

A SON IS BORN Sunday School- December 6, 2009

Unifying Topic: THE LINEAGE OF DAVID

Lesson Text

I. The Son of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 4:13-15)

II. The Line of David (Ruth 4:16-17)

III. The Human Family of Jesus (Matthew 1:1-6)

The Main Thought: And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying there is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David. (Ruth 4:17,KJV).

Unifying Principle: Genealogy is a popular hobby because people want to know who they are and where they came from. Why are we so fascinated with our family heritage? We want to be able to make connections, just as the Bible traces Jesus' human family through King David.

Lesson Aim: To help students appreciate how God's plan of salvation includes all persons.

Life aim: To teach how God uses human families like Ruth and Boaz and other people in Jesus' genealogy to fulfill His will and carry out his plan of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

4:13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

4:14 And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

4:15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

4:16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

4:17 And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

1:2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

1:3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Tamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;

1:4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;

1:5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

1:6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias;

HISTORY:

¹The story of **Ruth** is a series of setbacks. In **Chapter 1** Naomi and her husband and two sons were forced to leave their homeland in Judah on account of famine. Then Naomi's husband dies. Her sons marry Moabite women and for ten years the women prove to be barren. And then her sons die leaving two widows in the house of Naomi. Even though Ruth cleaves to Naomi, chapter 1 ends with Naomi's bitter complaint: "I went away full and the Lord has brought me back empty . . . The Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."

In **Chapter 2** the mercy of God breaks through bright enough for even Naomi to see it. We meet Boaz, a man of wealth, a man of God, and a relative of Naomi's husband. We see Ruth taking refuge under the wings of God in a foreign land and being led mercifully by God to the field of Boaz to glean. And we see Naomi recover from her long night of despondency as she exults in God (2:20): "The Lord's kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Chapter 2 overflows with hope. Boaz is a God-saturated man in his business and personal relations (v v. 4, 10-13). Ruth is a God-dependent woman under the wings of God. Naomi is now a God-exalting woman under the sovereignty of God. All the darkness of chapter 1 is gone. God has turned her mourning into dancing. "The Almighty has dealt bitterly with me" (1:20) has given way to "His kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead" (2:20).

In **chapter 3** Naomi and Ruth make a risky move in the middle of the night. Ruth goes to Boaz on the threshing floor and says in effect, "I want you to spread your wing over me as my husband." But right when the tragedy of Ruth's widowhood seems to be resolved into a beautiful love story, there is another man who according to Hebrew custom has prior claim to marry Ruth. The impeccably honest Boaz will not proceed without giving this man his lawful opportunity. So chapter 3 ends again in the suspense of another setback.

¹ John Piper. © Desiring God. Website: [desiringGod.org](http://www.desiringGod.org)

After the midnight rendezvous in **chapter 3**, **chapter 4** begins with Boaz going to the city gate where the official business was done. The nearer kinsman comes by, and Boaz lays the situation before him. Naomi is giving up what little property she has, and the duty of the nearer kinsman is to buy it so that the inheritance stays in the family. To our dismay the kinsman says at the end of **verse 4**, "I will redeem it." We don't want him to redeem it. We want Boaz to do it. So again there seems to be a setback. And the irony of this setback is that it is being caused by righteousness. The fellow is only doing his duty. Boaz says to the nearer kinsman, "You know, don't you, that Naomi has a daughter-in-law. So when you do the part of the kinsman redeemer, you must also take her as your wife and raise up offspring in the name of her husband Mahlon?" Then, to our great relief, the kinsman says in **verse 6** he can't do it. But there is a cloud overhead. Ruth is barren.

POINT:

Can you see why I said that the lesson of the book of Ruth is that the life of the godly is not a straight line to glory? Life is one curve after another. And we never know what's coming. But the point of the story is that the best is yet to come. No matter where you are, if you love God, the best is yet to come. The cloud over the head of Ruth and Boaz is big with mercy, and breaks with blessing on their head in verse 13.

