

The Expositor



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“... and expounded the matter unto them in order.” (Acts 11:4)

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II PETER 3

INTRODUCTON

After Peter shows the “process of growth” in chapter 1 and the “perils to growth” in chapter 2, he now seeks to “protect and preserve growth” in chapter 3. This chapter becomes one of provocation to grow in spite of obstacles faced in the chapter before. Just how will Peter do this? This chapter shows how. It was by:

1. EXTENDING HIS SUPPORT. (v. 1-2)

Peter would not sit back knowing what they faced without seeking to support them in the right. He could well remember how the Lord extended his support when he was in danger of falling. (Lk. 22:31-32) These verses show his support to be:

A. PERSONAL. (v. 1)

Notice the personal pronouns used by Peter. It is “I now write”, “I stir up” and “of us”. He wants them to know of his personal concern and support.

He wants them to think for themselves for it is so easy to let someone do your thinking for you.

B. PERSEVERING. (v. 2)

His concern and support would continue and even after his death they could, by his writings, be supported by what he had to say.

II. EXPOSURE OF THE SCOFFERS. (v. 3-7)

Peter is well aware of the effect of scoffers and what damage they can do. Thus sets forth some things concerning such. He speaks of the:

A. FACT REVEALED. (v. 3)

He points out that scoffers will come. He doesn't deny that there would be those who question the promises of the Lord. That is an obvious fact.

B. FALSE REASONING. (v. 4)

Here are some who ask about his promise to come. They say all things have continued as they were from creation, and therefore they would argue that there would be no change.

C. FALLACY REPROVED. (v. 5-6)

Peter shows that they would have to will to not know the facts. The flood denies their

false premise that all things continue as they were. The old world perished by water and that by the word of the Lord.

When scoffers faced this truth, they would surely stand exposed for what they are.

D. FUTURE RESERVED. (v. 7)

Those who doubt the promise of the Lord's promise are in for a surprise. God has their future reserved unto fire as the old world was reserved unto destruction by water.

Yes, Peter exposes them in spite of their claims.

III. EXPLANATION OF THE SAVIOR'S RETURN. (v. 8-10)

Here is inspired information relative to the Lord's return. Such would be needed so as to reassure those who heard the words of the scoffers. He sets before them the:

A. LORD'S CALCULATIONS. (v. 8)

The Lord does not count time as do men. He is not restricted by man's timetable. So often men scoff because they use their own calculations rather than God's. Time does not affect his promises.

B. LORD'S CONCERN. (v. 9)

This verse shows God's concern for lost man and gives him time to repent. His longsuffering is for man's benefit, not that he has gone back on his word.

C. LORD'S COMING. (v. 10)

“The day of the Lord will come”. That much is sure and certain in spite of all that these scoffers say. He is as good as his word. It will be sudden and with great sounds. We see the lightning flash and hear thunder roar but this is nothing compared to the passing of all that he knows and sees. That day is ahead. It will come.

IV. EXHORTATIONS OF THE SAINTS. (v. 11-16)

After showing that the Lord would come he sets before them some moral imperatives. There is a link between conduct and conviction. If men don't

believe the day of the Lord will come they are apt to live lives that are loose and degrading. However, if men know they must meet their maker there will be a difference. Peter was of the latter class. The exhortations of these verses come out of the assurance of the Lord's return. They are exhorted to be:

A. *PROPERLY MOTIVATED.* (v. 11)

Peter asks a question in view of all that has been proven to be so. Since the world is coming to an end. Since the judgment is going to occur, what responsibilities are facing them? Should they not be motivated to live in view of this event?

Take an example of a teacher seeking to prepare students for a test. If she warns that that testing day is going to come, doesn't it follow that such ought to motivate the student to prepare? Surely it should.

Since that great day is coming we ought to be motivated.

B. *PERSONALLY DESIROUS.* (v. 12)

These are exhorted to look for and earnestly desire the coming of the day of the Lord. This was John's attitude in Revelation 22:20 when he said, "Even so come Lord Jesus". Though others scoff and act as if Jesus will not return, these are exhorted to be desirous of his coming.

C. *PATIENT IN WAITING.* (v. 13)

In spite of what others say, and in spite of any delay, we are to keep on looking for new heavens and a new earth. Sometimes it is not easy to wait where people deny all that you hold dear, but we are to wait.

D. *PURE IN LIFE.* (v. 14)

The doctrine of the scoffer will encourage one to live in sin. Not so with the gospel. It teaches purity of life in view of the Lord's return.

E. *PERSISTENT IN FAITH.* (v. 15-16)

Rather than allow the scoffers to carry them away they were to properly regard the long-suffering of God as an opportunity for man's salvation. Peter used Paul to support such teaching and to thus support their faith. He thus seeks to shore up the foundation of their faith and to let them know it rested on that which was secure.

