

Torah references ----> . . . Now we see the pains of identity come to the fore:

Ruth as we know her now: “a rose among the thorns” -- placed alongside -- “the shifting sands (and necessities) of time”

Numbers Chapter / 25 בְּמִדְבָּר

- א וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּשֵׁטִים; וַיַּחֲל הָעָם, לְזָנוֹת
אֶל-בָּנוֹת מוֹאָב. 25: 1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people
began to commit harlotry with the daughters of
Moab.
- ב וַתִּקְרְאוּ לָעָם, לְזִבְחֵי אֱלֹהֵיהֶם; וַיֹּאכַל הָעָם,
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לֵאלֹהֵיהֶם. 2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of
their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed
down to their gods.
- ג וַיִּצְמַד יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְבַעַל פְּעוֹר; וַיַּחַר-אַף יְהוָה,
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. 3 And Israel joined himself unto the Baal of Peor;
and the anger of the LORD was kindled against
Israel.
- ד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה, קַח אֶת-כָּל-רָאשֵׁי
הָעָם, וְהוֹקֵעַ אוֹתָם לַיהוָה, נֶגֶד הַשָּׁמֶשׁ; וְיֵשֶׁב
חֲרוֹן אַף-יְהוָה, מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל. 4 And the LORD said unto Moses: 'Take all the
chiefs of the people, and hang them up unto the
LORD in face of the sun, that the fierce anger of
the LORD may turn away from Israel.'
- ה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה, אֶל-שֹׁפְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: הֲרוּ אִישׁ
אֶנְשָׁיו, הַנִּצְמָדִים לְבַעַל פְּעוֹר. 5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel: 'Slay
ye every one his men that have joined themselves
unto the Baal of Peor.'
- ו וְהִנֵּה אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא, וַיִּקְרַב אֶל-אֶחָיו
אֶת-הַמִּדְּיָנִית, לְעֵינֵי מֹשֶׁה, וּלְעֵינֵי כָל-עֵדֹת
בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל; וְהָמָּה בָכִים, פָּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד. 6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came
and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman
in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the
congregation of the children of Israel, while they
were weeping at the door of the tent of meeting.
- ז וַיֵּרָא, פִּינְחָס בֶּן-אֶלְעָזָר, בֶּן-אֶהֱרֹן, הַכֹּהֵן;
וַיִּקֶּם מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה, וַיִּקַּח רֶמַח בְּיָדוֹ. 7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son
of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from the
midst of the congregation, and took a spear in his
hand.

ח וַיֵּבֵא אַחֲרָיִם יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הַקְּבֵה, וַיִּדְקֹר
 אֶת-שְׁנֵיהֶם--אֶת אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאֶת-הָאִשָּׁה
 אֶל-קְבֵתָהּ; וַתַּעֲצֹר, הַמִּגַּפָּה, מֵעַל, בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 8 And he went after the man of Israel into the
 chamber, and thrust both of them through, the
 man of Israel, and the woman through her belly.
 So the plague was stayed from the children of
 Israel.

Here below one can see the textual interchanging of Moabites and Midianites . . . the Torah would see them both (both peoples and their women folk) in time as religiously alluring and dangerous to Israelite identity. Until there arose a need for Ruth and a Book of Ruth -- or in other words, when a need arose to address the presence of 'others among us' then their presence was reinterpreted. Hence . . . Ruth.

יד וְשֵׁם אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמְּכָה, אֲשֶׁר הִכָּה
 אֶת-הַמִּדְיָנִית--זִמְרִי, בֶּן-סָלוּא: נָשִׂיא
 בֵּית-אָב, לְשִׁמְעוֹנִי.
 14 Now the name of the man of Israel that was
 slain, who was slain with the Midianitish woman,
 was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a fathers'
 house among the Simeonites.

טו וְשֵׁם הָאִשָּׁה הַמְּכָה הַמִּדְיָנִית, כְּזוּבִי
 בַּת-צוּר: רֹאשׁ אֲמוֹת בֵּית-אָב בְּמִדְיָן, הוּא.
 {פ} {P}
 15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that
 was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was
 head of the people of a fathers' house in Midian.

