



SUNGAI WAY-SUBANG METHODIST CHURCH  
SERMON, 16 APRIL 2023

**FROM BITTER  
TO**  
*Better*

Ruth 1:6-16

HENRY WONG

*from* BITTER

*to* **BETTER**

*the Naomi & Ruth  
ODYSSEY*



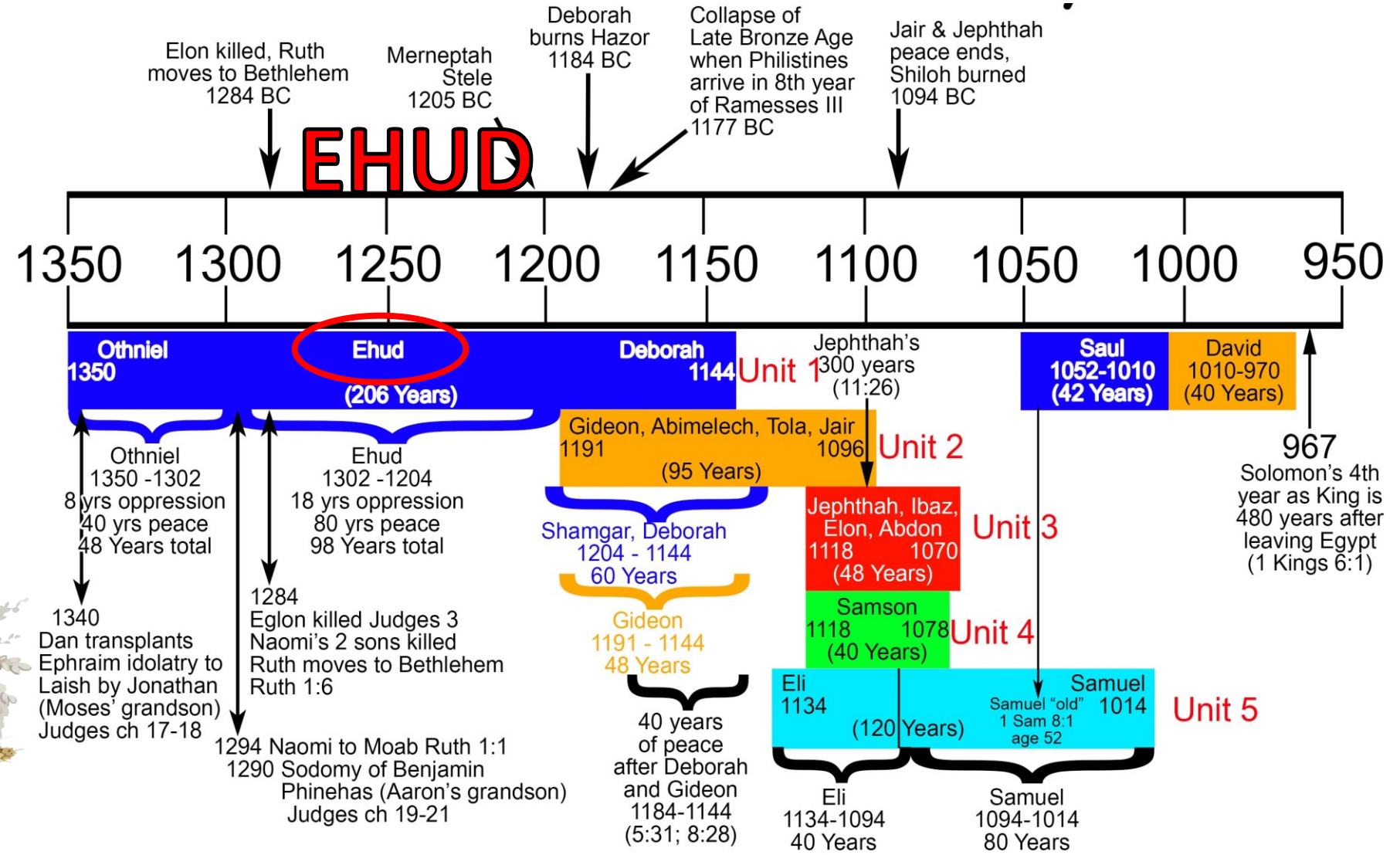
# Chronology of Judges Timeline

Naomi to Moab

1294 BC

Naomi & Ruth  
moves to  
Bethlehem

1284 BC



# Naomi to Moab

1294 BC

# Naomi & Ruth moves to Bethlehem

1284 BC





- Elimelech, Naomi and their sons, Mahlon and Chilion, move to Moab because of a famine.
- sons marry Moabite women Orpah and Ruth; Elimelech dies; sons die.
- Naomi sets out back to Bethlehem, and tries to persuade Orpah and Ruth to return to their own people.
- Orpah returns, but Ruth eloquently insists that she wants to stay with her mother-in-law: *'your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.'*
- Naomi renames herself Mara, meaning 'bitter'.
- They arrive at Bethlehem in the time of the barley harvest

**Faithfulness**





- Ruth gleans barley in Bethlehem from Boaz's field until end of harvest.
- Boaz - a relative of Elimelech. Hearing of her loyalty to Naomi, Boaz shows kindness to Ruth, insisting that she gleans from his field alone, and allowing her to glean from sheaves already gathered.
- Ruth shares the gleanings to Naomi.



- Ruth visits Boaz during the night, lies at Boaz's feet until morning.