IV. *ENCOURAGEMENT TO STEDFASTNESS.* (v. 17-18)

Peter was aware that there were those who could lead them astray. This would stop any progress they made. He would thus encourage them to be:

A. *CAUTIOUS IN DANGERS.* (v. 17)

Peter did not preach "once saved always saved". He knew they needed to be cautioned.

B. *CONSTANT IN DEVELOPMENT.* (v. 18)

What a way to end an epistle! He closes urging them to grow, and tells them the direction.

What a joy it was to Peter as he says, "To him be glory both now and forever. Amen". May God's glory be seen in our growth.

RUTH 1

INTRODUCTION:

This little book is nestled between Judges and I Samuel. It has been called "A brochure of beauty". Well, it could be. It is a love story with a happy ending. This book bears the name of a woman as does the book of Esther. There is, however, a great contrast between the two. Ruth was a Gentile who comes into the royal line from a far country. Esther was a Jew in a far country who marries into a Gentile family. Yes, there was a difference between the two.

The first chapter sets before us matters "in the far country". In it we shall see beauty in the midst of blackness. As one begins his study of this book he must deal with "the far country". Take a close look at the:

I. *CONDITIONS THAT EXISTED.* (v. 1-5)

What is the background of this book? What conditions existed? That is what the first five verses will tell us. We see these by observing the:

A. *SETTING.* (v. 1)

The time, place and conditions of the people are found in the lead line. Surely the time was not the best. One has but to read the book of Judges to see the moral climate of that day. Men were doing what was right in their own eyes. (Judges 17:6, 18:1, 21:25)

Also, there was a famine in the land. That sounds like a contradiction when you see that Bethlehem means "house of bread". Yet, this is the setting. God's people have not acted like his people and are being punished because of such.

B. *SEPARATION.* (v. 2)

Because of the famine, Elimelech separates himself from the house of bread. He goes to Moab, which means "wash pot". Wonder if he stopped to ask what effect it would have on him and his family? Do you reckon he was thinking more about their bodies than he was the soul? He is not like a young man who was offered a high salary to work in a western city. He was fearful of the effect the town might have on his family. That city's reputation was about like Sodom.

Did he take long view and ask how they would leave Moab? He should have.

C. *SORROW. (v. 3)*

Rather than finding success in the land of Moab this man met his end. He died there and that wouldn't be the best place for a God-fearing Jew to die.

Naomi becomes a widow in the far country because of the choice her husband made. How careful we ought to be in making decisions that concern our families!

D. *SIN. (v. 4)*

These sons married foreign women. This was in spite of Exodus 34:16 and Deuteronomy 7:3. These passages forbid such. Did the father leaving Judah and coming to Moab influence them? Did they think less of God's law because they are out of the land of promise? Did association with idolators influence them? Surely leaving Judah was taking its toll.

E. *SOLITUDE. (v. 5)*

Now Naomi loses both sons by death and is left with two foreign daughters-in-law. She is stripped of the last support she had and she is alone. Ruth has no husband and neither does Orpah.

Thus, one sees the condition now faced in the far country. It doesn't offer much hope for the future, does it? But that is always the way the far country is. The prodigal learned this the hard way. (Luke 15:13,15)

II. *COUNTING THE COST. (v. 6-15)*

When Naomi looks at her condition and hears that bread was again in Judea she must count the cost. Will she stay in Moab? If so, why? What reason could she have? Would Ruth and Orpah return with her? They must count the cost. This is what was done and in these verses we see:

A. *FAITH MOVING NAOMI. (v. 6-7)*

She heard of what the Lord had done in giving bread. If you will note carefully you will see that verse 7 says, "Wherefore she went forth". The movement of verse 7 is based on what she had heard. She was not about to sit down in Moab when she could better herself in Judah. She would have been foolish to do so. She heard a simple message, but that is all she needed.

Nobody had to tell her a dozen times to return or that bread was in Judah.

B. *FORCE WAS NOT USED. (v. 8-9)*

Naomi did not seek to force Ruth and Orpah to go with her. She did not try to overwhelm their wills or emotions. That was not her method.

Neither is that God's method. He doesn't force us to obey him against our will. We are free moral agents and can choose to do or not

do, but we must face the consequences of our actions. It is "whosoever will". (Rev. 22:17)

C. *FACTS MUST BE FACED. (v. 10-13)*

Naomi placed the odds before these women. They would never be able to say she had not told them the truth. They would know all that Naomi could relate to them.

Jesus let his disciples know what it would cost them to follow him. He let them face the facts. (Matt. 10:16-42) One cannot read these verses without knowing what to expect when he embarks in the service of God. But that is as it ought to be.

