



## Daily Devotionals

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### RUTH 1:3-7 RETURNING TO THE LORD

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<sup>3</sup> Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup> They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup> both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

<sup>6</sup> When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. <sup>7</sup> With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

In his need, Elimelech turned to the enemy of Israel for his deliverance and a temporary sojourn became a long-term residence. Elimelech died, his sons married the daughters of the people and then dwelled in Moab for another ten years before they died – childless – barren. A hungry family leaves the land of the promise to meet their hunger and the result is three widows and no children, and the line of Elimelech is no more. The lot of a widow was bad enough in her own country, but as a foreigner it was next to impossible.

Somehow the word came to Naomi that food was again available in Bethlehem and so she decided to leave Moab and return home. It was a desperate and costly act of repentance. The journey was dangerous for anyone, let alone unaccompanied women. She was responsible not only for herself but had the additional burden of the Moabite women her sons had married. And what kind of reception could she expect from those who saw them leave when things got tough and now return when food was again available; and return in a state of utter dependence? Yet Naomi, like the prodigal son (Luke 15:15-20), saw that it would be better to return and deal with the consequences than remain in her present circumstances. The Lord who came to the aid of his people might also provide for her.

There are many times in our lives that worldly wisdom dictates that we make certain decisions and we do so quickly without considering the divine will. Often these decisions look brilliant at first and we prosper in them for a while. But it is not unusual for that time of success to be followed by disappointment, malaise and spiritual barrenness. When

those feelings come we often try to assuage them by repeating the whole process again. We look for a new job, a new house, new relationships, a new “look,” in short yet another “country.” In time we learn that such an approach does not provide a lasting answer. What is needed is to bring God back into the equation. We need to repent of doing things our way and seek God’s way. The longer we have been on our own, the more difficult, costly and time consuming the return will be. Yet it is the only permanent “fix” for our needs. You do not have to wait until you are totally bereft or absolutely desperate, you can evaluate your life today based on how much you let God into your decision-making.

***Lord, I have taken my life into my own hands and have turned to the wisdom of the world rather than you for the solution to my problems and the realization of my desires. I repent Lord of both my passive neglect and active rejection of your will in my life. I now return to you and seek your guidance, acknowledging that there will be a cost and asking for the patience to wait upon you for your provision. Amen.***

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