

A silhouette of a person wearing a headscarf stands in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. The background is a bright, hazy sunset or sunrise, creating a warm, golden glow. The word "Ruth" is written in a white, cursive script across the center of the image.

Ruth



ACT 1

“The Fall of the House of Elimelech”

Ruth 1:1-5

Ruth 1:1-2

1 In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.

Ruth 1:3-5

3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, 5 and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

What are we reading?

- An Israelite short story
- A bit of family history
- A chapter in God's great narrative of salvation

“In the day when the judges ruled...”

- After Israel had taken possession in the Promised land, but before they had crowned their first king
- An era of national disobedience and spiritual faithlessness

“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21:25)

Helpful Translations

- Elimelech - “my God, he is king”
- Bethlehem - “house of bread”
- Judah - “praise”
- Naomi - “loveliness/pleasantness”
- Mahlon - “sickness”
- Chilion - “annihilation”

Did Elimelech make the right choice
to leave the Promised Land?

The Results

- Elimelech dies prematurely.

The Results

- Elimelech dies prematurely.
- Both his sons marry outside the faith.

The Results

- Elimelech dies prematurely.
- Both his sons marry outside the faith.
- Both his daughters-in-law remain childless for over ten years.

The Results

- Elimelech's family line is annihilated, with he and his sons dying far from their native land.

The Results

- Elimelech's family line is annihilated, with he and his sons dying far from their native land.
- His elderly wife is left widowed, childless, and bereft in a foreign land without the support of any extended family.

Do you think Elimelech is in any way
responsible for the disaster that
befalls his family?

Elimelech had a crisis of trust,
specifically in the character of God.

hesed (חֶסֶד) - God's extraordinary
loyalty and gracious devotion to
those whom he calls his own

Elimelech chose to seize control of the leadership of his own life.

Questions to Ask When God is King:

- What does the Bible say about this matter?

Questions to Ask When God is King:

- What does the Bible say about this matter?
- How does this decision conform with the moral will of God?

Heedless of God and his will,
Elimelech stepped out from under
God's protection, his wing of refuge.

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”
(Proverbs 12:12)

In contrast to Elimelech, God invites
us to trust him and depend upon his
hesed.

If you seek to trust God more, fortify
your mind as to the nature of his
character.

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us... We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God.” (A.W. Tozer)

*“But this I call to mind, and therefore I
have hope: The steadfast love [hesed]
of the LORD never ceases; his mercies
never come to an end; they are new
every morning; great is your
faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:21-23)*

Then with hope and patient
endurance, seek to live your life within
the bounds of the land of promise.