Men don't always go when the facts must be faced. The rich young ruler found that he was not willing to pay the price. (Matt. 19:21) We also see such in the:

D. *FALLING AWAY OF ORPAH. (v. 14-15)*

You couldn't see much difference until now but now you can see. Orpah kissed Naomi and went back to her family and her gods. Yes, the emotional aspect was there but not the will.

You never hear of her again. Did she ever hear of Ruth? Did she ever regret the opportunity she had? What might have been the outcome if she too had gone with Naomi? We do not know, but we could hope that is would be as well for her as for Ruth. That would never occur because she fell away.

III. *CHOICE OF RUTH. (v. 16-18)*

Ruth faced the same facts that Orpah did. She had the same odds against her, but she chose to go with Naomi.

If you had passed by and seen these women would you have even thought that a choice of this magnitude was being made? I doubt it. Yet, it was and it is expressed in some of the most loveable words in the Bible. This women let it be known that she was making a choice of:

A. *A PATH.*

She says, "Where you go, I will go". She is giving up her way to walk in the way of another.

B. *A PLACE.*

Where you lodge, I will lodge. She is going to live on that level. She is going to be located where Naomi is.

C. *A PEOPLE.*

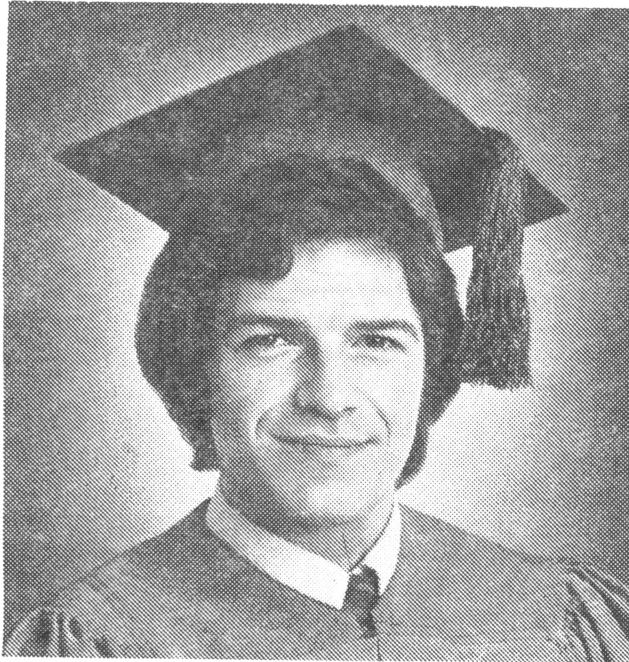
She would accept Naomi's people in spite of the prohibition of Deut. 23:3. Such would restrict her in what she could do.

D. *A PROTECTOR.*

"Your God shall be my God". It was under his wings that she would come to trust. (Ruth. 2:12) What a choice!

RUTH I To Be Continued In Next Issue

GLIMPSES OF
Alabama Christian
School of Religion
Montgomery, Alabama



A LOOK AT THE GRADUATES

This month marks the time for another graduation. The blue line of graduates gets longer each year as more and more people pass through the classes of the *School of Religion*. A roll call of these students is a

source of pride to all who are concerned with sound, warm hearted, balanced preaching. This is a credit to Bro. Rex Turner and his undying love for Christian Education.

Take a look at just a few examples in the state of Alabama. In these you will find one after another doing an excellent work aided by the indepth Bible training they have received as students of the *School of Religion*. Looking over the list of graduates, one sees James Rogers, a most effective student and preacher, in Talladega. George Herring of Montgomery, now teaches in an effective way at the *School of Religion*. Thomas Wortham has worked with the Blessing church in the Boaz area for a number of years. Add to this list Ronnie Hurst at Snead, Alton Hayes at Killen, Wayne Kilpatrick at Homewood, and Coleman Boyd at Montgomery. Byron Laird has been with the West Huntsville church for a number of years. Bobby Duncan is a most effective preacher with the Sixth Avenue Church in Jasper. Brodie Pyler is an elder at Liberty in Walker County. Charles Box has been with Oxford for over a decade. On and on that list could go, and should, for we surely don't want to slight a single person who is a graduate of this great school. But these are a few of the hundreds that have graduated and are reaching out with the gospel as they carry this message to the hearts of men.

Many have been able to enjoy the benefits of Christian education and have done so because of concerned churches and individuals. Churches have chosen this method to teach others, so, they in turn may teach others. Only eternity will be able to reveal the vast amount of good done in this way. After all, God does use human instrumentality to reach the lost. This is one way this can be done. May I, on behalf of the *School of Religion*, express to you a word of thanks for being "*Partners in Preaching*".

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