- Boaz accepts Ruth, impressed that she has not gone after young men, gives her extra barley.
- Boaz mentions, however, that there is a closer relative, who has a greater right to be her kinsman-redeemer and marry her.
- Ruth returns home with barley.

**Proposal**





- Naomi's kinsman at first seems willing to redeem Elimelech's land which Naomi sold. Part of his duty is to marry Ruth too,
- however, kinsman unwilling because he would have 'ruin his inheritance', ie, have to split it between the children he presumably already has, and any future children he would have with Ruth.
- Boaz takes off his sandal, as the sign that he has become Elimelech's kinsman-redeemer (Go-El) ; witnesses bless them,
- Boaz marries Ruth, who gives birth to Obed, who gives birth to Jesse, who gives birth to King David.



# Main Characters

**NAOMI** - REALITY OF LIFE,  
HARSHNESS OF LIFE,  
BITTERNESS OF LIFE

**RUTH** - ALIEN, NO IDENTITY, NO  
RIGHTS, NO RELATIONS,  
NO BELONGING



**BUT** *when Kinsman Redeemer comes.....*

**NAOMI** - ~~REALITY OF LIFE, HARSHNESS OF LIFE,~~  
~~BITTERNESS OF LIFE~~

**RUTH** - ~~ALIEN, NO IDENTITY, NO RIGHTS,~~  
~~NO RELATIONS, NO BELONGING~~

**BOAZ** - FORESHADOWS GOD'S LOVE,  
PROVIDENCE AND REDEMPTION



**BUT** *when Kinsman Redeemer comes.....*

NAOMI - life gets better,  
life is sweet

RUTH - Identity ; Purpose ;  
Belonging ; Mrs Boaz ;

