

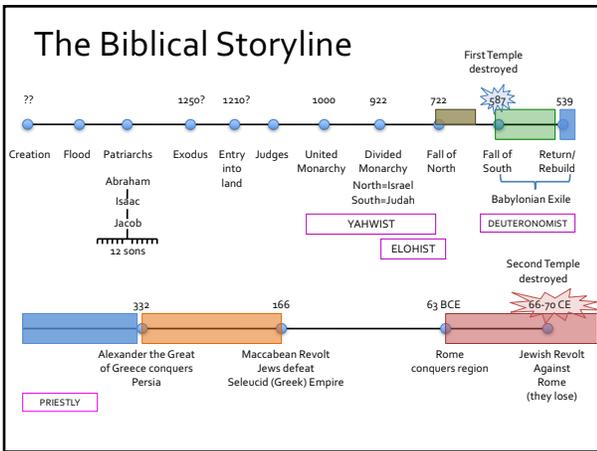
Class 3c

The Story of Ancient Israel: Discoveries & Historical Frameworks



Outline

- Story Mapped to History, part I
 - The Biblical Storyline
 - Conflicts between the Storyline and History
- How Scholars Build Your Bible
 - The process in general
 - The impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls
 - My own research on a 2000-year old manuscript of the Twelve minor prophets



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1375 BCE

Shasu People in YHW

Egyptian texts place this people at a site called YHW around 1375

- Midian is near here, where Exodus 3:1 places Moses' call from God at the bush, to lead the people from slavery
- The place name is so similar to one of the names of God in the Bible (YHWH)



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Consider these next five slides together against the biblical picture of Exodus and conquest of Canaan

1300-1100

Fall of Canaan

- Canaanite city states collapse
- Canaanite commoners rebelled from their elite overlords and established their own society



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1279-1213

Reign of Pharaoh Ramesses II

- Exodus 1:11 says the Hebrews were ordered to build two cities, Pithom and Ramesses
- Could the latter be Pi-Ramesse, built by the Pharaoh?



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Merneptah Stele

- Stone monument that Pharaoh Merneptah of Egypt erected to celebrate his victories over foreigners, including "Israel"
- Discovered in 1896, it's the earliest reference to Israel in a text outside the Bible



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Surveys of Hill Country of Canaan

- Archaeologists have found very few settlements in Canaan before 1200 BCE— maybe 25?
- By 1100, there were around 250; this suggests a mass migration into the region
- But there is no evidence of a widespread conquest, visible in destruction layers in villages of the period



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Israelite Houses

- A simple style of home begins to predominate in this period, with pottery similar to the Canaanites but none of the former fine-ware of the Canaanite elite
- This type of dwelling disappears with the Babylonian invasion



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Silver Scrolls with a biblical passage

- These tiny silver scrolls bear the inscription of the priestly benediction (Numbers 6:24-26)
- Archaeologist Gabriel Barkay found them in a tomb outside Jerusalem
- Nearby pottery and the palaeography suggest they were inscribed around 600 BCE



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Babylonian Invasion and Exile

- The Babylonians, based in southern Iraq, pushed north and destroyed the Assyrian Empire, then marched on Egypt, destroying Judah, Jerusalem and its Temple
- The biblical account (2 Kings 25:8-9, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) is corroborated by destruction layers at many Judean sites



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Post-exilic Regrouping & Composition of Tanak

- The elites exiled to Babylon returned, and were allowed to rebuild their Temple but not their monarchy
- Monotheistic religion became a unifying force and a way of asserting indigenous identity against a series of empires
- No idol figurines are found in this period



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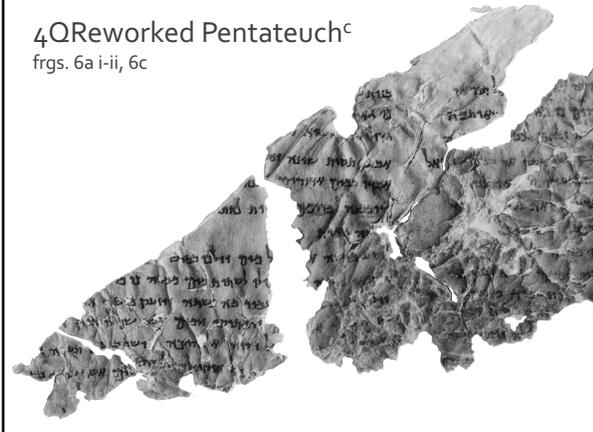
2005 BCE-68 CE

Post-exilic Regrouping & Composition of Tanak

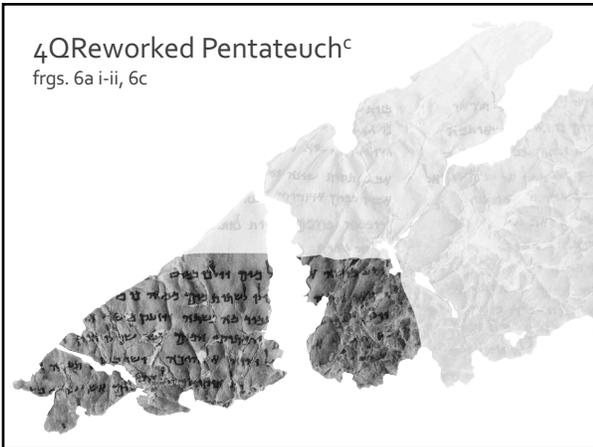
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4QReworked Pentateuch^c frgs. 6a i-ii, 6c



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New Technologies
may help us solve this problem



Herculaneum, Italy

16

New Technologies
may help us solve this problem



Humans were suffocated and entombed in ash

17

New Technologies
may help us solve this problem



The scrolls didn't survive the eruption of Mount Vesuvius very well either (79 CE)

18



New Technologies
may help us solve this problem



Villa of the Papyri, Herculaneum

19

New Technologies
may help us solve this problem



X-ray phase contrast tomography

20

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Virtually Unwrapping
the En-Gedi Scroll

X-ray phase contrast tomography applied to a carbonized scroll of Leviticus from En Gedi, Israel, by researchers and students at the University of Kentucky, 21 September 2016
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tbcUx0u0ow>

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