon. We admit our own weakness, our own failings, and yet, Lord, we rely on Thy greatness and [00:01:06] of Thy love and Thy kindness to us. How we thank Thee for Thy wonderful love that has been shown to us, first of all, in coming into this world, to Calvary's cross, and all that Thou didst endure there. Lord Jesus, we thank Thee for that which Thou didst in the past. We thank Thee, Lord Jesus, that even now Thou dost care for Thy people. We thank Thee that Thou dost provide sustenance for us by the way. And all we do look forward to the day, Lord Jesus, when Thou wilt come and take us to be with Thyself and that for all eternity to be in Thy Father's house.

And even now, Lord, as we wait that day, we pray that as we live our lives waiting for Thy coming, we may be more marked by devotion to Thee, Lord Jesus, more marked by living here in a way which is pleasing to Thee.

[00:02:03] Lord Jesus, we pray that Thou wouldst help us this afternoon, that as a result of being here there may be praise and glory for Thy name and to Thy God and Father. Thus we commend ourselves to Thee this afternoon. We would not forget other places where Thy word is being preached. We would pray for Thy servants wherever they are this afternoon. Bless them and we pray that Thy word would go forth and not be bound. We think particularly of any of Thy servants who will be preaching in the open air on this sunny afternoon. We pray for them. We pray for Thy blessing to be upon Thy precious word wherever it is faithfully preached as we simply commend ourselves to

Thee at this moment, seeking Thy help, seeking Thy blessing, praying that it all may be done for Thy glory, Lord Jesus. We commend ourselves to Thee now in Thy precious and worthy name, Lord Jesus. Amen. I wonder if we should sing another hymn, 278.

[00:03:04] Savior, we long to follow Thee, daily Thy cross to bear, and count all else, whate'er it be, unworthy of our care. 278. And count all else, whate'er it be, unworthy of our care.

We are not proud of our own house of thine, the house that you call thine own.

[00:04:07] And if thy grace hath called divine, earth, suns, and airs of God, my spirit to the present feel.

Our Father's house, where the old foes and doubt reclaim, the glorious death of old.

[00:05:02] Thy light is now beyond the grave, our hope for us set free.

Thy strength and grace in thee we have, for we are one with thee.

O Jesus, Lord, how far to know of prison life with thee.

Lord, we pray thee, while here below, what Christ our life may be.

[00:06:14] I'd like this afternoon to read a few verses from the Book of Ruth.

The Book of Ruth will begin in chapter 1 and verse 1.

Now it came to pass in the days of, for days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judea, went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. [00:07:02] And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons, Malon and Shilon. He from iths of Bethlehem, Judea. And they came into the country of Moab, continued there. And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left and her two sons.

And they took them wives of the women of Moab, and the name of the one was Orthah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. And Malon and Shilon died, also both of them, and the women were left of her two sons and her husband. Then she 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. Verse 15.

[00:08:01] And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods. Return thou after thy sister-in-law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee.

For whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge. And thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

And where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also. It is all but death, apart me and thee.

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And when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, she left speaking unto her. Chapter 2.

We'll just pick out a few verses here and there. Verse 7.

And she said, I pray thee, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves. [00:09:06] So she came and continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house. And verse 14.

And Boaz said unto her, At mealtimes come hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers, and he reached her parched corn. And she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. When she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not. Let fall also some of the handful of purposes for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and reproach her not. So she gleaned in the fields until even, and beat out that which she had gleaned. And it was about an ephod of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city, and gave her mother-in-law what she had gleaned. [00:10:06] And she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved, after she was sufficed. Chapter 3.

And verse 8. And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself. And behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth, thine handmaid. Spread therefore thy skirt over thy handmaid, for thou art a near kinsman. And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, for thou hast shown more kindness in the latter end, than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followest not rich men, whether poor or rich. And in chapter 4.

Verse 6.

And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar my own inheritance. [00:11:05] Redeem thou my right to thyself, for I cannot redeem it.

And verse 9.

And Boaz said unto the elders, and to all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech, and all that was Chilons and Malons, of the hand of Naomi.

Moreover Ruth of Moabite, the wife of Malon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead, for they are his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place.

Ye are witnesses today.

We'll just read the last verse, verse 22.

And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

[00:12:11] Perhaps some local brethren are worried to read and to speak on the book of Ruth.

