

THE ANCESTRY OF KING DAVID

Daily Bible Readings			
M	Nov. 25	Luke 3:23–38	We Belong to Christ's Family
T	Nov. 26	Ps. 128	A Household Built by God
W	Nov. 27	Ruth 1:1, 3, 6–18	Determined Loyalty
Th	Nov. 28	Ruth 2:1–3, 17–23	An Act of Kindness
F	Nov. 29	Matt. 12:46–50	Bound Together by More Than DNA
Sa	Nov. 30	Ruth 3:1–13	Daring Faith

MAIN IDEA

Jesus's and King David's family tree features an unlikely marriage between Boaz and Ruth, a testimony to the wideness of God's grace to affect divine purposes.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1–4; Luke 3:23–38

A VERSE TO REMEMBER

The women . . . gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David. (Ruth 4:17)

PREPARING TO LEAD

- Pray for participants and for yourself as leader. Reflect on lesson 1, "The Ancestry of King David" (Participant's Book, p. 1).
- Familiarize yourself with the context of Ruth 4. It will be helpful to read Ruth 1–4.
- Provide Bibles, Participant's Books, Worship Leaflets for lesson 1, name tags, paper, and pens.
- Obtain an Advent wreath and candles or four taper candles and a white pillar candle, as well as a means to light these.
- Step 6 offers additional options from which to choose.

LEADING THE LESSON

Opening Worship

1. Gathering

- Greet participants and provide name tags. Invite volunteers to tell the group an interesting story about their relatives or their family tree. Discuss how family stories give insight into who we are and where we come from.
- Distribute Bibles, Participant’s Books, and Worship Leaflets for lesson 1.
- Formulate and get consensus on some simple ground rules for the study (for example, welcoming diverse points of view, maintaining confidentiality, and so on).

2. Morning Prayer 1

Worship Leaflet, lesson 1

- If you use an Advent wreath, light one of the taper candles.
- Light the white pillar candle, noting that it is a tangible reminder of the presence of the risen Christ.
- Encourage participants to settle into silence.
- Invite volunteers to lead portions of Morning Prayer from the Worship Leaflet, beginning with the Opening Sentences and ending after the Hymn.

Teaching Tip
<p>Beginning the Advent season with the Old Testament story of Ruth and Boaz is a departure from typical Advent studies. The story of Ruth, great-grandmother of David, includes migration, poverty, a mixed-marriage, and redemptive love. The central characters are two widows, the elderly Naomi and the non-Israelite immigrant Ruth.</p> <p>With deep loyalty, Ruth follows her mother-in-law to Israel, where the women have few resources or family connections. Ruth finds employment, staving off their poverty. Boaz, Ruth’s employer, accepts familial responsibility for Naomi and her deceased husband’s property. He marries Ruth. The two conceive a son, Obed. The family’s lineage continues.</p>

SCRIPTURE

Luke 3:23, 31–32; Ruth 4:9–17

3:23 Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli . . .

³¹son of Nathan, son of David, ³²son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, son of Sala, son of Nahshon.

4:9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses today that I have acquired from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife, to maintain the dead man’s name on his inheritance, in order that the name of the dead may not be cut off from his kindred and from the gate of his native place; today you are witnesses.” ¹¹Then all the people who were at the gate, along with the elders, said, “We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you produce children in Ephrathah and bestow a name in Bethlehem; ¹²and, through the children that the LORD will give you by this young woman, may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.”

¹³So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. When they came together, the LORD made her conceive, and she bore a son. ¹⁴Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin, and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him.” ¹⁶Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom and became his nurse. ¹⁷The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Note: Find Scripture Notes for this reading following the lesson.

Bible Study

3. Scripture Reading

Participant’s Book, p. 2

- Assign parts for narrator, Boaz, elders and people (all participants), women (all women), Naomi. Invite participants to read Ruth 4:9–17. Ask participants what surprises them in these verses.
- Option: Read aloud Ruth 4:9–17. Discuss what they have heard or read about the biblical story of Ruth. What stands out about her story?
- Option: Read Ruth 4:9–17. Reflect on the meaning of the name *Ruth*, “compassionate,” “sorrowful for the plight of another.” Who is a “Ruth” to you? Give thanks for that person.
- Encourage participants to reflect further on these verses as they continue in the lesson’s exploration.

