

Israel, with whom was God and life and eternal blessing, and sought the Moabites, with whom was Satan and death and eternal woe. They fled from the rod of famine, and so met with the rod of death! What a picture of our present times. How many seek to drown trouble in intoxication, or rush into worldly amusements, pleasures, vanities, and dissipations of all sorts, to endeavour to forget, and so vainly try to escape from that rod of trouble, which may be sent from God in mercy, to draw our souls from the world to Himself. How foolish and blind we are by nature. See the word of the Lord on this point in *Jeremiah* xlii. 13-16.

Elimelech went to *sojourn* in Moab—this was his first mistake. In *verse 2* we see that he came to the country of Moab, and *continued there*—this was his second mistake. The path downwards is easy to travel in self-confidence, but the return will be through trial and sorrow. We soon come to the result of *continuing* there. The first warning comes in the death of Elimelech; but the contact with the evil nation had done its work in his family, and the warning was unheeded; rather than being arrested by it they plunged further into the evil, and in *verse 4* we find that the two sons took wives of the women of Moab, thus uniting themselves to idolators. Another ten years pass, and two more warnings are sent—the judgment is *doubled* this time in its intensity (*verse 5*). The power and strength of the family is wasted. Naomi and her daughters-in-law are truly brought low; bereft and afflicted they are now powerless. Naomi was alone