It's like the American who came to this country and spent a fortnight, and he said to himself, he said to his host, I'm going to go round London for this first week, and then for the middle of the next week

I'm going to go to the Midlands, and then I'll do Scotland on Friday.

He certainly couldn't do a great deal in Scotland on one day.

And as I look at the book of Ruth, you might be thinking, what can you take out of the book of Ruth in little over, in under an hour?

[00:13:02] Well I just want to simply touch one or two points, as we go through this book, which have been laid upon my heart, and I trust they will be points that the Lord can use in our lives as we move through this scene.

Now the book of Ruth has been often used and has been done by many of our expositors as a dispensational picture, the picture of the nation of Israel in the land of Moab. At this moment Israel is dispersed amongst the Gentiles, but they return to their land, and in Naomi do we not see a picture of Israel in unbelief going back to the land.

But then we see in Ruth a wonderful picture of Israel, that remnant which will go back to the land, and after much persecution and difficulty, they will be united with the Lord during the millennial reign. [00:14:02] Some others apply Ruth to a picture of the church, and I'm quite happy if that's the way you wish to look at it. But tonight I simply want to take this book of Ruth and apply it practically to us today in this land in which we live.

And it's remarkable that the book of Ruth, as I was looking at these verses, particularly the first verse, tells us it was in the days when the judges ruled. The last verse of the book of Judges says this, in those days there was no king in Israel.

Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. And you know we seem to be living in a day when that verse could be true today. Every man seems to do that which is right in their own eyes. The book of Ruth, you know, it comes after the judges. It becomes after Moses. And if you lived in Ruth's day, you would look back many years [00:15:02] and you could see great works which was done by Moses. You could see great works which was done by Joshua.

And no doubt those elders that outlived Joshua. And there were periods of time when you could look back and you could say, yes, we could see God's hand working there.

And perhaps today as we look back in our lives, and in the testimony that we are associated with, we don't see a great deal of God's work.

We can look back many years to Calvary's cross. We can see there that marvellous work that the Lord Jesus accomplished. We can see the great work that the apostles did. We look through the Middle Ages and we see no doubt men that stood up and shone for God. You know, as we look around today, we see little evidence. And perhaps we can become like Elimelech. We can become distressed and we can leave the land.

[00:16:05] And so we find that in the very first verse, there was a famine in the land.

And I'm sure that each one of us here tonight can identify famines that have been in our Christian lives. We can all think back, no doubt, to times when we lived more for the Lord Jesus. When he was

the bright object before our hearts. And somehow those things come into our lives and we have to hang our heads and say, there's a famine in the land.

There's a famine, dear friends, in our hearts. And this is where it starts. We have less time for the Lord today than we did years before. We remember the word that is spoken to the Ephesians in Revelation. You've left your first love.

And I like to apply that to myself. [00:17:03] And hang our heads in shame and think to ourselves, if the Lord Jesus should come tonight, we would have to say we have left our first love. We do not live for the Lord as we did when we were newly converted. He says of the nation of Israel in Jeremiah 2, I remember the love of thy espousals when they went to starve to me in the wilderness. There was a famine here in the land. There's a famine in our hearts. There's a famine in our families. And there's a famine in the assemblies. And we are looking around and we think, what shall we do? Beloved brethren, beloved friends, why was there a famine in the land in Ruth chapter 1? The answer is given in Deuteronomy. In Deuteronomy chapter 11 and verse 16, it says, Take heed to yourselves that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside and worship other gods and serve them. [00:18:02] Then the Lord's wrath shall be kindled against you. He will shut up heaven, that there will be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruits.

The reason why there was a famine in the land was because the people of God had turned their backs upon God and had gone away from God. And what is the answer given in Deuteronomy chapter 11? Therefore, shall you lay up these words in your heart and in your souls.

Bind them for a sign upon your hands that there may be a front lit between your eyes. Ye shall teach them your children, speak of them when thou sittest down. Perhaps the antidote to the famine in the land and the famine in our hearts is the word of God.

How sad it is that we have, as it were, forgotten the importance of the word of God. [00:19:01] How sad it is that in the world as a whole, the word of God is despised. The word of God is rejected.

It's even more sad when we find that within the Christian company, the word of God is not accepted.

How sad it is when we go in many churches and we look around and we find that it is unable to find a Bible. The word of God is rejected.

