

THE BOOK OF RUTH



- 1) Complex, deals with many Torah principles
- 2) Written sometime between 900 – 600 B.C.
- 3) Ruth place in our bibles according to Greek or Hebrew translation
- 4) Ruth was a gentile
- 5) Main purpose was to show that King David's line should rule the throne



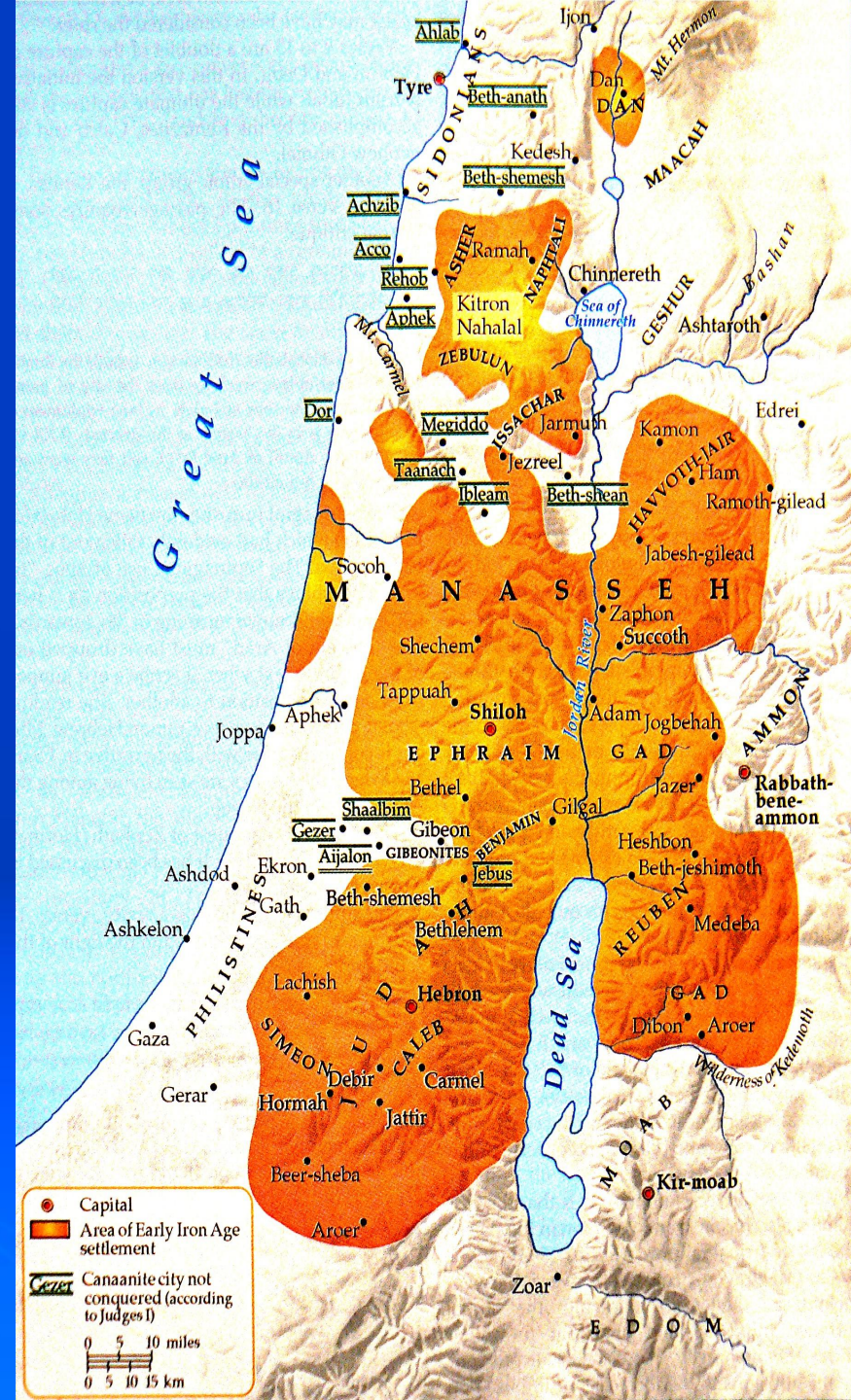
WHEN AND WHERE?

