

The Choice: *Submit* or *Succumb* (3:1-18)

Under the cover of darkness, Ruth laid herself at the feet of her redeemer. Although she could not see him, his voice comforted her. “Do not fear,” he whispered, “I will do for you all that you request” (Ruth 3:11).

Having made known her desires, Ruth returned to her dwelling to wait. There was nothing she could say, nothing she could do to control the outcome. “Be still my daughter. Wait to see how the matter will turn out” (3:18). She must decide whether she would submit to God’s will for her life or succumb to her fears and anxieties.

Although the outcome was not guaranteed, Ruth could be assured that “[He would] act for the one who waits for Him” (Isaiah 64:4).

Jeremiah 29:11 says, “I’ll show up and take care of you as I promised... I know what I’m doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for” (MSG). “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

Read Ruth 3:1-5.

1. How much time appears to have elapsed since Boaz’s and Ruth’s first meeting?
2. What is Naomi’s primary concern? Why? (Review Ruth 1:9.)
3. In Ruth 2:20 and 3:2, it was revealed that Boaz was a Kinsman-Redeemer to the family of Elimelech. Although Ruth was free to marry another, what could Boaz do that another man could not?

8. How did Boaz respond to Ruth's proposal? According to verses 10 and 12, why hadn't Boaz taken initiative with Ruth?

9. How, and to whom, did Ruth's actions demonstrate great "kindness"?

10. How did Ruth earn such a title? (v. 11)ⁱⁱ What does it mean to be a virtuous woman? (See Proverbs 31:10-31.) Why was this important?

11. What obstacle immediately presented itself? (vv.12-13)

12. What fears might Ruth have felt in that moment?

13. What was Boaz's greatest concern for Ruth?

14. What did Boaz allow God to determine? (v.13)

Why is this difficult in the face of personal desires?

Oswald Chambers said, “God sometimes allows you to get into a place of testing where your own welfare would be the right and proper thing to consider if you were not living a life of faith; but if you are, you will joyfully waive your right and leave God to choose for you.”ⁱⁱⁱ

15. What can be assumed about Boaz’s faith based on his response?

16. For what reasons might Boaz have asked Ruth to remain until morning? How does this attest to his character? (vv.13, 14)

Keep reading: Ruth 3:16-18.

17. Upon her arrival, Naomi inquired, “*Is that you my daughter?*” She was not seeking to know who it was that had entered her home, but what had occurred: “Who are you now? What has changed? What condition are you in?” Warren Wiersbe translates her words: “Are you still Ruth the Moabitess, or are you the prospective Mrs. Boaz?”^{iv}

How did Boaz seek to comfort and assure them amid uncertainty?^v (vv.15, 17)

18. To Ruth, Naomi said, “*Sit still my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out.*” (v.18) What does this mean and how does this verse speak to your present situation?

19. What must Ruth and Naomi submit to God?

20. How does Philippians 4:6-8 apply?

21. Anxiousness is a “state of mind wherein one is concerned about something or someone. This state of mind may range from genuine concern to obsessions that originate from a distorted perspective.”^{vi} “It appears to be rooted in incomplete knowledge, lack of control over circumstances, or failure to take an ‘eternal’ perspective on things (Matt. 6:25–34; 10:19; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11–12, 22–34).^{vii} Do you believe this is true? Why or why not?

Read Matthew 6:27. Of what are we assured in the preceding verse? (v.26c) Is disbelief in Christ’s words the source of worry?^{viii} Explain.

22. What does God promise amid our fears and anxieties? Read Psalm 94:19 and Isaiah 41:10.

23. Ultimately, what is the only remedy for anxiety?^{ix} Read Jeremiah 17:7-8 and Isaiah 26:3.

24. Regardless of the outcome, why could Ruth be confident of her future? Record Jeremiah 29:11 in your own words.

ⁱ Bramer, S. J. (1996). Kinsman-Redeemer. In *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology* (electronic ed., p. 457). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

ⁱⁱ “Boaz told her that all his fellow townsmen (lit., the “people of the gate,” probably referring to the elders of Bethlehem) considered her a person of the highest reputation.” This is of import because these men would decide the outcome of Elimelech’s redemption. (Reed, J. W. (1985). Ruth. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 425). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.)

ⁱⁱⁱ Oswald, Chambers. *My Utmost for His Highest*. (May 25).

^{iv} Wiersbe, Warren. (2003). *The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament History*. (196). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications.

^v Six measures, or seahs, approximately 1/3 of an ephah, were given to Ruth. The combined weight of two ephahs was approximately 60 lbs.

^{vi} Brand, C., Draper, C., England, A., Bond, S., Clendenen, E. R., & Butler, T. C. (Eds.). (2003). Anxiety. In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 78). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

^{vii} Enlow, R. E., Jr. (1996). Anxiety. In *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology* (electronic ed., p. 28). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

^{viii} “Anxiety is portrayed in the Scripture as being inconsistent with trust in God. David prays: “*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts*” (Psalm 139:23).” (Enlow, R. E., Jr.) In other words, David asks, “Reveal to me the ways I do not trust You.”

^{ix} “Freedom from anxiety begins with confession that it is not God’s will. In fact, anxiety is a subtle insinuation that God is either unable or disinclined to see to our welfare. Other remedial measures include recognizing the futility of worry (Matthew 6:27; Luke 12:25); cultivating a growing understanding of God’s power and fatherly disposition (Matthew 6:26; Luke 12:30); entrusting to God the things that we cannot control (1 Peter 5:7); increasingly viewing things in eternal perspective (Matthew 6:32–34; Luke 12:30–34); and substituting prayer for worry (Philippians 4:6).” (Enlow, R. E., Jr.)