You know, in our own hearts, we can value other things, we can value other literature, and we forget about the word of God. The answer to the famine in our hearts, I believe, dear friends, is the word of God.

It's to get into the word of God and to see in the word of God the person of the Lord Jesus.

Well, this man, he left Bethlehem. What a place to leave. That place where the Lord Jesus was to be born. That place which means the house of bread.

[00:20:02] And you know, I'll read a verse in Psalms.

In Psalms 37, verse 19, They shall not be ashamed in the time of evil. In the day of famine they shall be satisfied.

There's an abundance of food in God's word for us. There's an abundance of wealth here for us to study and to enjoy. However, Elimelech, he left the country, he left the land, the promised land, and he went into Moab.

How sad it is when we see people that leave God's people.

How sad it is when we see people that will leave the meetin', so to speak, and will go elsewhere. But you know, it's even more sad when they leave and they go to Moab. Moab, as we know from Numbers 22, they were the enemies of God's people. [00:21:02] They hired Balaam.

Barak hired Balaam.

We read in Psalm 83 that Moab is one of those nations that would destroy Israel.

And yet this was the nation that Elimelech went with his family. What a sad thing it is to leave the people of God and to go into the world. And that's what we find with Elimelech. And you know, not only was it sad for Elimelech, but it was terribly sad for his family.

And those of us who are responsible for our families, those who are head of the houses, we stand before God responsible.

And here we find a man who gave up his inheritance and went into the world. And in the world he lost his family. What a sad thing.

Elimelech, in verse 3, he dies.

[00:22:02] And the two sons, they marry wives of the daughters of Moab.

We could turn back into Deuteronomy 25.

We find there the great problems and trouble that had arisen through marriage to these Moabites. We could read in Deuteronomy 7, God's word to the children of Israel that they were not to marry from these tribes in the land in which they went into. And yet here were two sons, brought up, no doubt, in a God-fearing family.

I'll mention that in a moment. And yet they married unconverted people.

The reason why I suggest that here was a God-fearing family is that Elimelech, his name means God is King.

How can we, we can imagine his parents, [00:23:01] Elimelech's parents, unmentioned in scripture, giving birth to this child and saying God is King. In spite of all that was going on in the nation, they acknowledged that God was King. And we can say that Elimelech was brought up in a good home. And many of us are brought up in Christian homes. And yet we're giving up the inheritance that we've had. We're giving it up because there's difficulties, because there's problems.

And this is what Elimelech did. He gave up his inheritance. We want to see how important the inheritance was. We read in 1 Kings 21 about Naboth. He was asked to sell his vineyard. He said, I

cannot sell that which is the inheritance.

And dear friends, let us not give up the inheritance that we've received from our forefathers. Those who had fought in order that we might have the Bible. Those who had fought in order that we might know the doctrines and the truths of the Bible. Let us not give them up because the time is difficult. [00:24:03] And they took wives from the world.

And I will add this here because I think it is so important. 2 Corinthians 6.14 is a word that we ought to know, each one of us, be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

The Word of God is absolutely clear. That if I as a believer marry an unbeliever, I'm going against the Word of God. The Bible says again, 1 Corinthians 7, only in the Lord.

How important it is that even though we're in difficult times to stick to the Word of God.

We find that Mallon and Chillon, they both die.

And one of these verses, it speaks about in verse 4, they dwelt there about ten years.

You know, I think as we read through the Scriptures, we will acknowledge that we've been taught [00:25:02] that ten is the number that speaks of man's responsibility. We have ten fingers.

You remember when Abraham was speaking to the angels, or to the two men in relation to Lot, he begins at 50 and he goes down to 10.

And I believe he stops at 10 because he acknowledged that man is responsible before God. And I think in this position here we see that for ten years God left them and they lived and they were married for ten years. And as responsible persons before God, they were responsible to act according to the truth that they as Israelites had, and yet they didn't act according to it. And as a result, they both die.

You know, when we've looked at that portion, we find what a black scene we've got. What a sad picture it is. [00:26:01] And many of us here can identify ourselves, I'm sure, in some measure with Illuminac, as that we've forgotten God's things. We've given up the Word of God. We used to read the Word of God. We've slipped away slowly. You know, it has been said, the first step in departure may be very little, but it's away from God. And how true this is.

And again, as we think of Lot, when he had the choice to make, it says he chose those plains and he pitched his tent towards Sodom.