²They concluded such a transaction by relinquishing a sandal. This was a tradition or a custom not required by the Mosaic Law. The witnesses testified to the details of the matter, if needed; and the exchange of sandals testified to the conclusion of the transaction. This is saying that, Boaz will buy the property from the land of Naomi—he is purchasing all that belonged to Elimelech, Chilion and Mahlon. Boaz has these witnesses testify to the fact that he is purchasing the land with the intention of marrying Ruth and raising up her first born under the name of Mahlon, so that his name retains an eternal inheritance that even death cannot remove. When they say that Jehovah will make the woman (Ruth) like Rachel and like Leah—these two women, and their handmaids, were the mothers of all of Israel. They had twelve children between them, who made up the twelve tribes of Israel.

Ending in **v.12** Tamar who bore Pharez (Perez) to Judah-- Perez was born from a Levirate marriage.* Judah was actually the only semi-willing husband to Tamar. However, when found to be in error for his promises which were not fulfilled, Judah both married and raised up a child by Tamar—actually twins—one of whom was among the ancestors of Boaz. This indicates that the family of Perez is one of the larger and more prosperous families to come from Judah. Also, it was interesting that they mention Judah, Tamar and Perez. To be sure, this "House" was blessed far more than the house of Pharez could ever be blessed, and in fact, every other house, for it would be the "House of the Lord Jesus Christ."

NOTE

*The birth was an example of the "levirate" practice, whereby the brother or relative of the dead husband married his widow (Gen. 38). Boaz as kinsman redeemer was following this levirate practice since Ruth's former husband had no brothers. The descendants of Judah made Perez the prominent tribe. Boaz, David, and all the Judean kings were descendants of Perez.

Ruth 4:13-15: The Son of Ruth and Boaz

The Proposition: According to the Law of the Kinsman Redeemer, Boaz did it all by the book. Everything Jesus did, He did by the book! He fulfilled all the Law and paid the price for sin and He did it legally! The Purchase: A reason Boaz wanted to marry Ruth was to bring life out of death. Without a Kinsman-Redeemer, the family of Elimelech would die out. That family would perish from Israel. Boaz cared about that family and wanted to preserve life! Boaz was willing to pay any price because of his love for Ruth. Jesus and the great price He paid to redeem the souls of fallen men show His great love for us.

Most Jews would not even consider marrying a gentile woman. The father of Boaz was a Jew (Salmon), his mother was Rahab, the gentile prostitute. Since his mother was a gentile and a believer in Jehovah-Elohim, Boaz would have no problem marrying a gentile woman who was also a believer. "Boaz then marries Ruth and they have a son, Obed³, who sires Jesse, who is the father of David. "So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and he went in to her, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son" **v.13**. What Jehovah gave to Ruth is found only in Ruth 4:13 and Hosea 9:11, and it means conception, pregnancy, impregnation. This son firmly fixed Ruth's place in Israel! You see, her redemption gave her legal standing in the courthouse records, but this child gave her a

² <http://kukis.org/Ruth/Ruth04.pdf>

³ This is a name that means "**Worshipping**", derived from the Hebrew word 'ebed, meaning servant.

<http://www.pitwm.net//pitwm-sundayschool.html>

connection with the royal family! Obed was King David's grandfather! This made Ruth, David's great-grandmother! But, better than that, she is named in Matt.1:5 as one of the ancestress of Jesus Christ! They were separated by race, social status, morals, etc. Now, they are one flesh!

The women of Bethlehem (v.14) were expressing their desire that they began to bless the Lord for His kindness. The blessing indicated that Naomi would be the benefactor throughout the life of this child. "*He shall be unto thee (Naomi) a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age*" (v.15). From a dispensational viewpoint, we can see how this will come true through the child JESUS, Who was born hundreds of years later. He shall be a restorer of life and a nourisher to the Jewish people in their old age. This will take place in the millennium.