4. **A Heritage Grounded in Character** Participant's Book, p. 3

- Ruth's commitment to Naomi to leave her home in Moab and return to Naomi's home in Bethlehem was one way Ruth was a "restorer of life" for Naomi. In what other ways did Ruth restore life for Naomi?
- Boaz, as one of Naomi's remaining kinsmen, had rights to buy or acquire all property of Naomi's deceased husband, Elimelech, including daughter-in-law Ruth, the Moabite. Discuss benefits, responsibilities, and challenges of receiving these inheritances. What can be surmised about Boaz's character from this acquisition and his treatment of Ruth and Naomi?
- Discuss whether Boaz's acquisition, and later marriage, of Ruth was out of obligation, love, or both. Imagine Ruth's feelings in being acquired, married, and impregnated by Boaz. How will Ruth and her offspring build up the house of Israel?
- In groups or together, read Numbers 27:8–11; Deuteronomy 25:5–6; Numbers 5:5–8; and Deuteronomy 27:19. What do these laws reveal about family lineage and responsibility? What do they indicate about how God's laws offer care for God's people? How do these laws affect Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz?

5. **Faithful Character Reflects God's Nature** Participant's Book, p. 4

- Form groups to discuss Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi, respectively. In each group, discuss the character's feelings at the beginning of the narrative, the actions they took in the middle, and the feelings they showed at the end. What do we learn about God through the telling of this story?
- Review the message spoken to Naomi by the women (vv. 14–17). How are God's purposes advanced in providing Naomi a next-of-kin and an heir in the lineage of Jesse? How do divine purposes interplay with human decisions in this story? in your life? in the world?
- Consider how Ruth's story, a Moabite woman, who became David's great-grandmother, includes migration, poverty, a mixed-marriage, and redemptive love. How were these things viewed during the time of Ruth? How are they considered today? What does their inclusion in both the Bible and the lineage of Jesus say about God's perspective on them?
- In what ways does the story of Ruth encourage you and speak to you of the wideness of God's provision and grace?

6. **Stepping into the World** Participant's Book, p. 5

- Ruth and Naomi were widows who depended on the compassion of others. Who are people in your life who rely on the compassion

of others? Review ways your church or community organizations minister to people who depend on the compassion of others for survival. How can you help?

- Review Jesus's genealogy for significant figures besides David, Boaz, Abraham, and Adam such as Zerubbabel, Jesse, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Shem, Noah, and Enoch. Discuss the significance of Jesus representing his family members who walked carefully with God and others whose walk was uneven.
- Reflect on human diversity and unity, as reflected in Ruth and Luke's genealogy of Jesus in light of Ephesians 2:11–22. What is the result when nationality, race, or social status blinds humanity to their unity in Adam and in Christ?
- Reflect on your lineage and family tree. How have your ancestors shaped who you are today? As with the story of Ruth, is there pain? Is there redemption? Where do you find redemption among the members of your family?

Closing Worship

7. Morning Prayer 2

Worship Leaflet, lesson 1

- Invite the participants to turn to the Worship Leaflet, and enlist volunteers to lead remaining portions of Morning Prayer.
- Begin with the Prayer of the Day, pray the Lord's Prayer, and end with the Dismissal.
- Bless and challenge participants as they leave, saying, "(Name), trust in the Lord and know that God is at work within you."
- Extinguish the candles.

SCRIPTURE NOTES

The following notes from the Uniform Series provide additional information about today's Scripture.

1. In Canaanite culture, the death of all males in a household was an opportunity for a wealthy man to increase his property and legacy by acquiring that family's land.
2. The reference to Perez (Ruth 4:12, 18) brings the story of Judah and Tamar as a lens through which to read Ruth: both were stories of women abandoned by their husbands' families, who were given a lasting legacy in Israel through a levirate conception (Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25:5–10). Even given this connection, the familial relationship between Judah and Tamar is not the main focus here; God's grace is the key. God provided these women children to carry on a legacy, a critical cultural role for women in the ancient Near East.

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS DURING THE WEEK

Send an email or a text:

1. Encouraging them to create a narrative family tree of their ancestors, as many as they can recall. Write down or audio record stories of each person that capture something of their character and what gifts and sensibilities were passed down.
2. Suggesting that they read 2 Samuel 7:1–17 and think about the kind of house David wants to build and the house God promises to build for David.