It may not have been a very important step to have made and Lot may have said it's a better position, and there's lots of good things about this. But you know, the next time we read Sodom, we need about Lot, he's dwelling in Sodom.

And then he has a house, and then he's trying to make Sodom a better place. The slippery slopes, and they all begin with a small move away from God's things. [00:27:03] And yet when we come to this question of Ruth, we find a bright prospect. And you know, the wonderful thing is, is that God, in his marvellous grace, is able and is willing still to bless his people.

Had God not intervened, I'm sure that Naomi would have stayed in the land of Moab. And yet that wonderful verse, verse 6, she heard that God, the Lord, had visited his people and given them bread. Why had the Lord visited his people? Well, there's a verse which says, the Lord loves his people.

And here we find the grace of God, that he is prepared to bless the people. And you know, if it wasn't through the grace of God, none of us would be here tonight. None of us would have had any desire towards God's things. [00:28:01] It is only the wonderful grace and love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts that make us turn towards him. When we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. How true it is that each one of us, we may think we're good Christians and we may think that we're doing what is right, and yet it is only according to the grace of God that has put us into this wonderful position. And Ruth and Naomi and Orpah, they go back, as it were, towards the land of Israel, towards Bethlehem.

And here I think we see the difference between natural affection and devotion. We see here that Orpah, who had great affection to her mother-in-law, and she goes back with her a certain way. And yet we find the sad thing that Naomi, who has gone out in unbelief, she tells her daughters three times to return, return, return.

[00:29:02] And we find that Orpah, natural affection will not take us along the path of serving the Lord. She returns and goes back to her people. But Ruth, she stays.

And she says these wonderful words that perhaps each one of us here has learnt. Entreat me not to leave thee, nor 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.

I believe that when we come to that statement here, Ruth, as it were, had realised the complete emptiness of Moab.

She had realised there is nothing in Moab that would satisfy her heart. And you know, Moab is the other side of the Jordan.

And I believe that Ruth knew more than many of us. [00:30:04] There is nothing to satisfy us across the Jordan.

The Jordan would speak to us of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And when the children of Israel came out of Egypt, they came into Moab before they crossed the Jordan.

There is nothing in this world, beloved friends, that will satisfy us.

It is only through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, that we will get that which will satisfy and that which will feed our Christian life. And we see here that Ruth is prepared to go with Naomi.

And I would suggest that here we get Ruth being a disciple.

And I wonder if each one of us here tonight have counted the cost of being a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

[00:31:01] Because I think that Ruth, as she went this way, she counted the cost of what it would be to

leave Moab and to come into Bethlehem.

You know, we were, many years ago, we used to be taught and we used to be preached to that we should count the cost of being a disciple.

And in this connection, I will just read a few verses to you in Luke chapter 14.

Luke chapter 14, the Lord Jesus said, verse 26, If any man come to me and hate not his father and his mother and his wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, in his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. The next verse, And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple. Verse 33, So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsake us not all that he hath, [00:32:02] he cannot be my disciple.

Three conditions for being a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

The last one that we read, the last one that we read, forsake not all he hath, is clearly in relation to our possessions.

Now we prepare to put our possessions to one side and follow the Lord.

Because in reality, Ruth had to do that.

She had to put beside everything that she had in Moab and follow the Lord.

The first one, Hate not thy mother and thy father. She had to practically leave her family in order to follow the Lord.

And the middle one, Bear thy cross.

She had to come to the condition where she could say, I am nothing.

You know I believe that these three things are what we need to do. First of all, [00:33:01] if we are going to follow the Lord, there may be possessions, there may be things that we have which are holding us back. We have got to be prepared to say no to those things.

And they are varied and there may be many different things in our lives which are holding us back. And then there are families and friends and people and there may be those that are holding us back from following the Lord. And they have got to be put to one side. And finally, perhaps the greatest hindrance of following the Lord is ourselves.

We think we are something important. We think that we are quite a decent person. And we are not prepared to follow the Lord in a humble and submissive way.

We see here Ruth.

She follows Ruth. She follows Naomi back to the land.

What a wonderful picture this is. What a wonderful thing that in spite of all the difficulties, on the

pages of Scripture we have this Ruth who is prepared to commit herself [00:34:03] to the God of Naomi.

The challenge that I give tonight is are we prepared to commit our lives totally every aspect, every corner to the Lord Jesus and follow Him.