With the birth of this lad Naomi will find new hope for life and that her spirit would be revived. God's blessings have a way of bringing about revival to our spirits. Obed would be Naomi's hope for life because through the seed of Obed Naomi would be assured that Elimelech's line would not become extinct.

Ruth's kindness was known and recognized* throughout the city. God brought great blessings out of Naomi's tragedy, even greater blessings than "seven sons" (indicating the great blessing of an abundance of heirs).The announcement at his naming: It was not said, "A son has been born to Ruth," but "a son has been born to Naomi." Why? Because now her inheritance will continue throughout the ages. If there had been no son, her death would have marked the end of the family. But now Obed will carry on the family tree and maintain the family inheritance.

NOTE:

***The Gift of Ruth**

First, when Naomi's whole life seemed to cave in while in Moab, it was God who gave Ruth to Naomi. We know this from two verses. In 1:16 we learn that at the root of Ruth's commitment to Naomi is Ruth's commitment to Naomi's God: "Your God shall be my God." God had won Ruth's allegiance in Moab and so it was to God that Naomi owed the amazing love of her daughter-in-law. Also in 2:12 it says that when Ruth came to Judah with Naomi, she was coming to take refuge under the wings of God. Therefore it is owing to God that Ruth left her home and family to follow and serve Naomi. All along it was God turning Naomi's setback into joy—even when she was oblivious to his grace.

The Preservation of Boaz

Second, Naomi gives the impression in chapter 1 that there is no hope that Ruth could marry and raise up children to continue the family line (1:12). But all the while God is preserving a wealthy and godly man named Boaz to do just that. The reason we know that this was God's doing is that Naomi herself admits it in 2:20. She recognizes that behind the "accidental" meeting of Ruth and Boaz was the "kindness of God who has not forsaken the living or the dead." In every loss that the godly endure, God is already plotting for their gain.

Ruth 4:16-17 The Line of David

But notice how the focus in verses 14–17 is not on Ruth at all, nor on Boaz. The focus is on Naomi and the child. Why? Because the point of the book is that the life of the godly is not a straight line to glory, but they do get there. The story began with Naomi's loss. It ends with Naomi's gain. It began with death and ends with birth. Naomi placed the child in her bosom, which describes an action as when one embraces a loved one. She became his nurse, his nanny. The verb meaning to be firm and thus in this context conveys the idea of providing stability and confidence, as a baby would find in the arms of a parent. It does not refer to her actually feeding the child, which would have been an impossibility at her age. It is also possible that this process was symbolic of an adoption since the neighbors named the child, rather than the father, and proclaimed: "There is a son born to Naomi." The blessing of the child to each member of the family, makes it clear that, Boaz has a son, Ruth, the widow is now the wife and mother of new life, and Naomi who lost both her husband and her sons is now a grandmother. Obed would be the grandfather of King David, which puts them in the Davidic line.

Matthew 1:1-6 The Human Family of Jesus

For centuries, Jews had waited for a Messiah. They based their expectations on numerous O.T. promises. *Matthew's Gospel answers with a resounding Yes! He fills his account with O.T. prophecies that point to Jesus as "God's Chosen One" (Matt.1:23; 2:6, 15, 18, 23 to mention a few).

NOTE:

*Matthew meant "*gift of Yahweh*"; home in Capernaum; father, Alphaeus, and his occupation, a tax collector, however, later responded to Jesus' call. Matthew opens his account with a family tree of Jesus' ancestors (a book of genealogy).

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Matthew includes it for three important reasons:

1. To show that God's Son was also a real, flesh and blood human.
2. To show that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah of Israel.
3. To show that Jesus is also the international Christ, the Savior of the whole world. His genealogy reaches beyond Jews to include several ethnic groups that populated the Middle East during Israel's O.T. history.

In the lineage of the Messiah, Matthew highlighted the calling of one man (Abraham) to father the Jewish nation and the calling of one man from that nation (David) to father the line of the kings. If there had been any doubts about Jesus being a son of David, his claim to kingship would have been invalid. "*Begat*" can mean direct descent instead of direct parentage (v.2).

