

**University Heights Church
of Christ**
445 Columbia Ave.,
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 255-6257
www.uheightschurch.com

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday

Bible Study: 9:45 AM

Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7:30 PM (This is
immediately followed by a
short worship period)

First Friday of Each Month

Singing: 7:30 PM

LEADERSHIP

Elders

Garry Banks, David Collins,
John Thompson

Evangelist

Adam Litmer

Deacons

Troy Antle, Richard Brundige,
Matt Thompson, Adam
Litmer, Bill Morelan, Jim
Parsons, Pat Seabolt, Adam
Daniels, Jamie Powell

Adam's Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday (8:30-4:00)

Finally, Ruth chose Naomi's God to be her God. She left idolatry to worship the one true God. Were those three choices the right ones? Listen to Boaz's answer to Ruth's question, *"Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. The Lord repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"* (Ruth 2:10-12)

Never hesitate to choose to do what is right in the sight of God, for there is a reward waiting.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

David Seabolt, Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Louis Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Barbara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, John Bennett, Robert Brundige, Donald Dawson, Gail Stein, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young (had another fall and broke her wrist), Doris Baker, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Larry Sells, Christian Shadburne, Mattie Johnson (hip replacement), Evelyn Damron, Tony Tirey, Andrew Westphal, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, Joe Cable, Betty Clevinger, Glenda Brock, John Blessing

University Heights Messenger

Volume 8--Number 14

April 3, 2016

Consider God's Unwilling Servant

Adam Litmer

Mighty Assyria. They destroyed nations, plundered treasures, and cast down the mighty. Israel trembled before them before eventually falling victim to their might as many had before them. Jerusalem found itself shut in on all sides by the Assyrian juggernaut. Surely if much larger Israel had been plowed under by the Assyrian war machine than surely Judah stood no chance against them, right? Wrong.

Assyria was simply a tool wielded by *the* Sovereign hand (Isaiah 10:5-6). Any might displayed by the Assyrian army, any conquest that expanded its borders, any tribute forced upon defeated nations, any treasure taken by force occurred not because of Assyria's own strength, wisdom, and might; though they mistakenly thought otherwise (10:13-14). Assyria refused to accept that it was nothing more than a tool in God's hand, that it was only as strong as God permitted it to be, and that its domination was over the moment God decreed it. Hear God's words to them from 10:15: *Shall the axe boast over him who hews with it, or the saw magnify itself against him who wields it? As if a rod should wield him who lifts it, or as if a staff should lift him who is not wood!*

Why did Assyria fail to storm the city of Jerusalem? It was not because they had cut their military's budget or failed to train their soldiers properly. It was not because they failed to establish a baggage train to keep the army well supplied (10:28). It was not because the generals had failed to strategize an effective plan of attack. It was not because Judah's military was superior or their tacticians more cunning than Assyria's. It was because God determined that enough was enough and Assyria would go no further. The Assyrian army encamped outside the walls of Jerusalem went to sleep one evening and awoke the next with 185,000 fewer soldiers. What happened? *God happened!* (Isaiah 37:36-38)

God promised Assyria that because of its unwillingness to recognize itself as His tool to punish wickedness, choosing rather to delight in conquest and destruction (10:7), that He would punish them when He was done using them to fulfill His purposes (10:16-19,33-34). Interestingly, God's terrible attack against the Assyrian army that night marked the beginning of the end for Assyrian domination. Less than a century later Assyria would be no more. While Nineveh (the Assyrian capital) fell in 612 BC, the military never recovered from the disaster outside the walls of Jerusalem and grew steadily weaker until its final destruction. Assyria thought itself sovereign until it met *the* Sovereign.

Nations come and they go. From Assyria, to Babylon, to Persia, to Greece, to Rome, to the British Empire, to the United State of America; superpowers rise and then fade away. Some do not entirely disappear, they just become shells of the glory and might they once possessed. This one thing has never changed and never will: *the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will* (Daniel 4:32).

The lesson is this: do not put your faith in the military might, wisdom, or wealth of the United States of America. This is but one power among the many that have come and go. If God decrees against this nation no amount of military might, wisdom of counselors, or wealth is going to do a thing to stop it. So what do we do? We step even closer to the One who controls all things and cling to Him in love and trust. This world is not our home; *His* home is. If we remember and truly accept that our primary citizenship is in Heaven, not America, we will see Him before His throne and join the mighty angel chorus in singing His praises in eternity.

Ruth: A Woman Who Made Right Choices

John Thompson

Who knows how many choices anyone's life consists of? The number is enormous for each of us. Choices range from the most mundane to the most momentous and life altering. Choices also range from those requiring virtually no forethought to those requiring a great deal of study and the weighing of alternatives, even to the point of experiencing much distress and agony when the choice is only between unpleasant outcomes. For a few people, however, choosing the right thing just seems to come naturally. Ruth was such a person.

Ruth was a Moabite woman. The Moabites descended from the union between Lot and one of his daughters following the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Although often enemies, there must also have been peaceful times between the two nations, because during a famine that occurred when the judges ruled the land, an Israelite man took his wife, Naomi, and their two sons to wait out the famine in the land of Moab. The man subsequently died leaving Naomi with the two sons, who married Moabite women, one of whom was Ruth. Near the end of the ten years they lived in Moab, the two sons died and Naomi determined to return to Israel, having heard that God was providing food again.

As Naomi began the journey home, she urged her two daughters-in-law to return to their Moabite families. It is obvious that Naomi cared very deeply for them as she desired the Lord to deal kindly with them and she hoped they would find rest. At first Ruth and Orpah said, "*No, we will return with you to your people.*" With some additional urging Orpah left, but Ruth clung to Naomi. Once again, Naomi urged Ruth to go back to her own people.

It is at this point in the story that Ruth declares her choices, in one of the most beautiful passages one can find in the scriptures. She says, in chapter 1, verses 16-17, "*Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.*"

Ruth chose to remain with Naomi. Naomi had become her family and so she would not return to her own mother's house. Naomi's home would be her home, wherever that happened to be, even in a land that might not welcome her. Why was this the right choice? It was the right choice because she cared more for Naomi's needs than her own. "*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*" (Philippians 2:3)

Ruth also chose Naomi's people over her own people. She decided she would not live as a Moabite in an Israelite land, but that she would become an Israelite. Such a decision was a forward-looking decision enabling her to leave her past and fully assimilate without regret. Turmoil and animosity likely would have prevailed between Ruth and those around her had she not chosen them to be her people.