You know when they get back to the land we could have read about Ruth, about Naomi saying call me Mara, call me bitterness.

And what I think is remarkable that in chapter 2 we are introduced here to a mighty man of wealth.

What is even more remarkable is that Naomi never mentioned the fact that there was a mighty man of wealth who was connected to their family. And how sad it is that many of us will come to difficult times in our lives, will come to famines and we will forget about the fact that the Lord Jesus is there, the mighty man of wealth.

[00:35:01] You know if we read in the New Testament and we read many occasions where we can see the Lord Jesus as the mighty man of wealth. He said in John, is it John chapter 8?

Speaking of Abraham, before Abraham was, I am. In John chapter 4 is it? He says, I'm greater than Jacob. You know they said aren't they greater than Jacob? He says, Jacob will give you this drink, you'll thirst again. I'll give you a drink you will never thirst again. And that's the person that we can be connected with, identified with.

And yet Naomi never realised that she had this kinsman and it is only God who seems to introduce Boaz in chapter 2.

And again we have to say that had it not been for the love and the grace of God, none of us would have been brought to know the Lord Jesus.

And we see again the hand of God working in verse 3 where we get this old English word [00:36:02] and her hat was to light on the part of the field that belonged to Boaz. Why did she pick of all the fields around Bethlehem this field that belonged to Boaz? Well the world may say it was luck, the world may say it was by chance, but it was the hand of God that led her to that field because she was prepared to devote herself, as it were, to her mother, mother-in-law. If we are prepared to devote ourselves to the Lord Jesus then I'm sure the Lord will lead us in that right direction to that right field, to that place where Boaz has his rights, where Boaz controls.

You know, isn't this a wonderful picture of what our assembly should be, the place where the Lord Jesus has the control, the place where He can lead, the place where everything is for Him and for His glory.

[00:37:02] And it is there we find that Ruth gleans.

I'll show you a few little points on gleaning. How often do we spend time gleaning in God's Word for precious things?

Here we have in our hands available in this land for many, many years, the open Bible. What a

privilege that we have, dear friends, to glean through the Scriptures and to find that which will satisfy us. Our souls fall down here and she gleans in verse 7. And gleaning is not an easy task. It's not something that we like to do. It's a very difficult, a very hard task.

On the farm I remember when we used to have potatoes and there used to come a day when we had to glean the fields and nobody liked to glean. It was a back-aching job, a job without a great deal of reward. [00:38:01] And yet here, Ruth was prepared to glean from morning till evening. And not only did she glean for herself, but if we glean in the Word of God, if we steep ourselves with God's precious Word, just as Ruth had some to give to her mother, then we will have food for others. And she gleaned. And in verse 14 we read that she has her meal with Boaz.

And oh, you know, if we glean from the Scriptures, if we make the Scriptures the most important part of our lives, if we glean through the Scriptures, what will be the result? There will be fellowship with Boaz. There will be that communion with the Lord that will come from gleaning, just as Ruth did with Boaz.

You know, the very last verse of this chapter, it says, And she gleaned until the end of barley harvest and of the wheat harvest and dwelt with her mother-in-law. I wonder why it mentions this. [00:39:01] We know that she began gleaning in the barley harvest. And perhaps we are right to suggest that the barley harvest would speak to us of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. We remember in 1 Corinthians 15 we read about the firstfruits, linking them with the resurrection. And we remember that in Leviticus 23, the Feast of Firstfruits would speak to us of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And you know, as we glean through the Scriptures, do we not see there something of the Lord Jesus as the one who came into this world? As he moved about this world, he went to the cross, he died, and he rose again and exalted.

You know, it didn't only stop with her gleaning through the life of the Lord Jesus here and his death and his resurrection. That gleaning went right on to the wheat harvest.

And surely the wheat would speak to us of the man who is exalted at God's right hand. Except a corn of wheat [00:40:01] fall into the ground and die, it says, John 12, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. And as she gleaned through the barley into the wheat harvest, and as we read through God's word, do we not see not only the Lord Jesus as the one who moved through here, but we see him now as the exalted man at God's right hand.

Well, we come to verse chapter 3.

Difficult chapter for many of us to understand living in the West. But the simple point that I want to bring out from this chapter is that Ruth is found at the feet of Boaz.

And Boaz's comments in verse 10, he could say, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, thou hast shown more kindness in thy latter end than at the beginning.