An honorable genealogy* was necessary for a person to have a place in society. The genealogy given in Matthew is divided into three groups of fourteen (v.17), a system recalling the numbers 3 and 7, which ancient people thought were significant or perfect.

NOTE: *

- ⁴Genealogies were records of family history and were often memorized because ancient people did not have access to written records.
- The Bible contains numerous lineage lists. The Book of Genesis alone has nine different genealogies; 1 Chronicles has 17 chapters devoted to family trees; Ezra and Nehemiah record the names of people nine different times.
- Genealogies were used to decide inheritance rights, to make land allotments, and to organize censuses. names of people nine different times.
- Priests were determined by genealogy. They had to be from the tribe of Levi and the house of Aaron (see Nehemiah 7:64).
- Royal succession and the credentials of the Messiah are linked to King David's lineage (see 1 Kings 11:36).
- Genealogies are important but we must be careful about getting too caught up in them (see Titus 3:9). Their main purpose is to establish broad lines of descent without filling in all the details. The ultimate issue is Christology, not chronology.

The lineage of Jesus is essential to establish because His enemies enjoyed making disapproving remarks about Him. That leads us to Matthew 1:1: "***A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham.***" Matthew makes four powerful points right away.

- **His name is Jesus.** His earthly name meaning "*Savior*" and is explained more fully by the angel who appeared to Joseph in a dream (Matthew 1:21).
- **His title is Christ.** This means that He is the "*Anointed One*," the one qualified for the task of saving sinners. In Hebrew, the word is "*Messiah*." Jesus is the one everyone was waiting for, and He claimed this title for Himself (Luke 4:18).
- **He is the Son of David.** Interestingly, David is listed before Abraham, even though Abraham came first in history. In fact, David's name is mentioned five times in this genealogy. Why is that? Because Matthew is establishing that first and foremost, Jesus Christ is a direct descendant of David and therefore qualified to be the eternal king (Matthew 22:41). By tracing Jesus' ancestry back to King David (Davidic kings), Matthew connects Jesus with his royal heritage. The genealogy here is that of Joseph, Jesus' legal father, whereas the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38 is that of Mary, His actual parent, showing his blood line back to David. In Matthew's genealogy as he divides the Lord's lineage into three sections in verse 17. The first section speaks of the domination of David's kingdom; the second about its decline; and the third about its demise.
- **He is the Son of Abraham.** That means that Jesus was Jewish, and like Abraham, who surrendered all, He is the supreme servant. Abraham was promised that through his bloodline would come forth someone who would bless all nations (Genesis 22:18). The lineage of the Lord is traced back to Abraham and at the same time, Jesus said in John 8:58 that He is eternal: "***Before Abraham was born, I am!***" He is fully God and fully man. Galatians 3:16 makes it clear that the offspring of Abraham was Jesus: "***The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say 'and to seeds,' meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ.***"

Although the ancestral list does not include everyone, five women are mentioned: Tamar, Rehab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary. Tamar, Rehab, Bathsheba were connected with sexual sins; Rehab and Ruth were not Jewish and Ruth belonged to the nation of Moab, which had its origin in incest (Gen.19:30-37; Deut.23:3). Mary was an humble Jewish maiden.

1. **God uses the faithful.** As we glance at this genealogy, there are at least ten names that stand out.

- **Abraham.** Hebrews 11:17: "***By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice.***"
- **Isaac.** Hebrews 11:20: "***By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.***"

⁴ http://www.pontiacbible.org/index.php?/sermons/more/the_forgotten_family_tree/
<http://www.pitwm.net//pitwm-sundayschool.html>

- Jacob. Hebrews 11:21: *"By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff."*
- Ruth. Ruth 1:16: *"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."*
- David. 1 Samuel 13:14: *"The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart..."*
- Solomon. 1 Kings 13:12: *"I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be."*
- Asa. 1 Kings 15:11: *"Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done."*
- Jehoshaphat. 2 Chronicles 17:3: *"The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because in his early years he walked in the ways his father David had followed."*
- Josiah. 2 Kings 23:25: *"Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did-with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses."*
- Hezekiah. 2 Kings 18:5: *"Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel."*

2. **God uses failures.** Matthew's genealogy is filled with names in the lineage of the Lord that are shocking, and what some of them did can make us blush.

