

to Bethlehem of Judah, and reminding the class that only the compulsion of severe famine would have forced a Hebrew to migrate to this foreign and heathen country. What happened to the Hebrew family there? What led Naomi to return to her own land? Emphasize the fact that Naomi must have been the sort of person to inspire deep affection. Even Orpah cannot let her go without accompanying her some way on the journey. Encourage the class to picture the scene when the three women stop on the road, and when the two younger ones must decide as to the future. What course does Orpah decide upon? Can we blame her for it?

2. *Ruth's decision*, vs. 16-18. Point out that, while we may not be able to blame Orpah for what may be regarded as a very natural decision on her part, yet Ruth chose a better way. Is it true that we are sometimes called upon to choose between what may not be wrong in itself and what is really best?

Indicate that such decisions are often the hardest to make. Call attention to the impassioned appeal of Ruth in which her words rise to the height of poetry. Remind the class that in ancient times it was believed that a god and his people were inseparable, and that if Ruth was to make her home in the land of Israel, she must give up her former religion, and adopt that of her new land.

3. *At Bethlehem*, vs. 19-22. Speak of the life-like description which is given us of the return of Naomi to her old town. Everybody knows her, but everybody recognizes the change brought about by years and trouble. Call attention to the symbolic change of name. It is a reflection of the old idea, appearing in the book of Job, for example, that suffering is a proof that God is punishing us for some sin. What does Christ have to say about that idea? Take a few minutes at the close to speak of the happenings related in the rest of the book.

FOR TEACHERS IN THE SENIOR DEPARTMENT

Teachers in the Senior Department should study carefully the scholars' materials in the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY OF LEAFLET.

A good start may be made in the teaching of this lesson by referring to the illustration in the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY OF LEAFLET. Ask the scholars to point out in the picture, Naomi and Ruth and Orpah. Let the discussion gather about these three figures.

I. NAOMI. Ask in what country Naomi was at this time. The answer will lead to a discussion of how she came to be in Moab. The discussion will bring out the story of her leaving Bethlehem, with her husband and two sons, on account of famine, the marriage of the two sons to Orpah and Ruth respectively, the death of the husband and the sons, and the determination of Naomi to return to her own country. The story of the emigration may be illustrated by the coming of peoples from older lands to Canada, and the similar movements from the older to the newer portions of our own country.

II. ORPAH. There is no difficulty in distinguishing this figure. The story says: "Orpah kissed Naomi," that is, bade farewell. This daughter-in-law yielded at last to the persuasion of Naomi (see vs. 8-13), and had decided to remain in her own

country. Should Orpah be blamed for this decision? Or was she merely acting in accordance with dictates of common prudence?

III. RUTH. Point out that, in the picture, Ruth is represented as standing ready for the journey, her feet already on the road leading to Bethlehem. She has listened, like Orpah, to the persuasions of Naomi; but her mind is made up. She will not go back to her old home in Moab; she will go with Naomi to Bethlehem, cost what it may. Bring out the determination of Ruth as seen in vs. 16, 17.

Follow Naomi and Ruth to Bethlehem, and question about their reception there. Bring out the remainder of the story told in this charming little Old Testament book.

The Topic for the Senior Department is: THE POWER OF PERSONAL INFLUENCE. This is illustrated in the lesson by the way in which Naomi, by her life and conduct in Moab, so influenced Ruth, that Ruth was ready to forsake her country and her home to go with Naomi to Bethlehem. Is our Christian life so influencing others that they are eager to follow us in it.