

Where You Go, I Will Go (Ruth and Naomi)

Now in the days when the chieftains ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man of Bethlehem (“the house of bread”) in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to live in the country of Moab. The man’s name was Elimelech (“my God is King”), his wife’s name was Naomi (“pleasantness”), and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion. And they came to the country of Moab and stayed there.

Then Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah, the other, Ruth, and they lived there about ten years. And then those two—Mahlon and Chilion—also died; so the woman Naomi was left without her two sons *and* without her husband.

Then she heard that the LORD had taken note of His people and given them food (in Judah). So she rose up and started out to return from the country of Moab where she had been living, and set out on the road back to the land of Judah. And her two daughters-in-law followed her.

But Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, “Please turn back, (please return), each woman to her mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead (your husbands) and with me! May the LORD grant that each of you find comfort in the house of a husband!” And she kissed them farewell.

They raised their voices and they wept, and they said to her, “No we will return with you to your people.”

But Naomi replied, “Please turn back, (please return), my daughters! Why should you go with me. Do I still have any more sons in my womb who would be husbands for you? Please turn back, (please return), my daughters, and go, for I am too old to be with a man. Even if I believed there was hope for me, even if this evening I were to be with a man and if I were to bear him sons, would you really wait for them until they were grown up? Should you on their account chain yourselves up and restrain yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for the hand of the LORD has struck out against me.”

They raised up their voices in weeping again, and then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. So Naomi said, “See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Return and follow after her.”

But Ruth replied:

Ahl-TEEF-g'uh-ee-VEE l'uh-oz-VEICH, lah-SHUV mei-ah-cha-RAH-yeech,
Don't beg me to leave you, to return from following after you:

Kee EL-ah-SHER teil-CHEE, ei-LEICH; oo-vah-ah-SHER tah-LEE-nee, AH-leen.
For where you go, I will go; and where you sleep, I will sleep.

Ah-MEICH, ah-MEE; Vei-lo-HA-yeech, eh-lo-HAI.
Your people, [are] my people; and your God, my God.

Bah-ah-SHER tah-MOO-tee, AH-moot; v-SHAHM eh-kah-VAIR.
Where you die, I will die; and there will I be buried.

Khoh yah-ah-SEH a-do-NAI LEE, v-khoh yo-SEEF
May God do what he will to me, and still more,

KEE ha-MA-veht yaf-REED bei-NEE oo-vei-NEICH.
If even death makes a separation, between me and you.

For where you go, I will go; and where you sleep, I will sleep.
Your people, [are] my people; and your God, my God.
Where you die, I will die; and there will I be buried.

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Selected pronunciations:

[Beit-le-hem]
[EH-lee-MEH-lekh]
[nah-OH-mee]
[MAKH-lone]
[Kheel-YONE]