- **Judah.** Jacob had 12 sons, but for some reason, the lineage of the Lord ran through Judah. This is very interesting because he wasn't the oldest like Reuben was, nor was he necessarily the favorite son – that would have been Joseph or Benjamin. Genesis 49:10 states that the ruler would come out of Judah: *"The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."* This is traced all the way to the end of the Bible as well in Revelation 5:5: *"Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.'" At the climax of history in heaven, Judah's offspring is the only one that was found worthy.*

This son was married to a woman named **Tamar**, leaving her a widow and without children. According to their customs (Deuteronomy 25:5-10), his brother was to marry the widow and give her children but he refused, so the Lord took his life as well. Judah promised his third son to Tamar but he procrastinated. Tamar realized that this wedding was never going to happen so she took things into her own hands.

The story goes from bad to worse at this point. She hears that her father-in-law Judah is going to take a trip so she comes up with a wicked plan. She decided to disguise herself as a prostitute and waited alongside the road. Judah, not knowing it was her, offered to pay her with a young goat for her services, and gave her a deposit before the goat could be delivered – his signet ring, a cord, and his shepherd's staff, which is the ancient equivalent of a Driver's License today. Tamar becomes pregnant with twins and when Judah finds out, he is ready to burn her in the fire because of the disgrace she has caused his family. As she was dragged away to be killed, and the flames crackled in the background, she calmly identified the father of the twins by holding up Judah's personal property. Judah is humiliated and admits in verse 26: *"She is more righteous than I."* God uses failures. The genealogy of Jesus not only goes through Judah and Tamar, but also travels through Perez, the child of incest. Through the broken, God breaks through! Through the twisted twig of Tamar, God's grace continues to grow.

- **Rahab.** Drop down to verse 5: *"Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab."* Most everyone has heard of Rahab the prostitute, who provided protection to the Hebrew spies in Jericho. Her most famous deed is the telling of a lie. Rahab is mentioned eight times in Scripture, and six of those times, she's referred to as "Rahab the prostitute." Because of her faith, she is listed in Hebrews 11:31. Amazingly the Redeemer comes through Rahab as well.
- **Bathsheba.** She is not mentioned by name in this genealogy, but is called, *"Uriah's wife"* in verse 6. She is the woman David committed adultery with. The son of their illicit union dies. Eventually David marries Bathsheba and they have another son named Solomon. The family tree of Jesus has Bathsheba as one of its branches. As someone has said, *"We're reminded again that God's plan of redemption came neither through perfect people, nor for perfect people."*
- And there are others: Rehoboam v.7, Ahaz v.9, Manasseh v.10

The Savior of the world came from people that most of us would want nothing to do with. These individuals, who we could call failures, are in the Forgotten Family Tree, not for what they have in common with Christ, but for what they share in common with each of us. We are like them in so many ways...but isn't that why Christ came? Jesus can take our failures and turn them into something fruitful.

3. **God uses the forgotten.** God uses faithful people with flaws, He uses those who feel like failures, and He never forgets those who fear that they are forgotten. Look again at this list. There are some names here that we

know nothing about. What about Hezron and Ram? One had a truck named after him but we don't know if they were saints or scoundrels. Abiud, Azor and Akim? Zadok? They might not make the headlines but they are known in heaven. Do you feel forgotten today? Do you wonder if God even notices you? Don't despair. You are never out of His mind. In fact, Psalm 139:17-18 says: *"How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you."*

God takes what feeble faith we have, coupled with our failures and redeems them for His glory, and in the process, never forgets us. (In tracing David's genealogy, the author begins with **V.3** Judah and Tamar's son Perez, takes us down through Boaz, and then to David). Jesus' family was both colorful and mixed. How human is that?

