



Lesson 1 November 30th, 2024

The Ancestry of King David

Study Scripture – Ruth 4:9-17; Luke 3:23, 31-32

Background Scripture – Isaiah 7:13-14; Isaiah 9

Key Verse:

*“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

INTRODUCTION

Our Lesson Study is the study of the creative work of God. God uses a simple country family in a small village in Israel to build a family and then bring a child into the world, establishing hope for humanity where there was none before. God had to bring redemption, remove sorrow, bring joy, meet the needs of people who were living in poverty, victim of famine and practically destitute for the benefit of the local people in Israel. He would then extend redemption for the benefit of the entire world.

One writer calls this the story of the romance of redemption. We should therefore particular attention to how these persons behaved and how God taught them about His promise. He states that in a fascinating way God brings us the little Book of Ruth

“to illustrate the dramatic truths of the Christian faith expounded in the New Testament. It is a word picture in the Old Testament illustrative of the truth we find in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians tells us

***‘Now these things happened to them as a warning (literally as a type), but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come’.* 1 Corinthians 10:11.**

This story is over three thousand years old, but the character of the people involved, the pressures of life they lived under and the tensions that existed between them are exactly the same as the pressures of life we live under today. The tensions we experience today are similar to those they experienced in their relationships.

They had dreams and expectations, but these were shattered dreams, and their hope had to be rebuilt.

So when we look at how these men and women communicated with each other, the fears they had, the possibilities in their life they wanted to materialize, the work they did, the prayers they prayed, the frustrations they experienced, we see ourselves.

The context is therefore very important if we are to understand this creative work of God, for this context shows us the nature and the character of God Almighty, when He works, how He works, and how His promises unfold. His patience, His mercy, His compassions, and how He brings about His promise made in Genesis 3:15 will amaze us. This will lead to our praise and our giving Him honour and the glory He fully deserves.

This is not just a love story but a Lesson in the grace of God, and how people reacted to it.

This Book of Ruth begins with famine and people desperately trying to survive, moving outside of the gracious provision of God and making choices that lead to disaster for them. The choices leads to death, but it ends with a fruitful harvest and the birth of a son what would bring joy, happiness, and the redemption of what had been lost.

This is the time of the Judges, the most awful time in the history of the nation of Israel. This was a time when disobedience to the way God had laid down for the people predominated. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes. Everyone had established themselves as god, making decisions which over and over again led to disaster. They sinned, worshipped false gods and following the examples of the nations around them that they had been told not to copy. They thus went into defeat and slavery and when they cried out to God for deliverance, God sent Judges, warrior leaders, who fought the enemies and delivered them. But once the Judges died the people slipped back into idolatry, lovelessness and violence and their subjugation started all over again. This was the cycle of disobedience, constant sin, and the logical end was degradation and disaster.

God now sent famine to discipline them and bring them back to faith.

In this time of famine in Israel we are told that a man named Elimelech, the name means **“My God is King”**, but he did not live that way, married a woman named Naomi, which means **“pleasure”**, though like her husband the essence of the name was never shown.

Note they both stepped out of the limits God had set for them, for they stepped out of the Promised Land to go and live among pagans who lived in dark idolatry.

Interestingly, they had two sons, Mahlon which means **“sick”** and Chilion which means **“pining away”**. While they were in the pagan land of Moab the boys married Moabite girls, Ruth, which means **“beauty”** and Orpah which means **“fawn”**, a little young deer.

Then, Elimelech died, Mahlon died, and Chilion died leaving Naomi, Ruth and Orpah alone. Naomi in Ruth 1:20 thus declared her name was not Naomi anymore but told those seeing her as she returned to Bethlehem

“call me Mara....for the Almighty ...the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me’.

Note very carefully, for God will have us to learn these lessons of life, Naomi and her daughters-in-law were alone for the men in their lives had died after being victims of famine. Now the



three women who had likely enjoyed a bit of good living in this pagan country that did not belong to Naomi or her Jewish family, had poverty face them.

In those days women depended on the males to survive.

But these women decided to face life together, with Naomi deciding that her circumstances would dictate how she should respond to life, and even though she acknowledged God was there, she felt free to act in a hard way, feel bitter, and go back to Israel with bitterness, not the favour of God, dominating her heart.

But this woman who lived by “What you see is what you get”, when she is treated bitterly, she gets hard and bitter, was not alone for the two girls decided to return with her to her home in Bethlehem in Judah instead of remaining in the dark pagan land of Moab, a land where they had learned there was no real spirituality, and no true God.

These girls had been introduced to the Living God and they both had learned they had to trust Him to look after them.

The light had shined in the darkness.

Both girls had been confronted by the same truth, but it now appeared that one of them had only been emotionally stirred and had only made a ‘soulish’ commitment, having only a superficial view of the glory and the person of God. She had not actually met the Lord in her spirit.

