

The flax that she spread on her roof and the scarlet cord she used as a sign indicated that Rahab manufactured linen and also dyed it. (pp. 131–32)

Rahab's skillful scheme succeeded. The two Jewish spies were in desperate straits, seeing the Amorite pursuers were hot on their trail, but Rahab, although her safety and patriotism as an Amorite would be assured if she informed against the spies, decided to hide and preserve them.

Shortly after, when the pursuers had tracked the two spies to Rahab's house, she met them with a plausible excuse that they were there but had left by way of the Eastern Gate.

When Rahab hid the spies, put those who sought them on a false trail and helped the spies to escape and melt away into the shadows of the night, and lay concealed until they could reach Joshua with their report, she took her life in her own hands. (p. 132)

As Rahab offered to shelter the spies and aid them in their escape, she received from them the promise that when they returned to her country, along with Joshua and his army, that she and her family would be spared alive. (pp. 132–33)

When Joshua entered the city he set about the execution of the divine command, but respected the promise made to Rahab by the spies. Under the protection of the scarlet line, Rahab and all her kindred were brought out of the house. The spies came to her house, not to indulge in sin with Rahab, but to prepare the way for Joshua to take Jericho. She saved the spies because she knew that they were servants of the Lord. In turn she was saved.

The threefold reference to Rahab in the New Testament reveals how she became a faithful follower of the Lord. As a result of her marriage to Salmon, one of the two spies whom she had saved, who "paid back the life he owed her by a love that was honorable and true," Rahab became an ancestress in the royal line from which Jesus came as the Savior of lost souls.<sup>4</sup> (p. 133)

### C. Ruth [ רֹּוּת (*Ruth*); Ῥοῦθ (*Rhouth*) ]:

The first glimpse we have of Ruth is as a young wife robbed by death of her husband. Elimelech and his wife, along with their two sons Mahlon and Chilion, in order to escape prevailing famine in Bethlehem, emigrated to the neighboring country of Moab, the inhabitants of which were idolaters. After a while Elimelech died, and the two fatherless sons married women of Moab. Mahlon took Ruth to wife, and Chilion, Orpah. After some ten years' sojourn in Moab, Mahlon and Chilion died leaving their wives childless.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., "Rahab," 130–133.



As Ruth's husband, Mahlon, was the first-born of Elimelech and Naomi. With all we know of Ruth's honest nature, it is quite possible that she warmly received all her husband told her of the mighty Jehovah.

Bereft of her husband, Ruth, as well as Orpah, would be left without material resources of support. But if Ruth shed any tears over her sorry plight as she faced a gloomy future without her husband, there is no record of them. She did not seek for self-pity neither did she manifest the bitterness that had gripped the heart of Naomi because of her sad lot. Amid the shadows, Ruth maintained a poise and a serenity which even her mother-in-law must have coveted. When happy homes are ravaged by death, it requires grace to say, "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Naomi's self-confessed bitterness over the loss of husband and sons spoke of her lack of faith in God's good providence. But Ruth, heathen though she may have been, seems to have calmly acquiesced in the divine will. (p. 145)

She loved Naomi and was willing to leave her own land and share the unknown future with the aging woman in whom her life was bound up. In her happier days with Mahlon, and then in her desolation and bereavement, Ruth found in Naomi a home for her heart.

Ruth's declaration of love and loyalty for Naomi marks it out as being the purest and most unselfish form of devotion, especially when we remember that Naomi was more than twice the age of Ruth, and that, proverbially, it is not easy to live with a mother-in-law.

In an age like ours with its ever growing number of strained relationships, broken homes and loveless lives it is most refreshing to go back to the charming picture of loyalty found in a short yet sublime book in which every prospect pleases.

In spite of her heathen background and association with the degenerated tribe of Moab, Ruth became a devout worshiper of the true God. Just when she cast off her idolatry with its folly of bowing down to gods of wood and stone, and turned to the beauty and blessedness of true religion we are not told. Perhaps in her somewhat short married life, her heart was stirred by what her husband told her of the greatness of Jehovah. Then she must have seen that Naomi's God was totally different from the lifeless deity she worshiped. From henceforth the Hebrews would be her people, and Naomi's God her God.