SUMMARY:

The Book of Ruth is a story of loyalty and family love that comprised the attributes of the woman, Ruth. Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, had become destitute when the men in the family died and left only the family land as an asset. The custom in that day was that if an Israelite became so poor that the Israelite's land had to be sold (or the person had to sell himself into slavery) to pay off a debt, a family member could pay off the debt so the land could remain in the family. A family member to do such a thing was called a *"family redeemer"*. Boaz, a wealthy land owner and relative of Naomi, became the family redeemer for Naomi and Ruth. He not only bought the land, but married Ruth, with whom they had a son, Obed. That son was to become the grandfather of David. Ruth is one of only five women to be listed in the New Testament genealogy of Christ by Matthew (Matthew 1:5). The genealogy of Jesus is listed in Matthew and that genealogy supports writings in the Book of Ruth that show Ruth in the lineage as an ancestor of King David, therefore, also in the genealogy of Jesus. The lineage for David back to Perez listed in Ruth 4:18-22 corresponds to that in Matthew 1:3-6.

Do you see the great parabolic nature of this story? This is our salvation. Christ had to die for our salvation; He had to pay the penalty for our sins. The Law could not redeem us. We have no assets. We cannot redeem ourselves. We stand completely outside the family of God, rejected by the Law, and without assets. We are completely dependent upon Christ to stand in our place and to redeem us from the penalty of the Law, just as Ruth and Naomi were unable to redeem themselves

NAMES:

Naomi: While in the land of the gentiles, 3/4 of the family died. Naomi was the only remnant left. She becomes the type of the Jews that we know today. While scattered throughout the nations, many Jews have died. Naomi was in the land, she did not have possession of her true inheritance. She was bitter, feeling abandoned and afflicted by God. After the threshing floor, after the wedding, Naomi's land was redeemed back to her. So too, the nation of Israel will receive the full inheritance of their land during the millennial reign of Christ.

Ruth is representative of the church. During Naomi's absence from the land of Israel, this Gentile woman was being prepared for a husband. It is her marriage to the kinsman redeemer that will both gain her a husband, and restore the land to Naomi. Ruth was separated from God by the Law which stated, Deut. 23:3 "No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the Lord; But the grace of her kinsman redeemer brought her into the people of God.

Boaz, the kinsman redeemer, is of course a picture of Jesus Christ. The one who marries the church, His Gentile bride, and restores the land to Israel.

Ruth was written to help us see the signposts of the grace of God in our lives, and to help us trust his grace even when the clouds are so thick that we can't see the road let alone the signs on the side. This should never have happened. Ruth was an Arab from the tribe of Moab across the Jordan. The Jewish law of Moses was absolutely Adamant : *"No Moabite shall be admitted to the assembly of the Lord, even to the tenth generation"* (**Deuteronomy 23:3**).

Let's go back and remind ourselves that it was God who acted to turn each setback into a stepping stone to joy, and that it is God in all of our bitter providences who is plotting for our good. The book of Ruth wants to teach us that God's purpose for the life of his people is to connect us to something far greater than ourselves. God wants us to know that when we follow him, our lives always mean more than we think they do. Serving a widowed mother-in-law, gleaning in a field, falling in love, having a baby—for the Christian these things are all connected to eternity. They are part of something so much bigger than they seem.

⁵This is the great message of this book: redemption is a romance; because God loves us! He redeemed us! You will have to invite Him in. God offers the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus, but you have to reach out your hand and take it by faith. By faith you receive Christ.