So as the three women journeyed the superficial change that had occurred made one of the girls want to go back to her own people, her own gods, and her own faith in paganism.

When Naomi pointed out the difficulties they would face in Bethlehem, Orpah decided to go back to her family and no longer trust God to care for her. She kissed Naomi and Ruth and left to go back.

Note that it was not easy to tell the difference between the two girls until they stopped to face up to what their decisions would involve going to depend on the God of Israel as presented by the bitter –filled Naomi. She had told both girls:

“Go, return each to her mother’s house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt, with the dead and with me.

The Lord grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband.

So she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, “Surely we will return with you to your people”.

But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go—for I am too old to have a husband....For it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me!”.....

Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her,



And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law".

We now see a beautiful picture of the two kinds of commitments that are made to Jesus Christ. Many times we will see two people living under the same set of circumstances, having deep and serious troubles, being confronted with the same truth, make a commitment to Jesus, but the quality of the commitment varies markedly, as the Parable of the Soils told by Jesus makes clear.

But see in the other daughter-in-law Ruth whose name was "**beauty**" the marvelous commitment where she was wholly belonging to God, body, soul, and spirit. She responded to Naomi's unrighteous advice:

"Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me".

So they both Naomi and Ruth travelled hopefully together back to Bethlehem for Naomi had heard that God had visited His people and there was no longer the discipline of famine.

The questions we can now ask is, first, Is your God too small?
Second, Are you like Ruth being a light shining in a dark place?
Third, How does God's plan to bring redemption really operate?
Does He work in the grand palaces of the rich, the powerful, and the wealthy, or does He work in the small places, lifting up the poor and those with little status, showing His power and might, knowing fully well that only those that have been taken through the fire and know their helplessness and dependence on God are in the vast majority of cases the chosen ones?

Note the provisions made by God and revealed in the Old Testament to meet the needs of people. God knows the poor will always exist. He knows that the powerful will always live by the ways of hypocrisy and treat those who have no strength carelessly. Naomi and Ruth are poor and helpless. They now have to depend on the welfare system existing in Israel. As unmarried women they are at the bottom of the heap. They are vulnerable.

We therefore are told of the law with regard to the rights of the poor God had established. This is the law of "**gleaning**". The poor could go into the fields at harvest time and pick up the grain that had fallen, for the harvesters and owners of the fields under the law had to leave those leftovers for the poor to pick up or "**glean**". The field could not be stripped clean of produce. Daily bread for the poor should always be there. Leviticus 19:9-10.

Second, we are told of the **go'el**, the close relative spoken of in Leviticus 25, who if a family fell into poverty and had to sell their property or sell themselves into slavery, the **go'el** or kinsman



redeemer was to step in and on behalf of the family buy back the property so the land would not be lost to the family.

The third rule of law established by God was that of the Levirate marriage. One writer describes this:

“If a married man died without children, either a brother or some near relative (*levir*) was to marry his widow and father a child by her. The child would have the name of the man who had died, again so his property would not be lost to the clan ensuring that he would have progeny, so that memory of him would extend into the future”.

Leviticus25:5-6.

Note how beautiful the Lord God Almighty is. He made provision for the daily bread of His people.

He put in place a system that if tragedy occurred, there was someone to pay the price to restore the freedom of those forced by circumstances into slavery.

He also provided for a home for when death had happened in the family leaving the surviving women and widows or orphans helpless.

One writer then brings us to the real meaning of this story of Ruth:

“All of these things point to spiritual realities in Christ. He is the one whose power gives us what we need each day. He is the one who has bought us out of slavery to sin, and He is the one in whom we hope for the future.

The Christian message is that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; he has come near to us and he offers us life”.

The women who were destitute come to Bethlehem. They have to glean to survive.

Ruth knows about this “right to glean’ and in Ruth 2:2 she tells Naomi she will go to glean. She certainly understands the needs, the provision of grace God has made for her and Naomi, and she is willing to work and enjoy this grace.

She is not bitter like Naomi. She trusts God and His care.

She goes to the field and happened unknown to her, to go to the field owned by her family’s *go’el* named Boaz. His name means ‘wealth’ and ‘strength’

Do you believe in things ‘just happening’? Have things happened to you and you later come to realize those “happenings” are by divine appointment?

Have you ever remembered little Zacchaeus in Luke 19:2 who **just happened** to climb up the tree under which Jesus would walk?

Or did the woman of Samaria who **“just happened”** in John 4:7 to “just come” to the well at the right time to encounter Jesus who was alone and able to talk to her?

Does “boy” meet “girl” by divine appointment, or do they arrange “meetings” themselves and hope things will turn out all right?