BOAZ - FORESHADOWS GOD'S LOVE,  
PROVIDENCE AND REDEMPTION

Transaction takes place



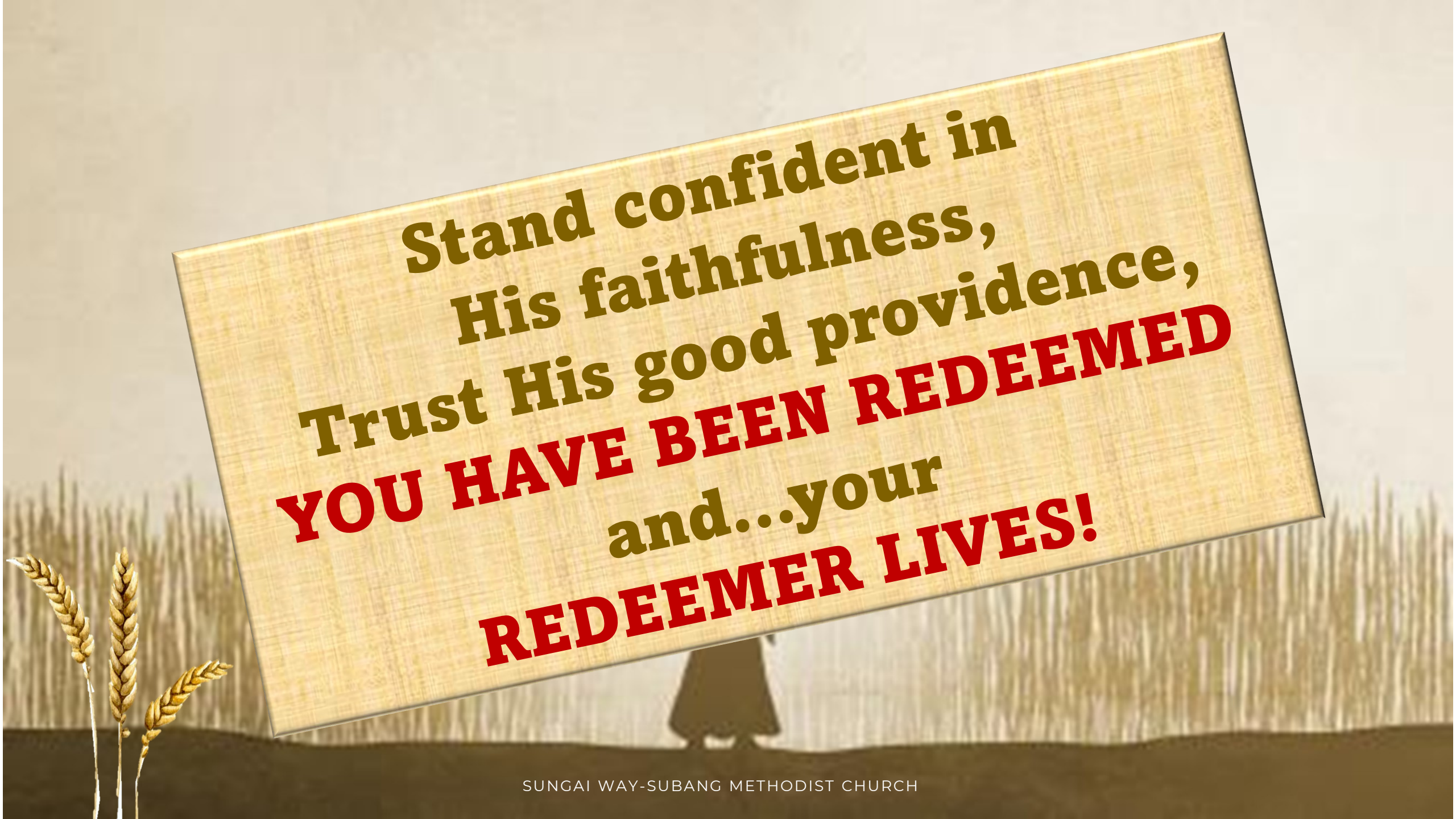
**REALITY OF LIFE, HARSHNESS OF LIFE,  
BITTERNESS OF LIFE**

**ALIEN, NO IDENTITY, NO RIGHTS,  
NO RELATIONS, NO BELONGING**



LIFE CAN GET BETTER,  
THERE CAN BE MEANING TO LIFE

CHILD OF GOD, COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS,  
RECONCILED , REDEEMED, HOPE

