

Where Do You Find Your Security?

International Bible Lessons

Ruth 1:8-18

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“So Naomi said, ‘See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law’” (Ruth 1:15—NRSV).

“And she said, ‘See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law’” (Ruth 1:15—ESV).

“And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law” (Ruth 1:15—KJV).

Where do people seek security? With a drought and famine in the time of the judges, it seemed another cycle of discipline from the LORD had come on the people of Israel, because they had once again turned from God to worshiping the idols of their neighbors. Seeking relief and economic security, Naomi and her family fled from Bethlehem to the land of Moab, to an idolatrous people who sometimes oppressed the Israelites as a part of God’s discipline on Israel (see Judges 3:12).

Because they remained in Moab, Naomi’s sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. After her husband and sons died, Naomi lost her security and resolved to return home, but she insisted that her daughters-in-law return to their mother’s house and said, “The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband” (Ruth 1:9). After Orpah returned home to search for a new husband, Naomi tried once again to convince Ruth that she would be better off seeking security in her Moabite idols than in going with her back to the land of Israel.

Though Naomi’s faith had weakened (or perhaps had never been strong enough to truly trust in God), Ruth’s faith in the LORD had grown strong from all that she had learned about God from her husband and Naomi. She found true security in God, and decided to entrust herself entirely to His care. Even knowing about the hostility that she might face from the Israelites, she insisted that she return with Naomi, saying, “your people shall be my people, and your God my God” (Ruth 1:16). — © Copyright 2011 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. Where did Naomi and her family seek security? After their husbands died, what did she advise Orpah and Ruth to do in order to find security? What did Naomi intend to do to find security?
2. Where and how do many people seek security today? What can happen to someone if they misplace their security?
3. Reread Ruth 3:15. In what ways is Naomi’s recommendation to Ruth the very opposite of what she should have recommended and what she needed to do?
4. Why do you think Ruth knew what to do?
5. What part of Ruth’s reply to Naomi means the most to you? Why?

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