When Ruth comes home from gleaning and tells Naomi where she gleaned the lights went off in Naomi's head and she "remembered" Boaz was a likely kinsman redeemer who could provide for her and Ruth.

She gives Ruth advice as to how to deal with Boaz, but Ruth complies but not completely with her advice on how to behave to attract Boaz.

But it all "works out". Boaz is attracted to her and she to him. Boaz is an older man, and he seems to regard highly Ruth's character and behaviour and agrees to see if marriage to Ruth and security for her and Naomi might be possible.

The levirate marriage provision by God to a kinsman redeemer is now a clear possibility.

Is all this an accident? Just happened?

Chapter 4 now reveals that there is a stumbling block, a catch in the situation that might bring all the dreams of the bitter Naomi and the faithful Ruth to a crashing halt.

Why would God allow that?

Here is a woman of excellence who is not only beautiful, but has shown a remarkable commitment to cling to the God of Israel and forsake the spiritual evils of Moab. Did not God arrange her to be in that childless marriage to the Jewish man Mahlon?

She had shown us she had the heart of a servant and God had worked in the heart of this woman who had been an idol worshipper to teach her how best to live for that meant serving others.

And here was Boaz, an older man descended from Rahab the Canaanite harlot who had saved the life of the spies from Israel and helped Joshua in the conquest, and who had been brought into the people of Israel.

There is no sign he had been married, but he certainly showed caring for the gleaners and for those young women who gleaned in his fields.

So how would God bring them from being apart and put them like Rahab and others in the line of the Messiah, the ultimate kinsman Redeemer?

How would God deal with the stumbling block facing them?

THE TEXT

We now have 4 sets of persons in this drama.

There are Ruth the beautiful, faithful and godly Moabitess,

- Boaz the Jewish man who is not only mature and godly but is willing to act as the *go'el*, and allow bountiful gleaning to take place, and even adopt the role of kinsman redeemer,
- the grumbling Naomi who questions, is frustrated, and struggles to trust God, and
- the townspeople of Bethlehem who as a group will see what is happening to the bitter Naomi and will react in a chorus to how God had changed her and redeemed.



Note these all are ordinary people who lived in difficult time on the land and who had to learn to depend on God for their survival..

Nothing marked them out as different from us. They were not geniuses or people of royalty.

They suffered as we do for they lived in a fallen world. God had to use their suffering to build their faith as He has to do with us. God had to deal with those who are frustrated and who struggled with their faith and who questioned His caring hand.

They had to show risky faith. We have to do the same.

Ruth showed this kind of faith. Boaz did too. The people of Bethlehem who never left during the famine showed this kind of faith.

Naomi had to be brought to the place where she would have this kind of faith.

They all lived through things which were not seen but they relied on God who could see, a God who was trustworthy.

Verse 1-8.

It had turned out that though Boaz wanted to help Naomi and Ruth there was another relative closer to them who had the right to act as the *go'el*. He was first in line to redeem the land of Naomi's dead husband.

Boaz had advised Ruth he would have to go and offer this man the right to redeem the land and if the man wanted to marry Ruth that would be his right. Boaz would have to see if the man wanted to exercise his right before he knew he would be next in line.

This obstacle had to be removed, and Boaz confronted the man and told him he had the right to redeem the land. Verses 3-6.

But when the man agreed to do that, Boaz skillfully brought forward the matter of Ruth, his ace in the hole, pointing out the man would have to marry Ruth for that was his right.

The man was willing to redeem the land but not to marry Ruth and so the skillful negotiator Boaz arranged for the bargain for the nearer relative to withdraw from his rights.

Verses 6-7.

The bargain was stuck so that Boaz would now move up to be first in line to redeem the land and as well to marry Ruth and produce an heir to carry on the name of Elimelech as the law required.

As was the custom the sandal was removed as require by Deuteronomy 25:8-30 and the close relative handed his right over to Boaz.

Note how God managed the situation and the wisdom He gave to Boaz. God ensured that the line He wanted to put in place was in fact put in place.

Verse 9.



The formalities were done before witnesses and Boaz publicly declared he had bought from Naomi all that belonged to her dead husband and her dead sons.

Verse 10. Boaz also publicly declared he had bought the rights to the widow of Mahlon to be his wife. As the law required the child they would have would be given the name of the deceased so that the name to ownership of the land and their inheritance would continue in perpetuity.

So the picture is clear. Jesus has taken over all of the estate of men who in Adam had fallen. He would redeem every man, woman, and child just as the estate of Elimelech, Mahlon and Chilion had been redeemed.

But what about Orpah?

Ruth but not Orpah was now involved in the activities of Boaz the *go'el* and she too could have been redeemed. But she had turned back to her own people and her own gods, and was never heard about again. She had no part in the inheritance though Boaz had bought the entire inheritance of her husband Chilion.

The elders of Israel had witnessed the transaction, and all was finalized.

