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## Na'omi Evaluates the Encounter

### 3: 14-18

Na'omi evaluates the encounter DIG: If found together, who would likely be blamed: Na'omi, Ruth, or Bo'az? Does this story reflect some kind of romantic love, or a proper sense of duty to an ethical code of conduct? Why? What are some examples of how the LORD wants His people to sit still? How did Ruth foreshadow the Church? How did Bo'az foreshadow Messiah?

REFLECT: What are you willing to risk? And for what? What are you willing to risk for the sake of the gospel? What are you willing to die for? Anything? Anyone? How patient are you? Can you wait on God? Does He need your help? Why can't we come into God's presence clothed in our own righteousness? Is Jesus Christ your Redeemer?

**Ruth foreshadows the Church in that she listened to Bo'az.** So Ruth lay at the feet of Bo'az until morning; then, before [it was light enough that] people could recognize each other, she got up because Bo'az said: **No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor (3:14 CJB).** Nothing immoral occurred, of course, and the Bible is clear about that. But **Bo'az**, being protective of **Ruth's** virtue, awoke **her** and sent **her** home just before **dawn**.<sup>83</sup>

**Ruth foreshadows the Church in that she received gifts from Bo'az.** He gave **her** a generous portion of **grain** as a gift for **Na'omi**. **He** also said: **Bring me the shawl. you are wearing and hold it out. When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley** (or eighty pounds), lifted it up, **and placed the bundle on her back so she could carry it home. Then [she] went back to town (3:15).** Chapter 3 ends much the way that Chapter 2 had ended, with **Ruth** returning home to share with **Na'omi** news of **her** adventure.

The growing realization of **Ruth's** value is underlined by **Bo'az's** generous gift. **He** sends **her** back with a large bundle of **barley** so that **she** will not **return** to **Na'omi** **empty**, the same word that **Na'omi** used to describe herself in Chapter 1. **She** came back to Beit-Lechem **empty**, but **ADONAI** was fulfilling all of **her** needs through **Ruth** and **Bo'az**. She

was not longer **empty**. **God** provided food for **her** hunger and a place for **her** to rest. Would **YHWH** now withhold from **her** the one other thing **she** lacked – descendants? No way! In light of that, **Bo'az's** earlier comment: **There is a redeemer closer than I**, takes on a whole new light. At that time **Bo'az** was merely talking about some **the unknown-kinsman**. But all through the story there has been **a Redeemer closer than Bo'az, a Redeemer** for **Na'omi** and **Ruth** who has hovered behind the scenes of the narrative, behind all the human agents, reaching out to **His** beloved but wandering sheep and showing them grace upon on grace.<sup>84</sup>



**Na'omi**, of course, had probably been up all night and was anxiously awaiting to see if **her** plan worked or not. When **Ruth** came to her mother-in-law, **Na'omi** said: **How did it go, my daughter?** Are **you his** wife or not! **Then she told her everything Bo'az had done for her and added, "He gave me these six measures of barley, saying: Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed (3:16-17).** The gift was a sign of good faith to carry out **his** promise (3:13). The emphasis is on not being **empty-handed**. In 1:13 **Na'omi** stated that **she had returned to Judah empty-handed** with no husband and no sons. But now the implication is that **she** will no longer be **empty-handed**. The aged widow could then rest assured that **she** would not be forgotten in the future. The gift of barley foreshadowed the fullness that was soon to come. This verse provides a transition of **Ruth's** exit from the story. From now on, **she** is only a secondary character. In contrast to **her**, it puts **Bo'az** and **Na'omi** on the center stage.<sup>85</sup>

**Ruth foreshadows the Church in that she waited for Bo'az to act.** **Na'omi**, who feminine intuition was impeccable, said: **Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will fall; for the man will not rest, he will do everything in his power to fulfill his promise, until he has finished the thing this day"** (3:18). It is **through faith and patience that we inherit the promises of God (Hebrews 6:12 and 10:36).** Because **Na'omi** and **Ruth** trusted that **Bo'az** would accomplish what **he** said **he** would do, **they** waited patiently until **they** received the good news that **Ruth** was **his** bride. Being still

is not an easy thing to do. Especially in today's society, we want it done yesterday! Now **Ruth** could have followed **Bo'az** around Beit-Lechem but that wouldn't have done any good. Our human nature gets nervous and wants to help **God** out, and when we do that, we only make things worse. Let's look to the Bible and see what it has to say about this matter.

