

Transforming Daily
“... a certain man ...”
Ruth 1:1d.

In context, “a certain man” refers to the character, Elimelech, in the storyline of Ruth. He and his family went to Moab to escape the famine in Bethlehem, Judah. His wife’s name was Naomi and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion. Elimelech, which is said to mean, “my God is King,” was just a man. As far as the record of Scripture there was nothing outstanding about him. Elimelech was just a man, like any other man, with responsibilities and cares not uncommon to the daily routine of life. Elimelech died and left his family to survive him. However, while he lived, based on these few verses in Ruth, he did his best to provide for and protect his family.

Whereas “*a . . . man*” is somewhat nebulous, “*a certain man*” has a divine sense about it, a hint of the Sovereignty of God. Not just “a man,” but “this man,” “that man,” “the man” – Elimelech. God had a purpose for him. God had a plan for him. And to the best of our knowledge, God completed His purpose and plan in, for, and through Elimelech as it pleased Him.

Do you think Elimelech knew what God’s purpose and plan was for his life before God revealed it to him? I’m not talking about what God purposed and planned for him regarding how he was to conduct himself as a husband, son, (possibly brother and uncle), or parent. There were rules and instructions that he would have been given in the Torah and other writings for that. We know based on the text that God did not plan for him to be a grandparent. You ask how do we know that? Because he died before there were any children born to his sons and daughters-in-law. As far as we can tell from the text, Elimelech was chosen by God to live this life without previous foreknowledge of what God would have him to do, or who God would have him to become, and Elimelech did so without any prior say so in the matter.

Many people today want to know specifically beforehand, and in many cases, act like they know beforehand, what it is that God has purposed and planned for their lives. Two dynamics are usually associated with this. One dynamic is self-aggrandizing. “I’m God’s gift to everything.” The other dynamic is self-deprecation. “I messed up what it was that God had exclusively planned for me to do or be, so I’ll always be a second class citizen in God’s Kingdom.” Both of these perspectives are, to say the least, skewed. Apart from Jesus Christ, no one knows what it is that God has in store for them. His blessings are abundant and immeasurable and His mercies are new every morning!

You are a *man* or a *woman*, a *boy* or a *girl*. However, you are a *certain* man, woman, boy or girl. You are unique. You are wonderfully and awesomely made in the image of God. God has a purpose and a plan for your life. You don’t have to know the whys and wherefores beforehand in order to affect God’s purpose and plan for your life. You don’t have to be self-aggrandizing or self-deprecating. To be fulfilled in His will, just enjoy the journey as God introduces the opportunities that lay ahead whether you are a certain boy, girl, woman, or a certain man.