Verse 11. All the people at the gates of the city agreed that they were witnesses to the arrangement finalized by Boaz.

They declared that this lovely couple had to be blessed. They were given the blessing of Rachel and Leah the mothers of the entire nation of Israel. Those two women had 13 children between them and so this was a big blessing that the marriage that would now occur would be fruitful and produce many children of value.

The blessing continued to have them prosper in Bethlehem Ephrathah and become famous in that town.

Verse 12. It was prayed that their house be like the house of Perez. We see his story in Genesis 38:27-30. Perez was the son born to Tamar who had conceived by Judah, from whom the Messiah would come. One scholar explains why Perez was so important:

“Trapp on *May your house be like the house of Perez:*

“That breach-maker, as the midwife called him, because he would needs be born before his brother, and carried away the first birthright: and afterwards became happy in a numerous and honourable posterity”.

”Indeed, it seems that Pharez was the ancestor of the Bethlehemites in general (1Chronicles 2:5, 18.50).

Moreover, Pharez gave his name to the section of the tribe of Judah that was descended from him (Numbers 26:20).” (Morris)

Verse 13. Ruth and Boaz got married and they had a child. Note Ruth was married to Mahlon for about 10 years (1:4) and she had remained childless.



So it would appear it was the hand of God that made her conceive and so she was barren no more and bore a son.

Verse 14. The women of the town now was said to turn to Naomi, telling her she has no longer any reason to be bitter.

Yahweh had allowed suffering for she and the daughters-in-law had lost husbands. But now Yahweh had provided a *go'el* to provide for both Naomi and Ruth.

One scholar analyses why the language does not indicate the women regarded Boaz as the true redeemer though he had done the act of satisfying the task of the *go'el* and as the new husband in the levirate marriage would be normally regarded as the redeemer.

He believes that in this case the language used had a wider meaning and pointed to a different redeemer. He states:

“However, in this instance, go'el refers to the baby. There are several reasons for believing this.

First, the women's pronouncing follows directly on the birth of the child, not on the marriage.

Second, the reference to the redeemer (the go'el) continues without interruption to the end of v. 15, where he is described as born of Ruth.

Third, the women hope that his name will be famous in Israel, thus expanding the horizon of the previous blessing at the gate that looked for a child to “bestow a name in Bethlehem” (Sakenfeld)

Notice they turn to “bitter” frustrated Naomi and blesses her in verses 14-16.

“Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel!

And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of you old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him”

Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him”.

Verse 15. The women have emphasized that God will do a great deal to make her heart right. They know she has been bitter and angry with God. She was lonely for she had counted on the men in her life to sustain her. But now things had been put right.

Very important for her, the Moabite Ruth was more to her than seven sons, seven sons being an ideal family.

In verse 16 she has taken the baby in her arms and is fitted in the role of grandmother previously denied her.

Verse 17. It tells us that the women gave the child a name, a highly unusual action. The name was tied to Naomi and the women said the child was born to Naomi. This reflected the fact the baby was really regarded as the child of the deceased Mahlon, Ruth's first husband and grandson to her and Elimelech her deceased husband.



The son was finally named Obed, meaning one who serves, a shortening of the name Obadiah, which means “servant of Jehovah”.

The verse makes it clear this child was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, Israel’s greatest king.

LUKE 3

The genealogy also includes these descendants into the line of Jesus the Messiah, and it traces the line of Jesus through Mary. Rahab, Boaz, Ruth, Obed, Jesse are in the line of David who was in the line of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

In the genealogy of Matthew the accuracy of the line is corroborated. Salmon is noted as the father of Boaz by Rahab (the harlot) and Boaz became the father of Obed by Ruth (the foreigner), and Obed became the father of Jesse who became the father of David.

Hence God’s covenant with Abram shows the incorporation of Gentiles in the line of the Messiah. All the nations were blessed because of this promise.

CONCLUSION

Every difficulty, uncertainty, broken heart was used by God to show He had provided something much better than we understood.

God is meticulous and very carefully in making sure His determinations are fulfilled.

Everybody is included for they loved God. God finds a way to bless even Naomi and those sick of soul were healed.

You will taste life in a sharper, better way when you come to God.

All the genealogies show David as the King came though the line of Rahab, Boaz and Ruth, Obed, and Jesse, the line eventually leading to Jacob, the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary from whom Jesus the Christ was born.

God had clearly planned to bring Ruth and Boaz together. They lived in Bethlehem, the place where Jesus, the final Kinsman Redeemer would come to enter into the world.

The images in this little Book are quite clear so that all can understand how God works. His hand is all over this story.

Remember that God works out His purposes in every succeeding generation.

God has a purpose for your life too. Pay attention to what the Holy Spirit is telling you. You too are fellow heirs of the grace of life.

