

**LESSON 1**  
December 1, 2024

**Unit I: Jesus, the Heir of David**  
**A Noble Family Tree**

**DEVOTIONAL READING:** Galatians 4:1-7  
**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:** Ruth 1-4; Luke 3:23-38  
**PRINT PASSAGES:** Ruth 4:9-17; Luke 3:23, 31b-32

**KEY VERSE**

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)

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The women living there said, **“Naomi has a son!”** And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. (Ruth 4:17, NIV)

**Lesson Aims**

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- Examine the significance of David’s family tree as it relates to the ancestry of Jesus.
- Marvel at God’s choice to live among us as a human being with a human family.
- Trace the demonstrated faith of their ancestors (either personally or as a congregation) by constructing a “spiritual” family tree.

**\*Key Terms**

**Blessed (Ruth 4:14)**—Hebrew: *barak* (baw-rak’): knelt; favored; “praise” (NIV).

**Give(s) (Ruth 4:12)**—Hebrew: *nathan* (naw-than’): put(s); set(s); bestow(s).

**Kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 4:14)**—Hebrew: *gaal* (gaw-al’): one who redeems, acts as a “kinsman” (KJV); close relative; “guardian-redeemer” (NIV). In this context, “redeem” refers to being the next of kin responsible for buying back a relative’s property, marrying his widow, etc.

**Prosperity (Ruth 4:11)**—Hebrew: *chayil* (khah’-yil): strength, efficiency, wealth, army; “standing” (NIV); “thou worthily” (KJV).

**Took (Ruth 4:16)**—Hebrew: *laqach* (law-kakh’): accepted; acquired; brought; kept.

**Widow (Ruth 4:10, NIV)**—Hebrew: *ishshah* (ish-shaw’): woman; wife; a female whose husband is deceased.

\*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)



### The Biblical Context

The book of Ruth was written to the Israelites during the chaotic period of the judges. No author is named, but tradition credits the prophet Samuel as its composer between 1011 and 931 BC. Set against the backdrop of the Gentile country of Moab, the book records a memorable account of human love and devotion and God's rewarding kindness by extending mercy to those who demonstrate compassion toward others. Ruth's steps were orchestrated and guided by God as she renounced her idolatrous faith to embrace Naomi's, followed her back to Judah, and chose to connect with God's people instead of hers. Several significant themes emerge from this book. One of these, the kinsman-redeemer theme, foreshadows Christ, the promised Messiah, Ruth's descendant through her husband, Boaz, and David's ancestor. As outlined in the Mosaic Law, Boaz fulfilled his responsibility to redeem an impoverished relative. Likewise, God sent His only Son to redeem the spiritually impoverished from sin's bondage. Ruth's unlikely marriage to Boaz also revealed the wideness of God's grace and demonstrated God's desire to include all humanity in fulfilling His divine purposes.

## Introduction

In a blog post dated September 26, 2017, Rachel Coleman emphasized the contemporary significance of family history on Family Search. According to Coleman, understanding, documenting, and safeguarding family history directly impacts individuals, their families, and future generations. To bolster her argument, she quoted Marcus Garvey, who aptly noted, "A people without knowledge of their history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots." There is a relevant parallel between a tree's survival and the importance of family history. Just as roots anchor a tree in the soil, maintain its stability, and facilitate its growth, our awareness and preservation of family history offer numerous advantages to us, our families, and society.

A grasp of our unique family history establishes our core cultural identity, fostering connections across generations, promoting compassion, nurturing resilience, and enhancing our sense of self-worth. Additionally, delving into family history transcends names and dates on a family tree; it involves discovering vibrant individuals from whom we descend individuals who endured challenges, celebrated triumphs, and experienced the full spectrum of life. This personal connection highlights the profound significance of their lives. And yet, while the exploration of family history has recently gained popularity, it is far from new. Among God's chosen people, the Israelites, family histories served various purposes, including validating ethnic heritage, securing land inheritances, determining eligibility for priesthood service, and tracing the

lineage of the Messiah.

The Old Testament clearly indicated that the Messiah would be a descendant of David's. However, records of Jesus' connection to David include some unconventional entries. Notably, the lineage features men and women with histories marked by sin, and women with mixed Gentile heritage. One of these women is Ruth, the Moabitess, who became David's grandmother and Christ's ancestor. Despite these unconventional aspects, Jesus' family tree is noble because of God's grace and concern for the salvation of all humanity, thus emphasizing the inclusive and redemptive nature of His earthly family lineage.

## ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

### Redemption Accomplished (*Ruth 4:9-12*)

#### KJV

9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem:

12 And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

#### NIV

9 Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelek, Kilion and Mahlon.

10 "I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from his hometown. Today you are witnesses!"

11 Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.

12 "Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

Ruth 4 marks the culmination of the narrative, illustrating how a Gentile woman became part of the lineage of David and Christ. The story begins with Naomi, her husband, Elimelech, and their sons Mahlon and Chilion's leaving Bethlehem to escape a severe famine in Judah. Tragically, Elimelech and his sons died in Moab, leaving Naomi and her daughters-in-law as widows. Upon learning that the famine ended, Naomi, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Ruth, returned to Bethlehem. Naomi encouraged Ruth to seek the assistance of Boaz, a wealthy landowner and relative, to redeem her land and provide an heir to continue the family legacy. The legal transaction initiated by Boaz is detailed in verses 1-8, where he claimed the right of redemption and called Bethlehem's elders as witnesses.

