

RUTH 1:7-22

- Verse 7 –Note that initially both of the daughters-in-law were going.
- Verse 8 -- The official position of Judaism at the beginning of Zionism was decidedly anti-Zionist.
- Verse 9 –
 - Naomi (representing Judaism) was not asking her daughters to leave God and Judaism, but to **find rest...in the house of her husband**. That is, Judaism wanted Orpah and Ruth to remain in the house, but not return to the land.
 - **Then she kissed them...** In a sense, these words could be used to describe the Jewish existence during the 2,000-year diaspora.
- Verse 10 -- During the entire diaspora, there was a solid commitment on the part of the Jewish people to someday return, waiting for the time when Messiah would allow.
- Verses 11-12 -- Naomi here expresses her love by expressing the sad reality that there was little chance of a future in the Promised Land. When the Jews returned, only a miracle would save them.
- Verse 13 –
 - For that generation that returned, there was great risk and high cost.
 - **It grieveth me much...** this is Judaism speaking. Grieved that the Lord is gone out against me. After the Holocaust, Judaism was more secular than ever before, saying, "If this is what it is to be chosen, I want nothing of it."
- Verse 14 –
 - In typology, Orpah represents Judaism that remained in the diaspora. She loved Naomi, but took her advice and remained in "Moab."
 - There were Jews, represented by Ruth, that held tenaciously to Judaism to such an extent that they were in bonds to return to their homeland.
- Verse 15—
 - **Sister-in-law** - The Hebrew word means "brother's widow." It is not a term used of a living sister in law.
 - Orpah returned **unto her gods**. Since *Elohim* is used in the plural to refer to God, it is impossible to tell whether she returned to **her gods** or **her God** (as in Young's Literal).
 - Question the assumptions!
 - Be careful on the dogmatism that says, "I know the answer" when the text doesn't give the answer.
 - **Return thou** -- Would Naomi (Judaism) really be encouraging her sons wives to return to paganism after she had prayed **the Lord [Yahweh] grant you that ye may find rest?** (v. 9).
- Verses 16-17 –
 - This is one of the most beautiful commitments ever made. It is, in type, the commitment of "the wife of the first generation" who was now making a commitment to Judaism, unto death.
 - In a very real sense, this is the commitment of Judaism. This is one of the reasons that Jewish evangelism is so challenging. The commitment of a Jew to Judaism is "till death do us part."

- A note for those who object to using this passage as an analogy of where the Jewish people are today.
 - First, do you have a problem with the Jews viewing this passage as Jewish conversion?
 - Second, do you have a problem using this passage (between a daughter and her mother-in-law) as an expression of love between a husband and a wife?
- Verse 18 – **then she left speaking to her** - Literally, "she stopped speaking to her." When the Jews returned to their homeland in modern Zionism, the orthodox Jewish community wouldn't have anything to do with those returning. Even today, Orthodox Jews and Zionist Jews have a very difficult and challenging relationship.
- Verse 19 –
 - **They were come to Bethlehem** -
 - In the typology, Bethlehem is the "House of Bread" that experienced famine (no bread), was abandoned during the "judging of the judges," and now was the place of return.
 - In a sense, Bethlehem represents the Promised Land.
 - Jerusalem could not have been the place of return for Naomi and Ruth because Jerusalem was not made a Jewish city until the time of David.
 - **All the city was moved** - The word דוּחַ [huwm] is "to make a great noise," like "clamoring over an unbelievable event."
- Verse 20 –
 - The name **Naomi** is from the root which means pleasant, beautiful, or kind. See Proverbs 16:24 and Psalms 27:4.
 - The name **Mara** is from the root which means bitter. See Genesis 27:34 and Exodus 15:23.
 - **The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me** - During the return of the exiles in modern Zionism, Judaism returned with a very bitter spirit toward God.
- Verse 21 –
 - **I went out full** –
 - This eliminates the possibility that Elimilech went out poor. He was a rich man escaping the famine, but in his new home his riches were lost.
 - Christian commentaries have almost exclusively shown Elimilech to be poor, then had to spiritualize this comment about going out full. For example, "*Why, I thought they went out poor? Yes. Seeking bread? Yes. Yet Naomi's description is true and beautiful. We are 'full' when we have that which makes home, home indeed, and we are poor if, having all wealth of means, we have not love*"¹
 - Notice the careful wording, "**I went out...the Lord hath brought me home.**"
 - **The Almighty hath afflicted me** - Naomi (representing Judaism) saw her experience outside of the Promised Land as judgement from God.
- Verse 22 - The barley harvest is in the spring, at Passover time.

¹ Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. *Ruth*. London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909. Print. The Pulpit Commentary.