

International Sunday School Lesson
For Next Sunday { **Review by P. B. Fitzwater, D. D., Teacher of English Bible, at Moody Institute, Chicago.**
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RUTH'S WISE CHOICE.

LESSON TEXT—Ruth 1.
GOLDEN TEXT—They people shall be my people and thy God my God—Ruth 1:16.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL—Ruth 2:14-22.

PRIMARY TOPIC—The Story of Ruth.

JUNIOR TOPIC—Ruth and Naomi.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Life's Decisions.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Power of Personal Influence.

I. The Occasion of Ruth's Choice. (1:15.)

On account of the famine in Bethel-Judea, Naomi with her husband and two sons sojourned in the land of Moab. After the death of her husband, her two sons married Moabitish women. After a time, both sons died also. Upon the death of her sons she resolved to return to her homeland, having heard that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Her family went to Moab to escape trouble, but they only got into more trouble. It was not till Naomi was thus chastised that she resolved to return. She had the good sense to recognize that the Lord had led her to Moab for good. Ruth and Orpah accompanied her. She was permitted, but determined to place before them frankly the difficulties which would necessarily confront them. It was this frank presentation of the diffi-

culties and her repeated urging them to go back that furnished the occasion for Ruth's wise choice.

II. The Trials of Ruth's Choice (vv. 16-18.)

Much as Naomi loved her daughter-in-law, she would not have them go into this matter blindly. She wished them to know the cost of their decision. She told them the worst that could come upon them, then if hardship came they could only blame themselves.

Note the difficulties which confronted Ruth:

1. No chance to get married again. Naomi told her that she had no more sons for which she could wait. In that day to be unmarried was the greatest disgrace. Furthermore, it was against God's law for the Jews to marry outside of their own people.

2. She must renounce her gods. The polytheistic worship could not be carried on in the land where God's people dwelt. This was delicately touched upon when Orpah went back (v. 15). Orpah went back when it was plain that there was no chance to get a husband. Now Naomi puts an additional test upon Ruth, that of giving up her religion. Naomi's very frankness in dealing with her caused Ruth to be more and more determined to cast her lot with her. No doubt she learned to love the true God through the life of Naomi.

3. The going into Moab, the chasm between the two peoples. The idea of being interested in the one of Christ's enemies (4:18-22; v. 15). The one who first decides for Christ and gives up all for him shall get a hundredfold in this life and in the world to come.

4. An honored place in the Israelitish nation (4:13-17). Though she had to forsake her own people, she became one of a nobler people. She became a link in the chain of Christ's ministry (4:18-22; v. 15). The one who first decides for Christ and gives up all for him shall get a hundredfold in this life and in the world to come.

5. The death knell of the long cherished bulwark of the republic.

In detail the indictment is sweeping, indeed. In the morning the family eats a hurried breakfast, father rushes to the office, mother hurries the children to school, and herself hastens to the bargain sale. Father and mother are not together; the children lunch in the afternoon, mother goes to the club, or the library, or the matinee, and, reaching home sometime after the youngsters have returned from school, prepares the evening meal. They eat together, hurry through with the dish washing and then rush to the movie or the theater or lecture. Surely they crowd into the motor cars and run out into the country. On the holiday they flee home for the community entertainment at the park or the clubhouse.

It is a terrible indictment. The main objection to it is that it is not well founded. Father and mother and the youngsters do not follow any set course day after day, if they did it would pull them and from very inertia they would stay at home o' nights and rest.

It is to be questioned if the typical American family may not be more truly pictured in the living room, in the evening, father with his newspaper, mother with her magazine, the youngsters with their books and magazines, the wife graph driving serious thoughts from all of them. Perhaps they go to the movie once a week, to the theater once a month, to a lecture or church entertainment once a fortnight, and "calling"—never. The gentle art of inter-family visiting has almost vanished. Where, oh, where, are the old-fashioned days of yesteryear?

The dancing eludes? They have been sacrificed to the growing desire of the American people to stay at home, or, when they go abroad, to go singly.

Inunditably, the motor car has taken folks from their homes to a greater degree than before. But in doing so it has emphasized rather than shattered the family unit. In the "old days" the community or inter-family picnic was an appealing event of every holiday. Now picnics are more likely to be intra-family affairs.

The indictment is worthy the consideration of most of us, for it is well to take stock occasionally of our family spirit and efficiency. If home is merely a service station to

CHURCH OF GOD.

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