

# Matthew 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

## Analysis

**And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse.** This verse appears in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus, remarkably including two Gentile women—Rahab and Ruth. The Greek *egennēsen* (ἐγέννησεν, "begat") indicates fathering or ancestry. The phrase *ek tēs Rachab* (ἐκ τῆς Ῥαχάβ, "of Rachab") explicitly names the mother, unusual in ancient genealogies which typically traced only patrilineal descent.

Rahab (Hebrew *Rachav*, רַחַב) was the Canaanite prostitute of Jericho who hid Israelite spies and confessed faith in Yahweh (Joshua 2:1-21, 6:22-25). Ruth was a Moabite widow who clung to her Israelite mother-in-law Naomi and declared, "Your God shall be my God" (Ruth 1:16). Both women were foreigners who entered Israel's covenant community through faith, becoming ancestors of David and ultimately Jesus.

Matthew's inclusion of these women (along with Tamar and Bathsheba, vv. 3, 6) demonstrates several crucial theological truths:

1. God's grace extends beyond ethnic Israel to include believing Gentiles
2. God's redemptive plan operates through unlikely, even scandalous, means
3. faith, not ethnicity or moral perfection, qualifies one for participation in God's purposes
4. the Messiah came to save sinners, foreshadowed by His genealogy including those with checkered pasts.

This anticipates the gospel's universal scope (Matthew 28:19, Ephesians 2:11-22).

## Historical Context

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Matthew wrote his Gospel primarily for Jewish Christians (likely 60s-80s CE), systematically demonstrating that Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy and is the promised Davidic Messiah. The genealogy serves crucial apologetic purposes, establishing Jesus's legal right to David's throne through Joseph while highlighting divine sovereignty in using unexpected people.

Rahab's story (Joshua 2, 6) occurred during Israel's conquest of Canaan (circa 1400 BCE). Her faith saved her family and incorporated her into Israel. Jewish tradition honored her as a proselyte and paradigm of repentant faith (Hebrews 11:31, James 2:25). Salmon, from the tribe of Judah, married this former Canaanite prostitute, and their son Boaz became a wealthy landowner in Bethlehem.

Ruth's story (circa 1100s BCE) shows her commitment to Naomi and Yahweh despite widowhood and poverty. Boaz, as kinsman-redeemer, married Ruth, and their son Obed became grandfather to David. For Matthew's Jewish audience, these inclusions would have been startling—Gentile women, one formerly a prostitute, in Messiah's lineage. Yet they demonstrated God's consistent pattern of including outsiders through faith, preparing readers for the gospel's extension to all nations. The genealogy's structure (three sets of fourteen generations) further emphasizes divine ordering of history toward Christ's coming.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's inclusion of Rahab and Ruth in Jesus's genealogy challenge our assumptions about who qualifies for God's purposes?

2. What does this verse teach about the relationship between faith and ethnicity in God's redemptive plan?
3. How should the scandalous elements in Jesus's genealogy affect how we view our own past or imperfections?
4. In what ways does this passage foreshadow the gospel's universal scope and availability to all who believe?
5. What does God's use of unlikely people in salvation history reveal about His character and methods?

## Interlinear Text

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Σαλμών δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Βοὺζ ἐκ τῆς Ῥαχάβ· Βοὺζ  
 Salmon And begat G3588 Booz of G3588 Rachab Booz  
 G4533 G1161 G1080 G1003 G1537 G4477 G1003  
 δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ὠβὴδ ἐκ τῆς Ῥούθ· Ὠβὴδ δὲ  
 And begat G3588 Obed of G3588 Ruth Obed And  
 G1161 G1080 G5601 G1537 G4503 G5601 G1161  
 ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰεσσαί  
 begat G3588 Jesse  
 G1080 G2421

## Additional Cross-References

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**Hebrews 11:31** (Parallel theme): By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

**James 2:25** (Parallel theme): Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

**Ruth 1:4** (Parallel theme): And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

**Ruth 4:21** (Parallel theme): And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

