



Daily Reflections

August 25, 2017

Scripture

Ruth 1: 1-22

Once in the time of the judges there was a famine in the land; so a man from Bethlehem of Judah departed with his wife and two sons to reside on the plateau of Moab. Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons, who married Moabite women, one named Orpah, the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion died also, and the woman was left with neither her two sons nor her husband. She then made ready to go back from the plateau of Moab because word reached her there that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth stayed with her. Naomi said, "See now! Your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her god. Go back after your sister-in-law!" But Ruth said, "Do not ask me to abandon or forsake you! For wherever you go, I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge, your people shall be my people, and your God my God." Thus it was that Naomi returned with the Moabite daughter-in-law, Ruth, who accompanied her back from the plateau of Moab.

They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Our Scripture Reflection

Naomi had experienced a tremendous loss: The death of her husband and of her two sons. In other words, she had lost all means of support. Since there was no social welfare back then, she was left to begging. Out of compassion, Naomi decided to release from their marital obligations her widowed daughter-in-laws so that they could return to their families who would surely provide food and shelter for them. One daughter-in-law, Ruth, however, refused to leave Naomi alone and helpless. In some of the most beautiful language in the Bible, Ruth expressed profound loyalty to Naomi: "For where you go, I will go...your people shall be my people, and your God will be my God." In a culture where concern for "the self" ranks supreme, we receive a powerful lesson on faith that got expressed in loyalty and sacrifice.

Food for your Journey

On providence and finding guidance in one's life: There's a certain harbor in Italy that can be reached only by sailing up a narrow channel between many clusters of dangerous rocks and shoals. Over the years, many ships have been wrecked, and navigation is hazardous.

To guide the ships safely into port, three lights have been mounted on three huge poles in the harbor. When the three lights are perfectly lined up and seen as one, the ship can safely proceed up the narrow channel.

If the pilot sees two or three lights, he knows he's off course and in danger.

What are the three lights that need to line up in our lives? The Word? Opportunity? Counsel of friends?

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You have never given up on me even when I am disloyal to You. Increase my faith, Lord, so that I may become faithful to You. Amen.