- Events probably took place during time of Gideon
- Author didn't definitively peg the date because for Hebrews it was not important!
- Young Earth/Old Earth debate because words are ambiguous
- Opening of Genesis not about WHEN but about WHO created the earth
- Modern "Greek" thinkers (us!) want proofs of God's hand in creation using scientific method



THE ERETZ

- **Eretz** = land
- The famine was not from Sinai to Lebanon
- **Beit-Lechem** = house of bread, means house of FOOD
- A “beit-lechem” was a village granary
- Many “beit-lechems” in Israel, this one was in Judah



ELIMELECH, NA'OMI, 2 SONS MOVE TO MO'AV



- Technically, no “nation” of Moab at this time, just a holdover name
- *Ephrathites* of Bethlehem – Judah
- *Ephrathite* is incorrectly connected to Ephraim
- Tav ת Mem מ
- Common copyist error
- Ephrath an earlier name for Beit-Lechem

EPHRATH IS ABUNDANCE

- *Ephrathites* of Bethlehem refers to a “clan of abundance”
- Nickname given to Elimelech’s clan because they had great farming wealth
- Change in town name from Ephrath (fruitfulness) to Beit-Lechem (warehouse to store fruitfulness) is really only a small modification

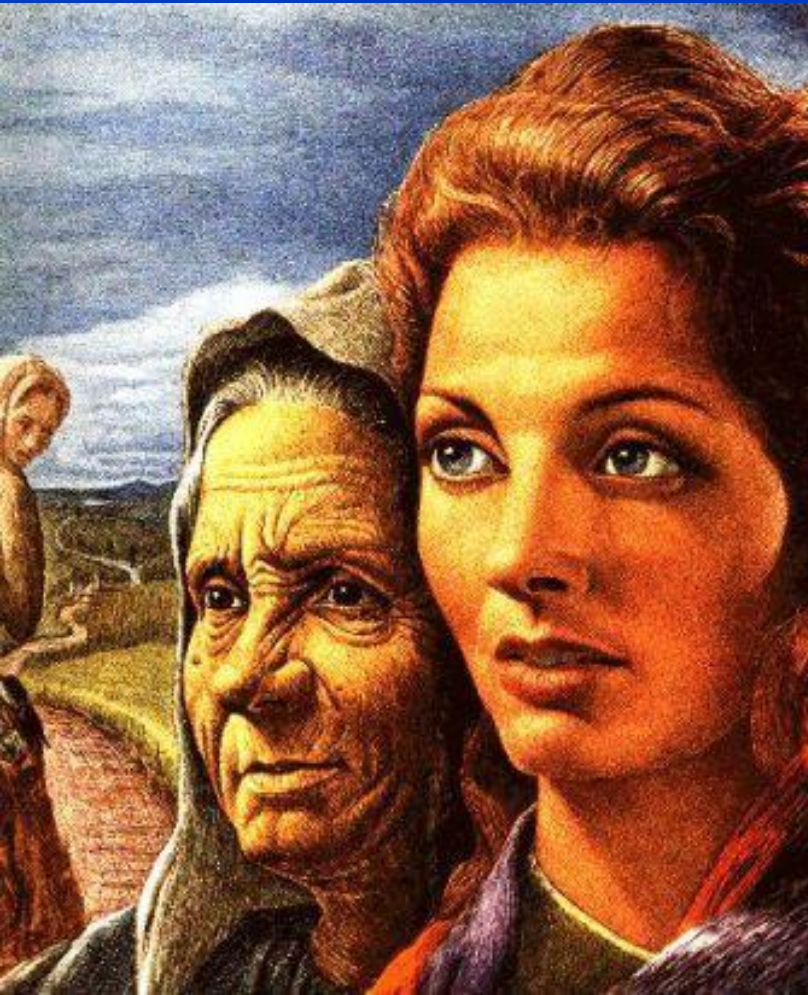


WHY DID THIS FAMILY SUFFER SUCH LOSS IN MOAB?



- *Gur* = sojourner, no plans to permanently relocate
- The loss of the 3 males can only be seen as a curse from God
- So what was the sin?
- Genesis Rabbah 28:
“...why then were they punished? Because they left the land of Israel for a foreign land.”