A golden, textured tablet is tilted diagonally across the frame. The background shows a field of tall grasses with a silhouette of a person standing in the distance. In the bottom left corner, there are three stalks of wheat. The text on the tablet is as follows:

**Stand confident in  
His faithfulness,  
Trust His good providence,  
YOU HAVE BEEN REDEEMED  
and...your  
REDEEMER LIVES!**

**R**ESILIENT

**U**NFLAPPABLE

**T**RUSTWORTHY

**H**ONOUR

**HAPPY ENDING**

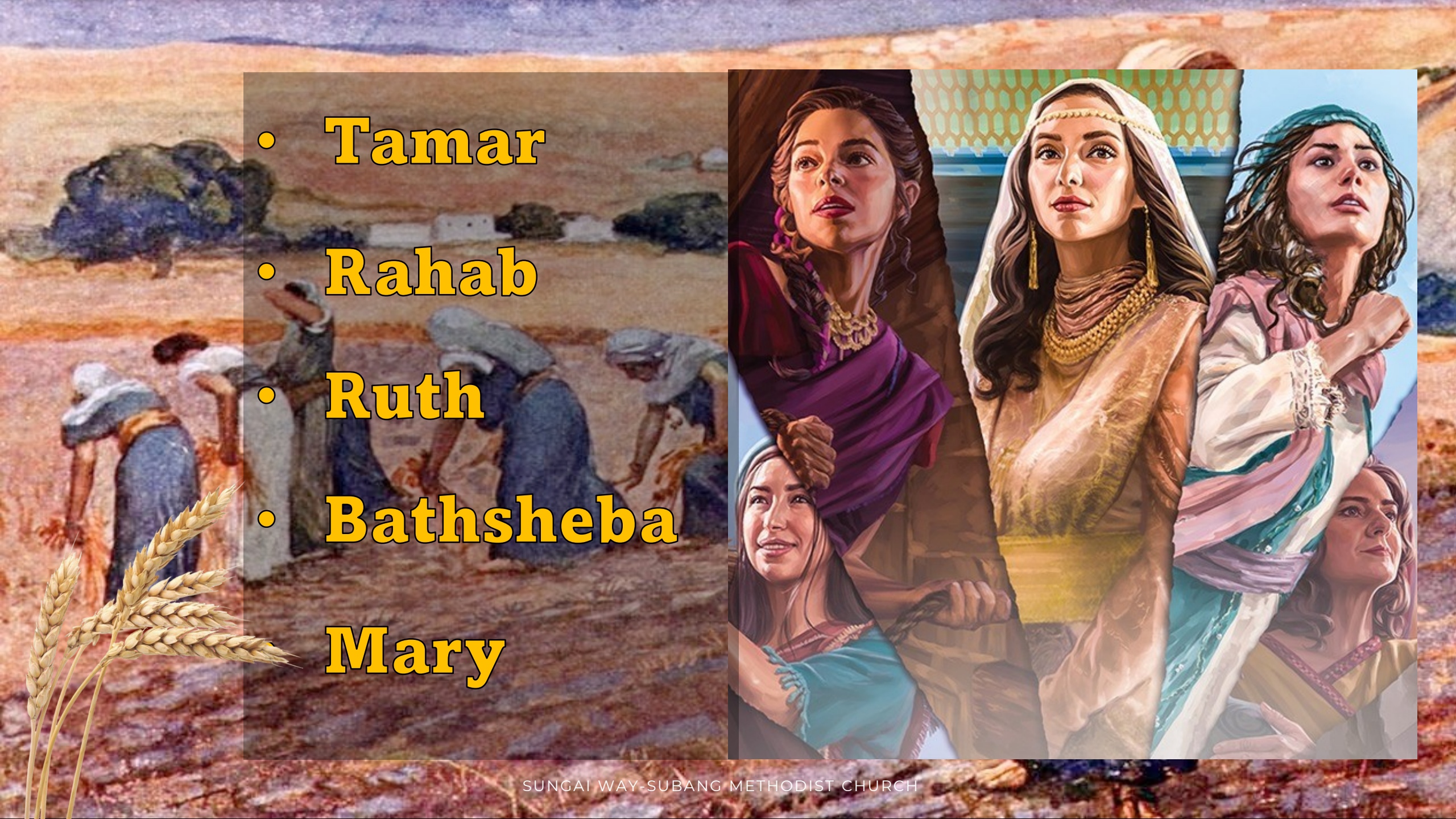
HONOR

COMPANIONSHIP

RELATIONSHIP

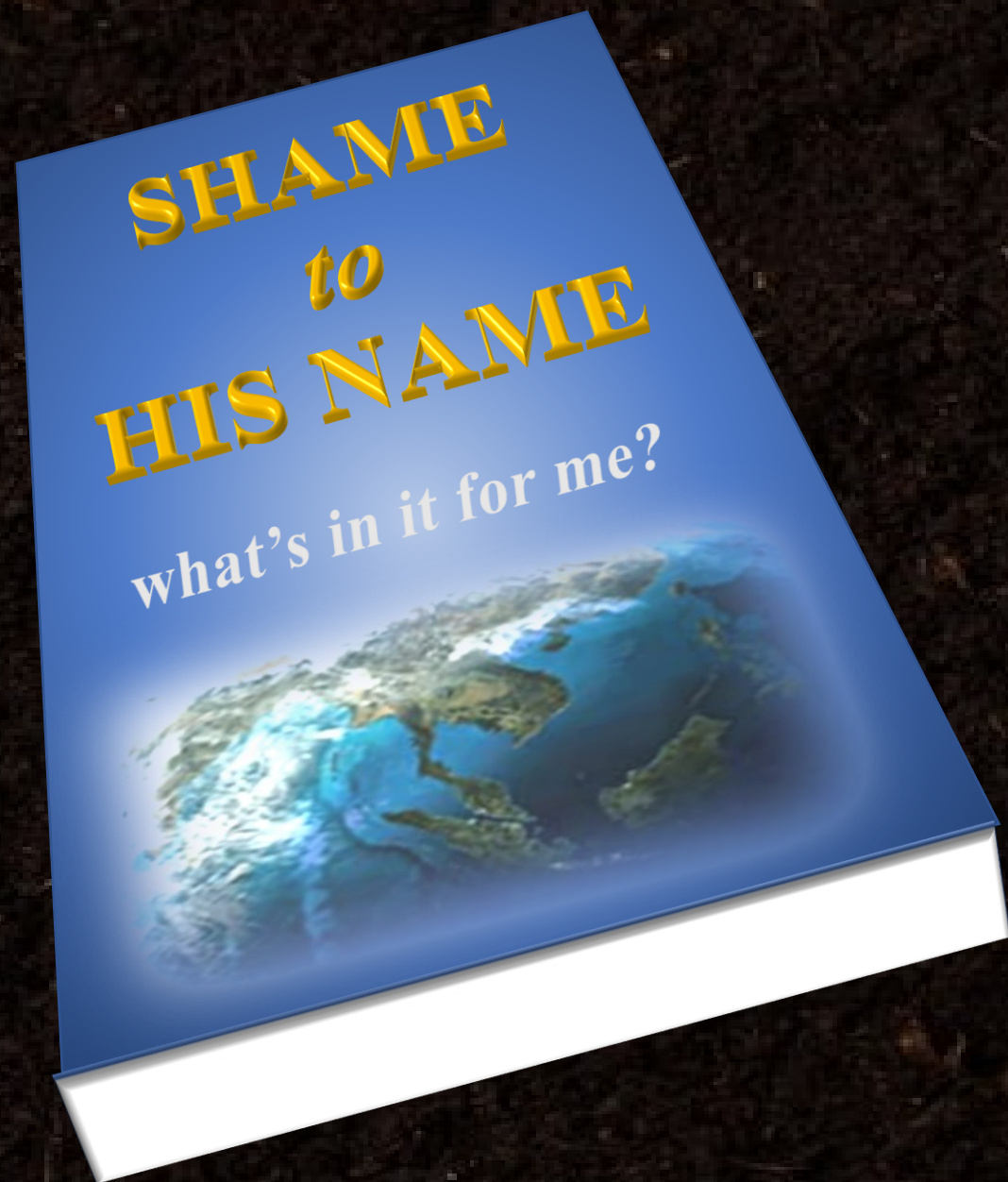
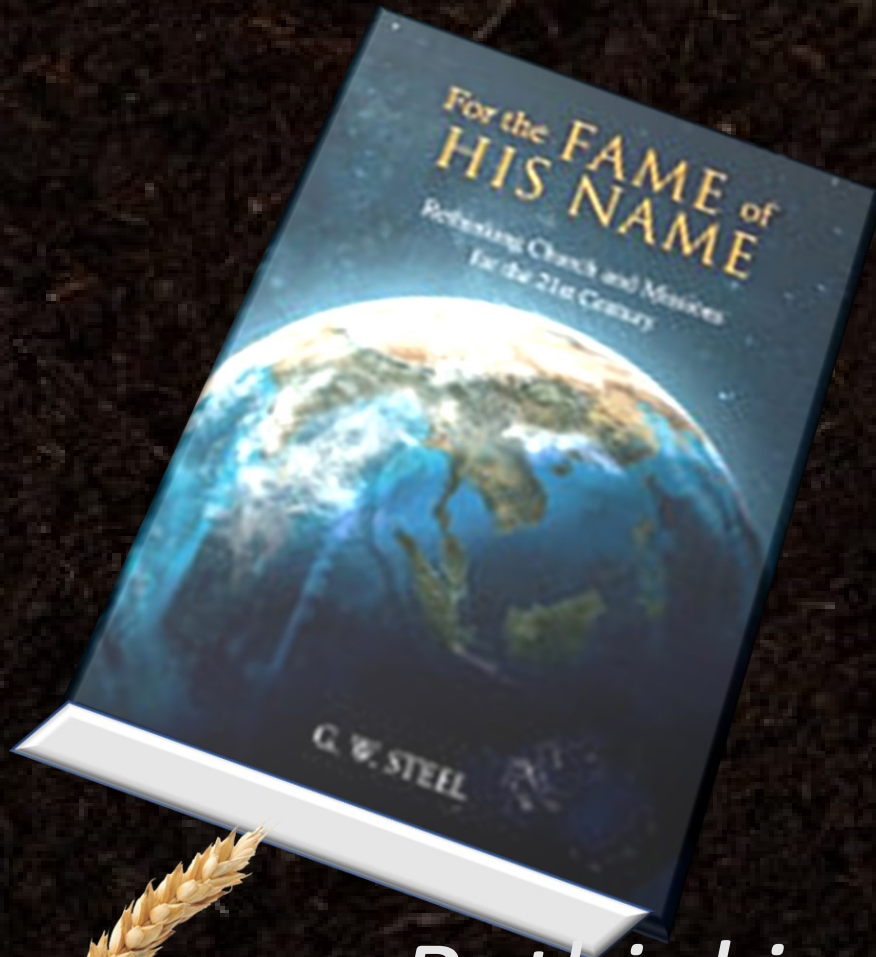
IDENTITY

PLACE-IN-HISTORY

- 
- **Tamar**
  - **Rahab**
  - **Ruth**
  - **Bathsheba**
  - **Mary**







Rethinking Church  
and **Missions** for  
the 21st Century



**R**ESILIENT

**U**NFLAPPABLE

**T**RUSTWORTHY

**H**ONOUR



**HAPPY ENDING**

HONOR

COMPANIONSHIP

RELATIONSHIP

IDENTITY

PLACE-IN-HISTORY