⁵ J Vernon McGee

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The New Testament begins with the genealogy of the Messianic line that ended with Jesus. And Ruth the Arab is listed among five women who bore a son for that royal line (**Matthew 1:1, 5**). The first was Tamar, whose pornographic story included spilling of seed to avoid paternity, prostitution, and incest with her father in law (**Genesis 38:1-30, Matthew 1:3**). The next was Rahab, the Canaanite prostitute who ran a brothel in Jericho (**Joshua 2:1, 6:22, 25, Matthew 1:5, Luke 3:31**). Ruth the Arab was the third. The story of Bathsheba is one of the horrors of the Old Testament. She got pregnant by King David, and her army officer husband was put out in front to be killed in battle (**2 Samuel 11:2-5, 14-17**).

If God can grow roses from such raw manure, nothing in my background or yours will phase him. Our past may be as murky as Tamar or Rahab. We may have been abused, and our marriage devastated like Bathsheba. Ruth certainly had no racial right to be included in the Messiah's family.

⁶Matthew 1:1 The book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Num.	<i>Matthew 1:2-6</i>	<i>Matthew 1:6-11</i>	<i>Matthew 1:11-16</i>
1	Abraham	King David, <i>counted twice</i>	Jechorah (born during the Exile)
2	Isaac	Solomon (son of Bathsheba)	Shealtiel (Sala'thiel)
3	Jacob	Rehoboam (Robo'am)	Zerubbabel (Zorob'abel)
4	Judah (Judah and his brethren Tha'mar)	Abijah (Abi'a)	Abiud (Abi'ud)
5	Perez (Pha'ies and Za'ra of Tha'mar)	Asa (A'sa)	Eliakim (Eli'akim)
6	Hezron (Esrom)	Jehoshaphat (Jos'aphat)	Azor (A'zor)
7	Aram (A'ram)	Joram (Jo'ram)	Zadok (Sa'doc)
8	Amminadab (Amin'a dab)	Uzziah (Ozi'as)	Achim (A'chim)
9	Nahshon (Naas'son)	Jotham (Jo'atham)	Eliud (Eli'ud)
10	Salmon (Sal'mon)	Ahaz (A'chaz)	Eleazar (Elea'zar)
11	Boaz (Bo'oz of Ra'chab)	Hezekiah (Ezeki'as)	Matthan (Mat'than)
12	Obad (O'bed of Ruth)	Manasseh (Manas'ses)	Jacob
13	Jesse	Amos (Amon)	Joseph, husband of Mary, the virgin visited by the Holy Spirit
14	King David	Josiah (Josi'as)	Jesus Christ, the Messiah

- These are fourteen of the generations from Abraham to King David;
- and fourteen from King David's time to the exile;
- and fourteen from the exile to Christ."
- Judah was only the fourth son of Jacob.
- Matthew omits three generations (Kings) after Joram -- namely Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah (1 Chron. 3:11-12).
- Even in Ezra 7:1-5, six generations of priesthood are omitted, compared to 1 Chron. 6:3-15, thus such an omission in Hebrew genealogies is not peculiar to Matthew's religious considerations.
- He names Zerah (Zara) as well as Perez (Phares) and mentions the brothers of Judah and of Jeconiah, which is unusual.
- Rachab and Ruth are gentiles.
- Abiud through Matthan are not found in the Old Testament, but taken from a public registry.

Matthew gave the names of those who were heirs to the Davidic throne, compared to Luke's genealogy from Jesus to Adam that records that of the physical descent with his humanity. Both make plain his virgin birth, and therefore his deity.

APPLICATION:

Everything we do in obedience to God, no matter how small, is significant. Just as Ruth was unaware of this larger purpose in her life, we will never know the full purpose and importance of our lives until we are able to look back on the whole picture from the perspective of eternity. We must make our choices with God's eternal values in mind. Because of Ruth's faithful obedience, her life and legacy carried great significance even though she couldn't see the end result. Live in faithfulness to God, knowing that the significance will extend beyond your lifetime!

⁶ <http://www.mazzaroth.com/ChapterSix/MatthewsGenealogy.htm>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>