THE REAL CENTRAL CHARACTER IS NA'OMI



- In Moab a total of 10 years
- *Na'omi*, an old woman, had no husband and no sons, so no means of income
- The girls could find new husbands because they were young, could bear children
- Na'omi faced poverty and depravation

THE KAHAL



- Were Elimelech's sons **WRONG** for taking Moabite wives?
- Deut. 7:3 only forbids marrying Canaanites, **NOT** Moabites
- Deut. 23:3 Forbids allowing Moabites to be part of the "kahal" of Israel until the 10th generation
- ***Kahal*** = HOLY convocation, ability to serve as elders, OK to enter Tabernacle grounds

MEANING OF THE NAMES

- *Na'omi* = pleasant, delightful
- *Elimelech* = my god is king
- *Rut (Reut)* = friendship
- However Ruth is NOT Hebrew per se, but was Moabite
- *Orpah* = stiff-necked?
- *Machlon* = weak?
- *Chilion* = failing?
- Most of these are nicknames and epithets, NOT their real given names

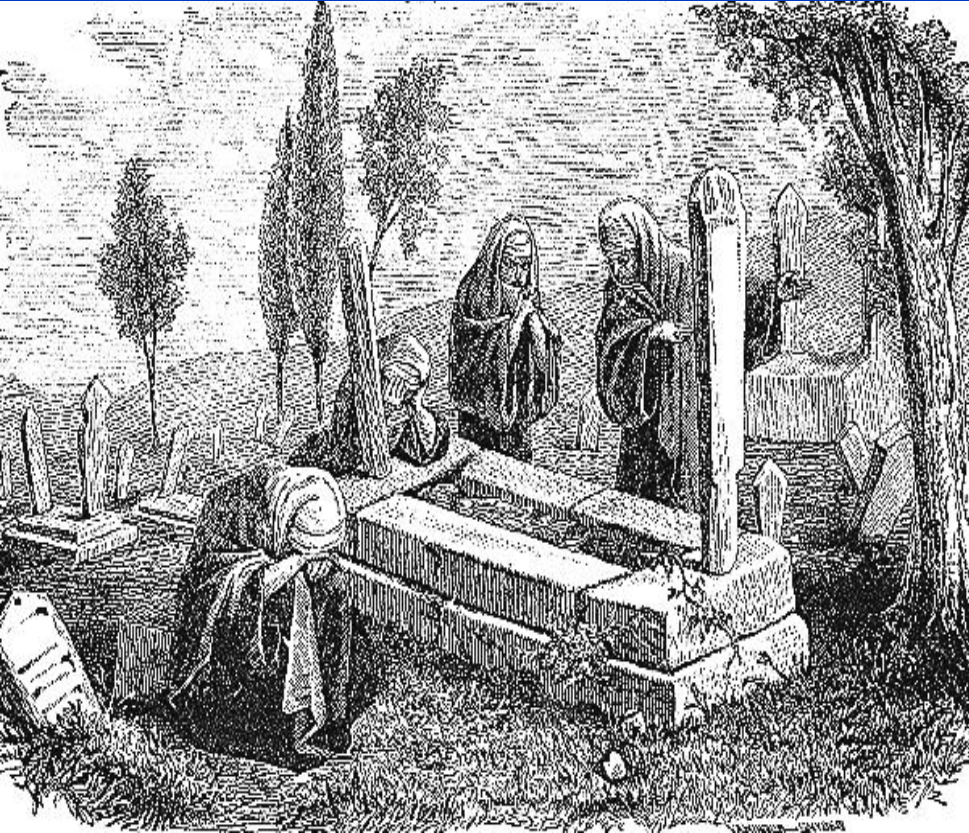


“Return to your mother’s house”

- Yehoveh “visited” the eretz and gave lechem (food)
- Divine hand of God caused famine, and released the land from famine
- Why “the mother’s house” instead of “the father’s”?
- This is story about women, told from a woman’s point of view



ANCIENT CONCEPTS OF DEATH



- Ancestor Worship played a major role in Hebrew thinking
- Believed the dead inhabited underground chambers (Abraham's Bosom, Place of Torments"
- Surviving family were to tend grave, bring food for deceased, continue speaking their NAME!

CHESED

- **Chesed** is a CONCEPT, not a word that has a direct translation
- Usual translation is “loving-kindness” Too shallow.
- Can mean loyalty, or ACTIVE love
- Almost always covenant related
- **Menuchah** = a PLACE of rest, with warmth and comfort
- Kissing was a customary body language/signal that meant “hello” or “good-bye”