Had Ruth accompanied Orpah to Moab and to obscurity, she would have returned to the altars of Baal. But now with God in her heart, she longed to live with those people "whose God is the Lord."  
(p. 146)



Back in Bethlehem, Naomi was reminded of how her afflictions had changed her. Her brow was wrinkled and her back bent, but by her side was the “foreigner,” to share her sorrow. Naomi and Ruth must live, and Ruth, with her characteristic thoughtfulness, knew that her aged mother-in-law was not able to work. Thus she went out and was directed to join the poor gleaners<sup>5</sup> in the fields of the rich, godly landowner, Boaz. (p. 147)

Ruth was not ashamed of the low order of her work as she took her place as a gleaner with the poor and outcast. The sacred historian tells us that as Ruth went out to secure food for Naomi and herself that it was “her *hap*<sup>6</sup> to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.”<sup>7</sup> But her entrance into the field of Boaz, and not into another man’s field, did not just happen. Under Jewish law Ruth had the right to glean in any harvest field. It was no mere chance, then, that brought Boaz and Ruth together. In God’s plan for His own there is no such a thing as *luck*. Determined not to eat the bread of idleness, industrious Ruth walked right into the arms of divine providence. Little did she dream that she would become the much-loved wife of the master of the field in which the reapers had given her a friendly welcome. (pp. 147–48)

Being one who feared God, and one who cared for the poor, Boaz went among his reapers. Coming upon Ruth he was arrested by her staid and modest look and arrested by her beauty and personality. Making inquiries about her, Boaz learns of her sacrifice for Naomi, and her conversion to the worship of Jehovah, and commands the reapers to purposely drop extra sheaves for Ruth’s benefit.

As for Ruth, her heart was full because kindness had been shown her by a stranger in the solitude of a strange land. Had she sensed that somehow Boaz had been strangely attracted to her, hence his generosity in spite of the alien blood in her veins? As for Naomi, when Ruth came to mention the name of her benefactor, Boaz, she recalls the name as that of a kinsman of her deceased husband, Elimelech. It may be that in the mind of Naomi there entered a feeling that perhaps a brighter future may be hers and Ruth’s.

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<sup>5</sup> לָקַטָּהּ (*laqat*): To pick up, to gather. About half of the occurrences of this term relate to the provision of the Mosaic Law to take care of the needy by allowing them to glean the fields, a provision featured prominently in the story of Ruth (Ruth 2:2, 3,7, 8, 15–19, 23” (Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* [Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003], 555).

<sup>6</sup> “Hap: Luck, chance, fortune. That which comes suddenly or unexpectedly” (Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* [New York: S. Converse, 1828], 1:97).

<sup>7</sup> “Elimelech was a member of the tribe of Judah. He had a hereditary possession near Bethlehem, and chiefly known as the husband of Naomi, the mother-in-law of Ruth. His sons, Mahlon and Chilion, married Moabitish women, Ruth and Orpah” (J. J. Reeve, “Elimelech,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, gen. ed. James Orr [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956], 2:933).



It turned out that Boaz was one of Naomi's nearest relatives and one of the few remaining kinsmen of her husband's family. Therefore he was able to befriend the widow of Mahlon, Elimelech's son, according to the deep principle pervading the law of Israel regarding the preservation of families.

This Levirate Law stated that where a husband died without issue, the nearest brother-in-law might be called upon by the widow to perform for her all the duties of a husband, and raise up seed for the deceased.

In the case of Ruth, however, no brother-in-law was available seeing the only sons Elimelech had were dead. Consequently, the nearest of kin could be called upon to act as "redeemer"<sup>8</sup> for the unfortunate, relieving them thereby of their distress. The nearest relative to Ruth by marriage was unable to function as her [redeemer] ... and being the next relative, Boaz did not shirk his responsibility toward the lovely woman who had won his heart. Before the council of ten men at the city gate he announced before witnesses his decision to buy Ruth's inheritance and marry her. Although bachelor Boaz was advanced in years, he was determined to play his part.

