

## BEATING FAMINE: NEGOTIATION

### SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

Ruth 4:1-11.

### ADDITIONAL STUDY

Genesis 30:25-43 and Luke 14:31-32.

### REFLECTION

+ What wisdom tips can you find from Boaz's conduct in today's passage?

+ In what areas of your life can you practically apply the power of negotiation?

And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You *are* witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. - **Ruth 4:9**

In life, when it gets dark is when some people find the opportunity to shine. While some may be swept away by the waters of an economic wave, those with foresight will be lifted by it. Boaz was one such person that was lifted by an economic wave while others drowned in it.

The book of Ruth reveals Boaz's character and some practical steps he may have taken during the famine in Bethlehem which may have made him soar above the tough times. For example, in this passage, we see how he negotiated with a close relative to acquire the inheritance of Elimelech, including Ruth, Mahlon's widow – *the timing of the negotiation, the place they met (at the gate where judicial matters are decided) the elders he got involved, ensuring everyone sat down, pretending at first that it was only about property and not the dead man's wife, etc.* So, it is safe to say he had great negotiating skills.

Armed with the skills to negotiate, Boaz must have used it with his clients and suppliers alike to negotiate sales deals, payment plans, credit facilities, repayment of loans, discount prices, etc., he must have reappraised every business deal to work for the good of his organization. He must have approached his bankers to discuss the terms for his loans or to renegotiate the interests on them.

One way of beating a famine or a tough economy, is to diligently manage your resources. Every business wants to maximize profit in these times, so you have to learn how to be a good negotiator and draw a hard bargain. Negotiation will help reduce your cost and cut your overhead; at every point in time you have to make sure you are getting value for your money. Don't always take the first shelf price. Haggle prices with sellers and save yourself some cost.

Through negotiation, people have sometimes gotten great deals. The bible talks about a man, who when he goes before the buyer he says, "not good not good, this thing is not good enough," until the seller brought the price down and when he got around the corner he started boasting because he struck a hard bargain (Proverbs 20:14). The monies you save from bargains will end up saving you a lot in tough times.

#### CONTACTS

PHONE: +234 9082222222  
EMAIL: INFO@INSPIRED2GO.ORG

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