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Scene Three: Na'omi's Wonderful Plan for Ruth's Life 3: 1-18

Ruth lived outside the covenant family of YHVH, bankrupt, with no claim to the mercy of God. Therefore, she foreshadowed the Church (to see link click [Ah](#) - The Book of Ruth and Shavu'ot) in five ways as the rest of the story is told.



Na'omi saw it as **her** duty as mother-in-law to seek long-term security for **her** faithful **Moabite daughter-in-law** who had so graciously proven **her** loyalty, generosity, diligence and strength of character throughout the hot and difficult harvest season. In a culture where arranged marriages were the norm, this meant doing what **she** could to orchestrate a marriage between **Ruth** and **Bo'az**.

There were several things involved. Elimelek had possessed a portion of land in Beit-Lechem that **Na'omi** was being forced to sell due to **her** poverty (**4:3**). Now **Bo'az**, a relative of Elimelek, was **her kinsman-redeemer**. **She** hoped that **Bo'az** would **redeem**, or restore, **her** land, and **redeem**, or marry, **Ruth**, thus preserving the family name of Elimelek. On the basis of this hope, **Na'omi** encouraged **Ruth** to visit **Bo'az** who had shown **himself** to be kind.

Because **she** was a woman, protocol forbade **Na'omi** from approaching **Bo'az** to arrange a marriage for **Ruth**. In fact, there was no suggestion that **Na'omi** had spoken to **Bo'az** about anything since **her** return from **Mo'av**. Yet from the very beginning, **Na'omi** clearly had an intuition about **Bo'az's** interest in **Ruth**. Having

watched and waited through the long harvest season, **Na'omi** apparently decided **Bo'az** needed some subtle help to bet the ball rolling. The way things finally played out suggests that **Na'omi's** instincts were right on target.

If **Bo'az** had ever been married, the Bible doesn't mention it. **According to Jewish tradition, he was a lifelong bachelor.** Although **he** obviously took a keen interest in **Ruth** from the moment **he** first saw **her**, it does not seem to have entered **his** mind to pursue **the kinsman-redeemer** role on **her** behalf. **He** even said **himself** that **he** was surprised that **Ruth** didn't deem **him** unsuitable for marriage (**3:10**). **He** obviously needed some prodding.

Na'omi had sized up the situation correctly though, and **she** instructed **Ruth** on what to do. **Na'omi's** plan was bold and utterly unconventional. It was very dangerous (see [Af - The Concept of Chesed](#)), but there was nothing unrighteous or indecent about **her** plan. **Na'omi** certainly would not have asked **Ruth** to compromise **her** virtue or relinquish godly modesty. Nevertheless, what **Na'omi** advised **Ruth** to do was shockingly forward. **The essence of Na'omi's plan was for Ruth to propose marriage to Bo'az!**⁶⁹