

From Ruth to Jesus

The Family Line in Ruth 4 and Matthew 1

The book of Ruth ends with a list of names (Ruth 4:18-22). It is easy to skip, but it shows where the whole story was heading. The New Testament opens with that same list and carries it all the way to Jesus (Matthew 1:1-16). Matthew also does something unusual for an ancient family record: he stops to mention five women.

God promised Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him (Genesis 12:3).

One of Jacob's twelve sons. Israel's kings were promised to come from his tribe (Genesis 49:10).

The ten names that close the book of Ruth

Ruth 4:18-22

God promised David a descendant whose kingdom would never end (2 Samuel 7:12-16).

The kings of Judah, the exile in Babylon, and the long wait that followed.

Joseph was the legal father of Jesus, not His biological father (Matthew 1:18-25).

Born in Bethlehem, the same town where Ruth gleaned and David kept sheep (1 Samuel 17:15; Matthew 2:1).

Abraham

then Isaac, then Jacob

Judah

Perez

Hezron

Ram

Amminadab

Nahshon

Salmon

Boaz

the redeemer

Obed

Jesse

David

the king

Solomon

24 more names
Matthew 1:7-15

Joseph

the husband of Mary

JESUS

who is called Christ

Tamar A widow denied the heir she was owed. Judah admitted, "She has been more righteous than I" (Genesis 38:26).

Leader of the tribe of Judah in the days of Moses (Numbers 2:3).

Rahab A woman of Jericho with a shameful past who hid Israel's spies and trusted Israel's God (Joshua 2; Matthew 1:5).

Ruth A widow from Moab who chose Naomi's people and Naomi's God: "your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16).

The baby laid in Naomi's lap (Ruth 4:16-17).

"Jesse the Bethlehemite" (1 Samuel 16:1).

Bathsheba Matthew calls her "her who had been the wife of Uriah," a reminder of David's great sin (2 Samuel 11-12).

Mary A virgin from Nazareth, who gave birth to Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26-38).

Ruth's story was never small.

A widow gleaned in a field was carrying the line of Israel's greatest king, and of the Savior.

God welcomes outsiders.

Rahab came from Jericho and Ruth from Moab. Jesus' own family tree shows who He came for.

Grace runs through brokenness.

Scripture does not hide this family's failures. God kept His promise through all of it.

Family lines in the Bible sometimes skip generations, so "begot" can mean "was the ancestor of." This chart follows Matthew 1. Luke 3:23-38 records the line from David through a different son, Nathan.

Scripture references follow the New King James Version (NKJV).

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