God smiled upon the marriage of honorable Boaz and virtuous Ruth, and blessed them with a son whom they named Obed. Through the birth of Obed, who became the father of Jesse, who, in turn was the father of King David, Ruth found herself numbered among the elect, and God wove the thread of her life most intricately into the web of the history of His people, both before and after Christ. (p. 148)

A Gentile by birth, Ruth yet became the chosen line through which later the Savior of the world appeared. As He came to redeem both Jew and Gentile alike, it was fitting that the blood of both should mingle in His veins.

Ruth was a Gentile, Boaz a Hebrew. Boaz redeemed Ruth's possession and then became her husband. All have sinned, both Jews and Gentiles, but Jesus died for all, and His church is composed of regenerated Jews and Gentiles whom He calls His Bride.<sup>9</sup> (p. 149)

#### D. Bathsheba [ בַּת־שֶׁבַע (*Bath-sheva*) ]:

Bathsheba came of a God-fearing family. She was the daughter of Éliam, whose name means "God is gracious," was one of David's gallant officers. Bathsheba became the wife of Uriah, the most loyal of David's men.

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<sup>8</sup> גְּאוּלִּיִּים (*ge'uliyim*): To act as a kinsman-redeemer for a deceased kinsman (Ruth 3:13); to redeem or buy back a kinsman's possessions [Ruth 4:4]" (Baker and Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary* [2003], 176).

<sup>9</sup> Lockyer, "Ruth," in *All the Women of the Bible*, 145–149.



After the murder of Uriah, she became the wife of David, and the mother of five sons by him. The first died in infancy. The others were Solomon, Shímea, Shóbab and Náthan. She is mentioned in our Lord's genealogy as "her that had been the wife of Uriah" (Matthew 1:6). (pp. 34–35)

While God freely pardons a sinner, often the effects of committed sin remain. The tragic lapse in the life of the man after God's own heart is built up, from David's first sight of Bathsheba to the climax of his unutterable remorse when realizing the enormity of his most grievous sin, he flung himself upon the mercy of God. The sad story begins with the significant phrase, "But David tarried still at Jerusalem" (2 Samuel 11:1).

David saw a woman on the roof of a nearby house undressing and bathing herself, and his passions were excited. David, ever attracted by lovely women, coveted her, and became guilty of an outrageous disgrace.

NOTE: At this point we must take the time to study the famous encounter that occurred between David and Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11. In doing so we will be able to determine that Bathsheba was the victim of multiple acts of rape. To understand the context, we will note 2 Samuel 11:1–3 from the NET translation and NASB from there:

**2 Samuel 11:1** In the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally conduct wars, David sent out Joab with his officers and the entire Israelite army. They defeated the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed behind in Jerusalem.

**v. 2** One evening David got up from his bed and waked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. Now this woman was very attractive.

**v. 3** So David sent someone to inquire about the woman. The messenger said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" (NET)

**v. 4** David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. (NASB)



1. The word “messengers” refers in this context to men assigned by David to seize Bathsheba and bring her to the palace. It was not a cordial invitation but rather an abduction, indicated by the Qal imperfect of the verb **לָקַח** (*laqach*): “to seize violently,” indicating Bathsheba did not submit to the men from her own free will but was physically forced to leave her home and be taken to David’s quarters.
2. Consequently, she did not come to David, but instead was “brought to David,” another Qal perfect this time of the verb **בָּוֵא** (*bo’*). What happened next was a sequence of rapes indicated by the Qal imperfect of the verb **שָׁכַב** (*shakav*): “sexual intercourse,” but in this case it was accomplished by force.
3. The passive voice means that Bathsheba did not willingly engage in the act while the imperfect tense indicates she was raped several times.
4. After these attacks finally stopped, the verse continues with this reading from the NASB, “when she had purified herself from her uncleanness.” It leaves the impression that following the rapes she took a bath.
5. Certain Study Bibles correct this misleading phrase with the use of a parenthesis in the following translations:

From *The NET Bible*:

**2 Samuel 11:4** David sent some messengers to get her. She came to him and he had sexual relations with her. (Now at that time she was in the process of purifying herself from her menstrual uncleanness.) Then she returned to her home.<sup>10</sup>

From the *Biblical Theology Study Bible* (NIV):

**2 Samuel 11:4** Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home.

7. Verses 4 and 5 appear to take place between late afternoon and the following morning. Based on this and “translator’s note 14” in the NET Bible, this cannot possibly be the case.
8. If Bathsheba’s rooftop bath was a post-menstrual cleansing, then David’s rapes of her could not have resulted in a pregnancy on that same night.

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<sup>10</sup> “The parenthetical disjunctive clause further heightens the tension by letting the reader know that Bathsheba, having just completed her menstrual cycle, is ripe for conception. Since she just had her period, it will also be obvious to those close to the scene that Uriah, who has been away fighting, cannot be the father of the child” (*The NET Bible*, [Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 1996–2005], 557tn14).

9. Ovulation occurs normally between 12- and 14-days following menstruation. This means that 12 to 14 days had to expire between verses 3 and 4 or, if she went to the palace that night, she had to be retained there for at least 12 to 14 days in order to become pregnant.
10. Later, discovering that she was pregnant, Bathsheba sent word to David in:  
**2 Samuel 11:5**                      The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant."
11. This means that another fourteen days or more had to expire before she could inform David that she was expecting.
12. This news set in motion a sequence of events that resulted in God imposing on David four-fold installment discipline.

Learning of Bathsheba's pregnant condition, David hurried Uriah home to allay suspicion, but returning, the devoted soldier, a man of highest principle, refused any physical contact with his wife. David's clever plan failed. Uriah must be gotten rid of, so he was sent back to the battlefield with a letter to Joab to put Uriah in a foremost place where he was bound to be killed. Thus, for David lust, adultery, deceit, treachery and murder followed in quick succession. (p. 35)

After the accustomed period of mourning Bathsheba became the wife of David, and their child of an adulterous union was born without disgrace, only to die within a week of his birth. The deep grief of David over the sickness and death of the child, while not relieving the king of his murderous crime, gives us a glimpse of his better nature and of his faith in reunion beyond the grave.<sup>11</sup> (pp. 35–36)

**E. Mary [ מִרְיָם (*Miryam*); Μαρία (*María*) ]:**

This Hebrew name has ever been popular in all countries of the Western world, and has altogether some twenty variations, the most conspicuous being Maria, Marie, and Miriam. Mary is about the only feminine name that has pronounced masculine forms such as Mario, Marion and Maria.

According to the sacred record, Mary was a humble village woman who lived in a small town, a place so insignificant as to lead Nathanael to say, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46), but out of it came the greatest Man the world has ever known. Mary was of the tribe of Judah, and the line of David. She became the wife of Joseph, the son of Héli (Luke 3:23). As a virgin, Mary bore Christ in a miraculous way.

<sup>11</sup> Lockyer, "Bathsheba," in *All the Women of the Bible*, 34–36.





Later Mary was married to Joseph the carpenter and she bore him four sons and several daughters (Matthew 13:55, 56; Mark 6:3). During His ministry, none of His brothers believed in Him. But as a result of His death and Resurrection, His brothers became believers, and were among the number gathered in the Upper Room before Pentecost. (p. 92)

When the fullness of time had come for Jesus to be manifested, He [God] did not go to a city, but to a remote and inconsiderate town—not to a palace but a poor dwelling—not to the great and learned but to lowly partisans—for a woman to bring the Savior into a lost world. The gentle and lowly Mary of Nazareth was the Father’s choice as the mother of His beloved Son, and that she herself was overwhelmed at God’s condescending grace in choosing her is evident from her song of praise in which she magnified Him for regarding her lowly estate, and in exalting her.<sup>12</sup>