טז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר
 16 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying:

יז צָרוּר, אֶת-הַמִּדְיָנִים; וְהִכִּיתֶם, אוֹתָם
 17 'Harass the Midianites, and smite them;

יח כִּי צָרְרִים הֵם לָכֶם, בְּנִכְלִיָּהֶם אֲשֶׁר-נִכְלוּ
 לָכֶם עַל-דָּבָר-פְּעוֹר; וְעַל-דָּבָר כְּזוּבִי בַת-נָשִׂיא
 מִדְיָן, אַחֲתָם, הַמְּכָה בְיוֹם-הַמִּגַּפָּה,
 עַל-דָּבָר-פְּעוֹר.
 18 for they harass you, by their wives wherewith
 they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and
 in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of the prince of
 Midian, their sister, who was slain on the day of the
 plague in the matter of Peor.'

**Here, let's have a brief look at the Torah's understanding of "others" --
Deuteronomy 23: 4 - 9**

Notice the harsh view of the Ammonites and the Moabites -- peoples we can only understand as family, especially if we review in our thoughts the occurrences of Lot and his daughters in Genesis 19. It is also true that Egyptians are family according to the Torah, as they are the progeny of Ishmael, son of Abraham, although clearly not of the "line" we as either Israelites or Jews draw ourselves from . . .

- ד לא-יבא עמוני ומואבי, בקהל יהוה: גם דור עשירי, לא-יבא להם בקהל יהוה עד-עולם.
- 4 An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation shall none of them enter into the assembly of the LORD for ever;
- ה על-דבר אשר לא-קדמו אתכם, בלחם ובמים, בדרכך, בצאתכם ממצרים; ואשר שכר עליך את-בלעם בן-בעור, מפתור ארם נהרים--לקללך.
- 5 because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Aram-naharaim, to curse thee.
- ו ולא-אבה יהוה אלהיך, לשמע אל-בלעם, ויהפך יהוה אלהיך לך את-הקללה, לברכה: כי אהבך, יהוה אלהיך.
- 6 Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.
- ז לא-תדרש שלמם, וטבתם, כל-ימיך, לעולם. {ס}
- 7 Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever. {S}
- ח לא-תתעב אדמי, כי אחיך הוא; לא-תתעב מצרי, כי-גר היית בארצו.
- 8 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother; thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land. (← and by the way, they are relatives too)

ט בָּנִים אֲשֶׁר-יִוָּלְדוּ לָהֶם, דּוֹר שְׁלִישִׁי--יָבֵא לָהֶם,
בְּקֵהל יְהוָה. {ס}

9 The children of the third generation that are born unto them may enter into the assembly of the LORD. {S}

(This ^ is a generous comment as we see here that only three generations must transpire, as opposed to the 10 generations (further above) required of Ammonites and Moabites and subsequently, Midianites . . . (although ^ they too are kinfolk, as per Moses and his wife and children).

Ruth Chapter 1: 14 -- 18 -- here is our “Rose among the thorns . . . “ -- due to ‘the shifting sands of time . . . ‘

יד וַתִּשָּׂנֶה קוֹלוֹ, וַתִּבְכֶּינָה עוֹד; וַתִּשַׁק עֲרֹפָה
לְחֻמּוֹתֶיהָ, וְרוֹת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth cleaved unto her.

טו וַתֹּאמֶר, הִנֵּה שָׁבָה יְבִמְתְךָ, אֶל-עַמָּהּ,
וְאֶל-אֱלֹהֶיהָ; שׁוּבִי, אַחֲרַי יְבִמְתְךָ.

15 And she said: 'Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god; return thou after thy sister-in-law.'

טז וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת אֶל-תַּפְּגֵעִי-בִי, לְעִזְבֹךָ לְשׁוּב
מֵאַחֲרַיךָ: כִּי אֶל-אֲשֶׁר תֵּלְכִי אֵלַי, וּבְאֲשֶׁר תֵּלִינִי
אֶלִי--עִמָּךְ עַמִּי, וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵי

16 And Ruth said: 'Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God;

יז בְּאֲשֶׁר תָּמוּתִי אָמוּת, וְשָׁם אֶקְבֹּר; כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה
יְהוָה לִי, וְכֹה יוֹסִיף--כִּי הַמּוֹת, יִפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ.

17 where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the LORD do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.'

יח וַתֵּרָא, כִּי-מִתְאַמְצָת הִיא לְלָכֶת אַתָּה;
וַתִּחַדֵּל, לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ.

18 And when she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her.