You know, I want to simply say that if we become disciples of the Lord Jesus, if we recommit [00:41:01] our lives to the Lord Jesus, if as disciples of the Lord Jesus we glean through his precious word, we will be able to be at his feet, we will want to be at his feet, worshipping him and praising him, giving him the affections that would flow from our hearts. Because Boaz says, Thou hast shown kindness.

You know, we remember in the New Testament of Mary of Bethany, how wonderful it is as we view her in Luke 10, we see her, she sits at the feet of the Lord Jesus.

We can see her there as a learner.

We look at her again in John 11 at the grave of Lazarus. She's at his feet and she's mourning.

We come to chapter 12 prior to that cross.

The beginning of the week that led up to him being crucified at Calvary.

There is Mary. She's at his feet.

[00:42:01] She's pouring out her heart before him.

She's worshipping him we can say. She's given him thanks and the praise.

You know, beloved friends, what a wonderful privilege that we have in this scene of his rejection to, as it were, to be at his feet, to be given him the praise and the thanksgiving for what he has done.

This is a privilege that is not just open to the brothers, but it's a privilege that each one of us can do.

Yes, we can do it in the meetings, but we can do it wherever we are. We can bow, as it were, at his feet.

We can give him the worthy honour that is due to him.

We come into the next chapter. We find that there is another one there that could redeem, but the law could not redeem.

We read in Romans what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh. God said in his son, in the likeness of sinful flesh [00:43:02] and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

Yes, the law could not do anything and we cannot do anything to benefit ourselves. It is only the true Boaz who can redeem us.

And you know, I want to finish on this verse, verse 10.

Moreover, Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mallon, have I purchased to be my wife.

He says in one verse, I have redeemed all.

You know, each one of us here tonight, there's a threefold way in which we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first way, we can say that the whole of this universe was created by him.

And creatorially, we belong to the Lord Jesus.

Everyone in this room, because he's our creator, we belong to him.

[00:44:01] Then we read, he bought the field.

We read in 1 Peter, is it, about the fact that he bought this person.

Every one of us has been bought with a price.

We've been bought, this whole world was bought.

But not only that, 1 Peter 1 verse 18, for as much as you know, you are not redeemed.

You are not bought with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with his precious blood.

And each one of us here, we have been redeemed. And I will quote now one, well I'll turn to it, because it's a very important verse, 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 20.

[00:45:11] For ye are bought with a price.

Therefore glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are God's.

Yet each one of us are bought with a price.

We don't belong to ourselves anymore. We belong to the Lord Jesus.

He has died for us.

He created us. He has redeemed us.

And every one of us should be here for him and for his glory.

And that's what I think we have as we come to the close of this Book of Ruth.

Here is a person who was prepared to give up that which would naturally hold her in this scene. She was prepared to be a disciple [00:46:01] of the Lord Jesus.

Having made the decision to follow the Lord, are we prepared to study his precious Word? Are we prepared to read through the pages of this Book that we have in our hands in order that there may be a result, in order that it may flow forth to others, in order that there may be that communion with the Lord Jesus?

And if we read his precious Word, and if we know what it is And if we read his precious Word, and if we know what it is to feed with the Lord, to feed on the Lord Jesus, if we know what it is to go forth and to tell out the wonderful praises to those that are around, well then there will be that time when we will be able to come before the Lord and worship him, [00:47:02] give him the praise of our hearts for what he has done.

When we come to the fourth chapter, we realise that what we are doing is only because what Christ

has done.

He has bought us. We belong to him.

May we be encouraged with these few words, dear friends, as we seek to carry on and serve the Lord Jesus before he comes.

Because the final word in the Book of Ruth is perhaps the most important, David.

We're looking forward to the day in the Book of Ruth when that great man David will take the throne, when he will be the one that will rule in Israel, the man after God's own heart.

We here tonight, surely we're waiting for the moment when the true David, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, will come into the air, will take us to be with himself. Then he will take up the drains of judgement [00:48:02] and will rule in this world. What a glorious day that will be. But until that day comes, let us all be faithful and seek to serve him while we wait for his coming.

Can we sing in closing? Three hundred and eighty-eight.

Nothing but Christ has on we tread.

The gift unpriced Christ God's living bread with staff in hand and feet well shod.

Nothing but Christ the Christ of God.

Three hundred and eighty-eight.

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