**Stand still (Exodus 14:13)** was the command of Moses to the people of Isra'el when the Egyptian army had them pinned in with no possible way of escape. There was no need to panic, for **YHVH** had the situation well in hand. When **ADONAI** commanded the people to **go forward**, **He** led them safely through the Sea of Reeds (see the commentary on **Exodus**, **to see link click [Ci](#) - The Waters Were Divided and the Israelites Went Through the Sea on Dry Land**). There is a time to stand still and a time to go forward, and we need to ask **the LORD** for the wisdom to know which is which.

**Be still, and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10)** is a wonderful cure for a restless spirit. The Hebrew word **be still**, *yashab*, means *relax, take your hands off*. It's so easy for us to get impatient and start "helping" **God** when we should stop playing **Holy Spirit**. **He is God** and **He** can accomplish the impossible. Our hands may get in the way and make it worse.

**Bo'az** was busy working for **Ruth**, and **Na'omi** was confident that **he** wouldn't rest until **he** had settled the matter. **Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6)**. It is encouraging for us to know that **Messiah** never stops working for **His** children as **He** intercedes for us in heaven: **Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died - more than that, who is raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us (Romans 8:34).**<sup>86</sup>

In his book on *Ruth*, Iain Duguid discusses the fact that the story of **Bo'az** and **Ruth** is not a *Romeo and Juliet* type of love story. It's not boy meets girl, in which they are physically attracted to each other and the rest is a passionate love affair. We know that **Bo'az** was relatively old and that **Ruth** could work all day in the hot sun with hardly a break and then carry eighty pounds of grain home on **her** back. Doesn't exactly sound like the usual movie script. No. The book of **Ruth** is a different kind of love story than we are used to.

The devotion that **Bo'az** and **Ruth** had for one another was built on **their** common character, which is always a much better foundation for a lasting relationship than mere physical attraction. **Theirs** was a character match, not a sex match; **they** were both people of substance. That is specifically what **King Lemuel's mother** advised **him** to look for in **a wife of noble character (Proverbs 31:10-31)**. When the young (and not so young) make their mental checklist of what they are looking for in a spouse, physical attributes usually

head the list with spiritual attributes recorded as an afterthought. **Bo'az** and **Ruth**, however, had a far more biblical agenda than most do today.

The real love story in this book is not about **Bo'az** and **Ruth**, but about **ADONAI** for **His** sheep that have wandered off the path. It is a love that prevented **God** from merely ending the world when Adam and Eve first sinned. It is the love that chose and called Abraham and then persisted in pursuit his rebellious offspring Isaac and Jacob. It is the love that would not let **the Israelites** go, even after centuries of rebellion and idolatry. His love causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall. In the lives of the children of **YHVH**, this love feeds us and clothes us. In **His** providence, **His** love may bring godly friends to encourage us, and a godly family with whom we can share our lives. We should be thankful for all **God's** gifts of love.

**Yeshua Messiah** gives us the clearest picture of **God's** love. **His** love for us took **Him** much further than a grain pile at midnight. It took **Him** all the way to the cross. There, in the midst of a darkness far greater than any ordinary midnight, **He** offered **Himself** for the sins of **His** people: **God made Him who had no sin to be a sin offering for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (Second Corinthians 5:21)**. And because **God the Father** cannot be in the presence of sin, for the one and only time in all eternity, **the Father** turned **His** back on **God the Son** as **Jesus** was punished for the sins of all humanity from noon to three o'clock (see the commentary on [\*\*The Life of Christ Ly - Jesus' Second Three Hours on the Cross: The Wrath of God\*\*](#)). **Messiah** didn't just risk **His** life, **He** gave it. Was it is because we are such wonderful people and we really deserve it? Hardly! It is because **ADONAI** was so committed to saving sinners like us, this was the only way it could be done. **Bo'az** was the only one could redeem **Ruth**; and **Jesus** is the only **One** who could redeem us. **For salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we may be saved (Acts 4:12)**.

Do you know this love of **God**? Have you responded by giving your heart to **Him**? Disfigured by sin though it is, your heart is all you have to give. So give it to **Him**. **He** will be your **Redeemer** and receive you into **His** family. **He** will cover you with **His wings** and be your refuge. **He** will **spread His robe** of **Messiah's** righteousness over your nakedness. No matter how undeserving you are, no matter what you've done or where you've been, the invitation is open to come and be redeemed.<sup>87</sup> **YHVH** will welcome if you believe that **Christ died for your sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day and that He appeared to Peter and then to the Twelve (First Corinthians 15:3b-5)**, and you want to make **Yeshua** your **Lord**. **Messiah** loves you so much. Have you put yourself at the feet of **the Lord of the harvest**, and are you trusting in



**Him** to work?