

**JUDGES AND RUTH: FACING GROUP APOSTASY AS INDIVIDUALS**  
**Part XV: Functioning Well When Our Welfare Depends On Choices By Others**  
**(Ruth 3:1-4:22)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. When a believer's welfare involves his choice **alone** to trust in God, life can appear to be easier than if his fate becomes affected by the choices **other** people make; he can be tempted with anxiety as his welfare is put at the mercy of other imperfect and sinful people!
- B. Ruth learned about trusting God for her welfare when it was complicated by choices others around her would make independent of her control in Ruth 3:1-4:22. We study her example for us as follows:

**II. Functioning Well When Our Welfare Depends On Choices By Others, Ruth 3:1-4:22.**

- A. Ruth was in need of permanent protection a woman like her would gain only through marriage:
  - 1. Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, recognized Ruth needed the "rest" from a lack of permanent protection and provision that marriage to a husband in that culture would provide, Ruth 3:1 with 1:9a.
  - 2. Well, Naomi recommended Ruth take advantage of the Law's kinsman-redeemer provision: this law required a near relative of a deceased husband (in this case, Boaz) was to wed his relative's widow (Naomi, or her daughter-in-law as Naomi was beyond childbearing) and reproduce children to carry on the heritage of the deceased (in this case, Elimelech), cf. Ruth 3:2-4 with Deuteronomy 25:5-10.
- B. In wisdom, Ruth sought to present this legal **requirement** to Boaz in as **respectful** manner as possible:
  - 1. Though Ruth, being a younger widow, might have sought marriage to a younger wealthy man than Boaz (Ruth 3:10), out of concern for her mother-in-law's welfare, she agreed to Naomi's request to seek marriage to Boaz to prolong the heritage of Naomi's husband, Ruth 3:2-4, 5.
  - 2. Accordingly, Ruth **wisely** approached Boaz in a carefully respectful manner to enhance the opportunity to gain as positive a response as she could from Boaz, Ruth 3:6-9:
    - a. Ruth showed respect to Boaz by not embarrassing him by choosing not to interrupt his meal before his harvesters, but approached him privately following the event, Ruth 3:6-7b.
    - b. Ruth was unobtrusive in her approach to Boaz: instead of waking Boaz directly, she removed his cover so he would become cool and awaken after she was already resting at his feet, Ruth 3:7c.
    - c. When Boaz approached Ruth to ask why she was present, Ruth made her request regarding the kinsman-redeemer issue in a simple, honest, Biblically based manner, Ruth 3:8-9.
- C. However, though **Ruth** had done her **best** to influence Boaz to wed her, complications in relationships over which she had no control produced a hurdle to her request for marriage to Boaz, Ruth 3:10-15:
  - 1. Boaz was very positively affected by Ruth's request for marriage to him, Ruth 3:10-11.
  - 2. However, he relayed to Ruth the nerve-wracking news that he was not the nearest kinsman to Naomi, that another man had legal rights to marry Ruth ahead of himself, Ruth 3:12!
  - 3. Accordingly, Boaz informed Ruth he would try to purchase the right to wed her, but Ruth's marriage rested with the **unknown** party who was a nearer kinsman to Naomi than he, Ruth 3:13-15.
- D. Not knowing what would become of her due to this complication, Ruth **waited on God** for the results:
  - 1. When Ruth reported to Naomi Boaz's words on the matter, Naomi suggested Ruth **wait** for Boaz's actions, Ruth 3:16-18. The matter was now completely outside of the control of these women!
  - 2. Accordingly, Ruth did just that -- she waited, an act of faith in her mother-in-law and in **God**.
- E. Accordingly, the **Lord richly rewarded** Ruth and Naomi through Ruth in the end, Ruth 4:1-22:
  - 1. At first, the nearer kinsman claimed he would purchase the property owned by Naomi's husband, 4:1-4
  - 2. However, when Boaz noted he also had to wed Ruth and raise up seek unto Elimelech thereby, that kinsman declined the purchase, fearing his limited wealth would cause his marriage to Ruth and the reproduction of a son through her to disinherit his own offspring, Ruth 4:5-6.
  - 3. Thus, Boaz became the kinsman-redeemer, and bought Elimelech's land and married Ruth, 4:7-10.
  - 4. Boaz was blessed by the witnesses to this transaction, and took Ruth as his wife, Ruth 4:11-13a.
  - 5. God blessed the union, and gave Ruth a son, Obed, who became king David's grandfather, 4:13b-22.

***Lesson: When our welfare becomes dependent on decisions by other people, WE can do our BEST in RELATING to these people, but REST in the Lord regarding the actual decisions they make, Pr. 21:1.***