Mary, then, was selected by divine wisdom from among the humblest and it was in such an environment that the Father prepared His Son to labor among the common people who heard Him gladly. The one of whom He was born, the place where he was born were arranged beforehand by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Centuries before Mary became the mother of the Savior of mankind, it was prophesied that it would be so (Isaiah 7:14–16; 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2, 3). (p. 93)

When Mary willingly yielded her body to the Lord saying, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to your word,” the Holy Spirit took Deity and humanity and fused them together and formed the Lord’s two natures within Mary’s being. Therefore, when Jesus came forth it was as the God-Man, “God manifest in the flesh,” or “... that Holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). *Son of Mary*—humanity! *Son of God*—Deity. We may not understand the mystery of what happened when Mary yielded up her body that Christ should be formed within it, but believing that with God nothing is impossible we accept what Scripture says as to the birth of Christ. (p. 94)

Taking the Lord at His word, Mary praised Him as if what He had declared had been fully accomplished. What a marvelous song of rejoicing the Magnificat is! It reveals poetic and prophetic genius of the highest order, and takes its place among the finest productions of the world. This extemporaneous ode expressing Mary’s joy is indeed one of the choicest gems of Hebrew poetry. As given by Luke (Luke 1:46–55) this lyric expresses Mary’s inward and deeply personal sacred and unselfish joy, and likewise her faith in Messianic fulfillment. It is also eloquent with her reverential spirit. Her worship was for her Son, for her spirit rejoiced in Him as her own Savior.

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<sup>12</sup> This refers to Mary’s “Song of Praise,” or “The Magnificat”: “My soul does magnify,” in Luke 1:46–55.



Her “hymn” also spoke of her humility, for she was mindful of the fact that she was but a humble village maiden whose “low estate” the Lord regarded. By her “low estate” Mary not only had in mind the material poverty she was accustomed to, but also the sharpest of all poverty, the low estate of one of Royal birth. Mary never claimed anything for herself, but Christendom wrongly selected her as the object of worship and one entitled to a consideration above her Son. (p.95)

The Bible portrays her as a woman “blessed among women,” but only as a mere faithful, humble, godly woman. Rome’s exaltation of Mary consists largely of fictitious and unreliable legends and dogmas. The true Christian portrayal of the mother of Jesus is that to be found only in the gospels in which the Master taught that man has access to God *only* through His all-sufficient mediatorial work (John 14:6).<sup>13</sup> (p. 99)

#### F. Observations:

1. Because of the circumstances that developed among Judah’s three sons, Tamar ultimately had relationships with the two oldest as well as Judah. Judah’s first son, Er was married to Tamar but he died under circumstances not revealed in Scripture.
2. In Jewish society there was a system that maintained the family’s chart pedigree should a husband die leaving his wife a childless widow. When Er died, Judah’s second son, Onan, was bound to marry Tamar.
3. This is referred to as: “Levirate Law. A law of Moses which states that if two brothers live together, and one of them dies without leaving a male heir, his brother shall marry his widow, and the first son of the union shall take the name of the brother who died.”<sup>14</sup>
4. Onan refused to consummate sexual relations with Tamar and that marriage failed causing the third son, Shelah, to qualify as her third husband, however he was a minor and she had to wait for him to reach maturity.
5. She got impatient over that delay. By playing the part of a harlot, she tricked Judah into having sex with her which resulted in the birth of Perez.
6. Rahab was a professional prostitute, but when we studied the events that took place in Joshua chapter 2, we learned that Rahab became a believer when she heard of the victories God provided for the Israelites against the Egyptians and later over the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og.

**(End JAS2-52. See JAS2-53 for continuation of study at p. 521.)**

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<sup>13</sup> Lockyer, “Mary,” in *All the Women of the Bible*, 92–95, 99.

<sup>14</sup> S. Barabas, “Levirate Law,” in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, gen. ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 3:912.

