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RUTH, OR TRUE DECISION.

Beauty and simplicity are characteristics of the touching narrative of Ruth. Poetry, painting, and sculpture have each found a subject and inspiration from the thrilling history. We have also, prominently marked, the great features of a Divine Providence, watching over and guiding the steps of those who trust in God, and setting in motion events intended to culminate in the accomplishment of purposes of love. Here we have a link in the chain of that line that was crowned with Deity, when Jesus was born; it is seen at a point too where it touches the Gentiles, probably foreshadowing the wide diffusion of the blessings of salvation to the world. The object we have in view at this time is to set forth the importance of true decision for God.

The firm determination is expressed thus: "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: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Were this only a fanciful tale we would pronounce the artistic grouping of the whole scene perfect, but its truthfulness stands out in the tender touches of nature that glow in every line. Allusion to the circumstances of the story would make our remarks tedious, and therefore we come to the grand idea embodied in the strong resolution to serve God—"thy God shall be my God." Her mind is made up; with unwavering lip, though with tearful eye, she makes announcement of her choice. In the history of every saved sinner there is a similar chapter. Two kingdoms divide the allegiance of men, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil. Geographical lines define the boundaries of nations. Moab and Judea had each their limits. The kingdoms of light and of darkness are divided by works of a corresponding character. Now a contest is going on for the heart, a step must be taken which is to decide under what colours we shall fight, under what principles we shall live. Appeals, representations, influences, are put forth to sway the heart. The wand of the Tempter conjures up the glories of this world. True religion or sinful neglect of it are in the scales of the balance. In a right decision we take God to be *our* God. Other lords have had dominion over us; they are cast down, they are denuded of their power. God becomes the God of our salvation. Faint and feeble impressions become strong. True beauty is seen in Christ. He is taken in all His offices, as prophet, priest, and king. Faith looks at the wounds of Jesus, and like Thomas cries, "My Lord, and my God."