

The old testament, the other and pluralistic democracies

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How are non-Israelites regarded in Ruth and Ezra? In the book of Ruth, Old Testament, both of Naomi's sons were married to Moabite women, non-Israelites. Naomi, an Israelite decides to return to Bethlehem and leaves with her Moabite daughter-in-laws, Oprah and Ruth. While Oprah agrees to go back to her home when Naomi asks her, Ruth decides to follow her mother-in-law back to her home country. From the book, it is clear that the Israelite mistreat non-Israelites and hence Boaz decides to let her work in his field in order to avoid molestation from workers in the other fields. However, Naomi, Boaz and her family in general accept Ruth in their family and recognize her as one of their own.

As a result, Ruth is able to integrate into the family, even asking Boaz to marry her due to his relationship with Naomi according to the Israelite culture. The Israelites depicted in this book are accommodating and loving of non-Israelites and treat them well. Ruth is a representation of non-Israelites. In the book of Ezra, the situation is opposite of that in Ruth. The Israelites are not accommodating of the non-Israelites as they deem them to be unclean and not worthy of them. This is shown when they discover that some of the men have intermarried with the local communities.

This is in disregard with God's directions when he led them to the land. Ezra, the Priest speaks against the Israelites behavior and those who have intermarried with the foreign people especially the men are ordered to divorce them and send their wives and children away. During this time, the Israelites have returned from exile and have just completed and dedicated the temple to God. They want to adhere to God's word to the letter and hence are willing to cut ties with the non-Israelites. How should we regard <https://assignbuster.com/the-old-testament-the-other-and-pluralistic-democracies/>

those of other faiths in our world? In our modern world, there are numerous faiths including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and others. This may be distributed according to ethnicity, race or region.

However, the rise of globalization has brought people from different backgrounds within one area. This has, in turn, led to increasingly close relationships, be it personal, casual or professional, among individuals of different faiths. This makes it necessary to assume an accommodating attitude towards these individuals of different faith in order to maintain cordial relationships. It is necessary to accept the pluralism of religion in order to fully appreciate the positive aspects each religion may have. It enables one to appreciate the differences within each faith instead of regarding them with hostility or as inferior compared to one's own religion.

Each different faith has a particular aspect that is positive and which one may integrate into their own day to day life. Hostility towards other religions and open criticism usually leads to arguments and fights between the different parties. This may even culminate into something worse causing wars and strife in an area in a bid to achieve faith supremacy. It is necessary to remember that each individual has freedom of religion which needs to be respected. We should, therefore, adopt a respectful attitude towards other people's religions and learn not to make derogatory comments in relation to them.

This will go a long way in ensuring we have peace as well as maintaining our relationship with such individuals. Globalization brings about interdependence between individuals from different backgrounds and hence

one has to learn how to live with those of different faiths. Harmony among individuals of different faith is a step towards world peace.