Boaz officially took possession of Naomi's property, married Ruth, and pledged to raise a son to perpetuate the names of Elimelech and Mahlon (**verses 9-10**). The elders and onlookers joyously and willingly acknowledged the legality of this transaction (**verses 11-12**). In their prayers, the elders expressed hopes for Ruth's fertility, likening her to Jacob's wives, Rachel and

Leah, and prayed for Boaz to become renowned in Bethlehem. Additionally, they invoked blessings for Boaz to be the father of distinguished offspring, likening him to Perez, Judah's son, by Tamar, another Gentile woman used in God's plan of redemption. Although the elders' reference to Perez is not explicitly explained, it is understood that Bethlehemites were Perez's descendants. Their prayer was fulfilled, as Boaz and Ruth's union led to the birth of David, Israel's greatest king, and that of the eternal king, Jesus Christ.

Two spiritual principles are embedded in Boaz's selfless and compassionate act of serving as a kinsman-redeemer. First, Boaz serves as a type of Christ, the ultimate kinsman-redeemer. Second, his unconditional acceptance of Ruth, a Moabite woman, mirrors God's acceptance of all those in need of redemption into His family. Legally, she was redeemed according to Jewish Law, but spiritually she became a "branch" in Jesus Christ's noble family tree.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How does Boaz's attitude and behavior mirror God's character, and what can the faith community learn about and apply to its ministry to others?

## Redemption Rewarded (*Ruth 4:13-17; Luke 3:23, 31b-32*)

### KJV

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.

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.

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.

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

17 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.

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23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

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31 which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David,

32 Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson.

### NIV

13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

14 The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!"



15 “He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.”

16 Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him.

17 The women living there said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

.....

23 Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli,

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31 the son of Nathan, the son of David,

32 the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon.

Faithfulness to God has its rewards. **Ruth 4:13** is a brief but powerful climax to Ruth’s story and the extraordinary blessing accompanying Naomi’s and her redemption through Boaz. Ruth became Boaz’s wife and was blessed by the Lord to conceive and bear a son. God replaced Ruth and Naomi’s despair and sorrow with joy. The women who had witnessed Naomi’s emptiness upon her return to Bethlehem praised God for her deliverance by a kinsman-redeemer, Boaz, and requested that God make her name famous in Israel (**Ruth 4:14**). As the women continued to praise God for her redemption and restoration, they predicted her ongoing care through Boaz and declared Ruth to be better than seven sons to her (**Ruth 4:15**). For Hebrew families, the addition of seven sons would be regarded as an extraordinary blessing from God. Naomi lost two sons, but God gave her a devoted daughter-in-law, arguably better than seven sons, who became the mother of a grandson—a source of great joy for her old age.

Naomi became her grandson’s nurse (**Ruth 4:16**), and the women of Bethlehem named him Obed, meaning “worshipper” (**Ruth 4:17a**). This marked the beginning of a lineage that unfolded over time: Obed fathered Jesse, Jesse fathered David, and David became the ancestor of Jesus, the promised Messiah (**Ruth 4:17b**). As generations pass, God’s redemptive purpose becomes increasingly apparent, unfolding through diverse individuals with human flaws, moral and spiritual failings, and varied cultural backgrounds—as illustrated in **Ruth 4:18-22**; **Luke 3:23, 31b-32**; and **Matthew 1:1-17**. The unlikely marriage of a Jewish male and a Moabite woman in this context is an example in point. Equally significant is the evident grace that God extends freely to all who accept the salvation He offers through the eternal Kinsman-Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How can the faith community consistently follow God’s example and demonstrate inclusiveness as His redemptive agents today?

### A Closing Thought

Modern Bible readers often skip the reading of biblical “family trees” because of the long lists of difficult names. However, we must not overlook their value and spiritual insight into

God's sovereign will and nondiscriminatory use of everyday men and women to fulfill His eternal plan. The book of Ruth's climaxing verses are an informative and reassuring example. Beginning with verse 17 through verse 22, the author of the book of Ruth provides a brief family tree, looking back nearly nine hundred years to Jacob's time and forward one hundred years to David's coming reign and the fulfillment of the hope for a messianic King and kingdom through one of his descendants. This hope was realized with the Advent of the Lord, Jesus Christ, through David's grandfather Obed and great-grandson of Ruth and Boaz.

## Your Life

Ruth's story and David's family tree illustrate the inclusiveness of God's plan to redeem humanity beyond ethnicity, social status, and gender. Therefore, as you celebrate this Advent season, show your appreciation and gratitude for being included in God's "spiritual family tree" by an intentional act of generosity toward someone regarded as an outsider by the broader society.

## Your World!

Ruth and Naomi were redeemed by Boaz, who became their kinsman-redeemer. The unlikely marriage of Ruth, a Moabitess, to Boaz led to King David's birth and, ultimately, Jesus Christ, humanity's Kinsman-Redeemer. During this season of Advent, consider how you and your congregation can minister to the "left-outs" and "dropouts" in your community as God's redemptive agents working His plan to reconcile fallen humanity.



## Closing Prayer

Dear God, thank You for revealing Your will to redeem the lost through David and Christ's family tree. During this Advent season, may we follow Your example of compassionate inclusiveness as we proclaim the blessing of Christ's coming to save us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Conclusion

### (Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

As you prepare for next week's lesson, consider your response to this question: "Why should we prioritize building spiritual legacies?"

Home Daily Bible Readings		
MONDAY, December 2	"The Lord Looks on the Heart"	(1 Samuel 16:1-13)
TUESDAY, December 3	"A Shepherd for God's People"	(2 Samuel 5:1-10)
WEDNESDAY, December 4	"Christ's Unending Reign"	(Luke 1:26-38)
THURSDAY, December 5	"God Defends His Anointed"	(Psalm 2)
FRIDAY, December 6	"Endless Peace for David's Throne"	(Isaiah 9:1-7)
SATURDAY, December 7	"The Son of David"	(Romans 1:1-7)
SUNDAY, December 8	"An Everlasting Kingdom"	(2 Samuel 7:4-17)