

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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CHOICE!

Mrs. Geo. Tealite Dec 21 1918

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God's presence is such a wonderful blessing to his people that his people are made a wonderful blessing to others. Those coming in contact with them, or dwelling among them are blessed because they are blessed. So Moses said to Hobab, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." "Come thou"—that is an invitation. An invitation implies the alternative of either accepting or rejecting. We see this evidenced when Joshua said to the people, "If it seem a vexation unto you to serve Jehovah choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the river, or the gods of the Amoritea, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." Josh. 24:15.

We know of no more beautiful decision than that of the little Moabite girl, Ruth, when, in those most touching words, she said, "Intreat 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; 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." Ruth 1:16-17.

These passages illustrate the fact that men are not mere machines; that they are not, by hard and fast decree, predestinated to an inevitable course or destiny, but that the power of volition is ours; ours to be exercised, exercised either for our own betterment or to our own detriment. God has given that power to man and He respects man's privilege of choice. He never trespasses on that territory. He will be invited; but He will not intrude.

Never were souls more tempted to turn back than when Naomi urged Ruth and Orpah to return; yet they replied, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people." "And Naomi said, Turn again my daughters: why will ye go with me?"

As the girls stood listening to her voice, all that appeals to the heart of human beings passed before their mind's eye alluring them to the backward trail. Love called to them; their homes, parents, kindred, all were behind them. The ashes of their dear ones called to them. No normal being likes to think of being buried far from the ashes of his fathers. Back in Moab were many graves dear to Ruth and Orpah; but two were especially dear; in

these two lay all that was mortal of Mahlon and Chilion. Could they leave these memories? Moab itself with its lofty peaks and mountain fastnesses called them.

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn-
ed,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd
From wandering on a foreign strand?"

So sings the poet expressing that strong emotion which binds one's heart to the land of his birth. Ruth and Orpah felt this strong emotion tugging at their heart strings. Religion called to them to come back. The Jehovah religion of the family into which they had married was comparatively new to them; but back in Moab were the gods, the groves, the temples, the rites, the religious customs and institutions to which they had been accustomed all the days of their girlhood. Religion called them.

Orpah lingered. A profound affection gazed tenderly from the depths of her eyes into the depths of the older woman's eyes. Love, memories of the dear, dear dead ones, patriotism, religion clamored to be heard. She listened. She kissed Naomi. That kiss meant "Good-bye! I am returning to my people, my cherished graves, my country, my gods. Good-bye!"

"But Ruth clave unto" Naomi.

"Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister in law," said Naomi.

If Orpah's was a profound affection, Ruth's was a wonderful love. Her snowy arm slipped up and around the older woman's neck and her eyes welled full of tears as she looked Naomi in the face. She also heard the call of the trail that wound among the hills back into the land of her fathers.

Her country calls her; but listen, she is speaking, "Whither thou goest I will go." Her home calls to her; but she says, "Where thou lodgest I will lodge."

Memories of her kindred voice a demand for consideration; but she answers to Naomi, "Thy people shall be my people." Her gods protest. She says, "Thy God shall be my God." She takes a backward glance at the little mound in the old Moabite cemetery. Chilion is buried there. She bravely brushes away a tear and says, "Intreat me not to leave thee; or to return from following after thee; for where thou diest I will die and there will I be buried;

the Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

And when Naomi "saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her."

Steadfastly minded—Daniel purposed in his heart. Shadrach, Mesbach and Abed-Neyo said, "We will not serve gods." Paul's companions saw that "he would not be persuaded" to deviate from his course, so "ceased, saying that The will of the Lord be done." Ruth belonged to this good company. She was steadfastly minded. Such souls will always receive special help; for "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."

Ruth made a deliberate choice. It was the choice of that man of faith, Abraham. It was to "get out from her country and from her kindred into the land that God would show her." It was the choice of the meek man, Moses. It was "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

A reward was ahead of all of them which was in their estimation a full and sufficient recompense for whatever they left behind. Abraham became the friend of God and father of the faithful, as well as great progenitor of that seed in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Moses became the deliverer of his people, the great antitype of Jesus. (You remember that it is written that Moses said, "A prophet shall the Lord raise up, like unto me, him shall ye hear). And Ruth! By her choice she stepped into the direct line of the most royal family of kings which ever did or ever will, grace a throne.

"Thou shalt bring forth a son," said the angel, "and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Who was Jesus? The Son of David. Who was David? The son of Jesse. Who was Jesse? The son of Obed. Who was Obed? The son of Boaz and Moabite Ruth.

The first promise was given to Eve (Gen. 3:15) The last promise was given to Mary (Luke 1:32-33). Into that long line of promise little Ruth stepped by her own deliberate choice and became the

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