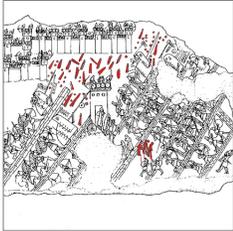


Class 4a

### The Story of Ancient Israel: The Rise & Fall of Kingdoms



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### Outline

- Story Mapped to History, part II
  - The Biblical Storyline
  - Story and History: The Rise & Fall of Kingdoms
- Tales, Tellings & Evidence

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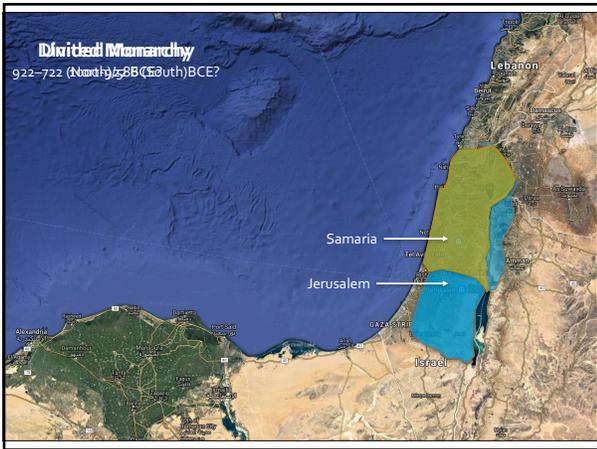
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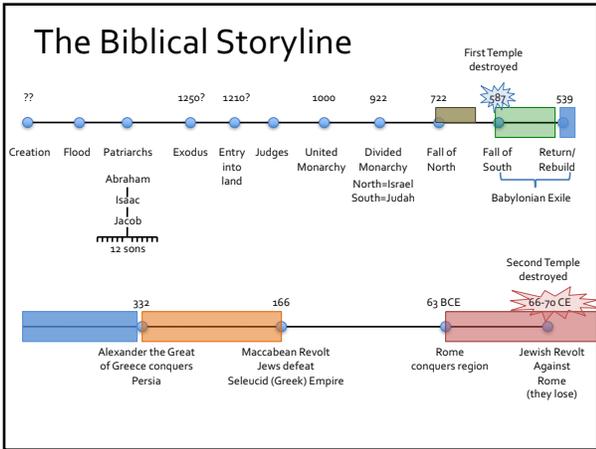
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### Story & History

#### The Origins of Israel

1000

**Palace of David, City of David**

- In 2005, archaeologist Eilat Mazar discovered a massive stone wall; could this be part of the palace of King David?

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### Story & History

#### The Origins of Israel

1000-900

**Six-chambered gates**

- The Bible mentions David's son King Solomon's building campaign, which included cities at Gezer, Hazor and Megiddo
- Archaeologists have found unique six-chambered gates at each location, built just before the invasion of Pharaoh Shishak in 925 BCE

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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### Tel Zayit Abecedary

- Archaeologist Ron Tappy unearthed an abecedary near Jerusalem
- This is the oldest paleo-Hebrew alphabet every found in a secure archaeological context
- It indicates that the potential existed for trained scribes to write down traditions such as those that eventually formed the Bible




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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### Pharaoh Shishak Invades Gezer

- The Bible says Pharaoh Shishak invaded Gezer in 925 BCE, five years after Solomon's death (2 Chronicles 12:2)
- An Egyptian Temple at Karnak describes Shishak's invasion of Gezer
- Archaeologists found dramatic evidence for a destruction at Gezer itself dating to this time




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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### Tel Rehov Female Figurine

- Archaeologist Amihai Mazar found this female figurine when excavating an Israelite house dating to about 850 BCE
- Thousands of these figurines have been found in domestic and sacred sites dating to 900-500 BCE, just when the Bible was promoting the official state religion of monotheism




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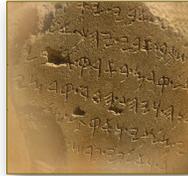
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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### Tel Dan Stele

- Archaeologist Avraham Biran and draftsman Gila Cook found this stone tablet in 1993
- The Aramaic inscription refers to the "King of Israel" and the "House of David"
- It boasts of a military victory, probably by Hazael, king of Damascus, over the Israelites
- Dating to the 800s BCE, it is the earliest archaeological find that directly mentions David




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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### Tomb Inscription: YHWH & Asherah

- Archaeologist William Dever found this tomb inscription in 1968 at Khirbet el-Kôm near Jerusalem
- It mentions "YHWH and his Asherah"
- Asherah is the Canaanite mother goddess; other inscriptions found like this show that in early Israelite religion, God had a wife




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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### Assyrians Invade the Northern Kingdom of Israel

- The Assyrian Empire, based around Mosul in northern Iraq, conquered the northern kingdom in 722 and reduced the southern kingdom to a vassal state
- This is well-documented in Assyrian documents and art, like the reliefs from Sennacherib's Palace in Nineveh
- Many northerners fled to Judah and Jerusalem




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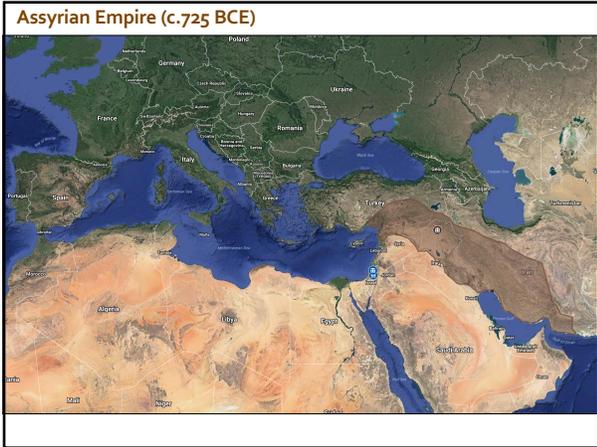
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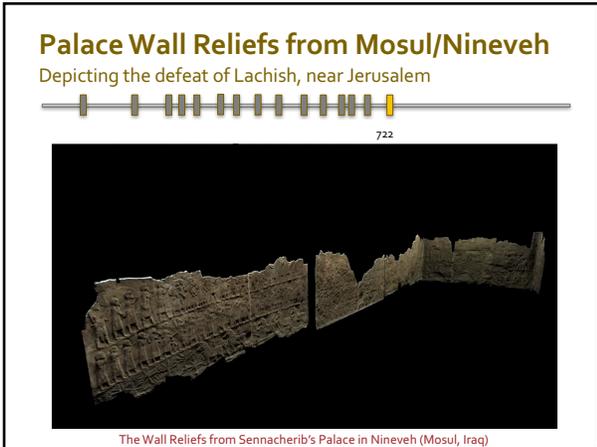
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**The Deuteronomists**  
 Tell the History of Israel in Its Land (Deut 30:1-5)

- 30 When all these things have happened to you, the blessings and the curses that I have set before you, if you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, 2 and return to the Lord your God, and you and your children obey him with all your heart and with all your soul, just as I am commanding you today, 3 then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, gathering you again from all the peoples among whom the Lord your God has scattered you. 4 Even if you are exiled to the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there he will bring you back. 5 The Lord your God will bring you into the land that your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors.

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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### 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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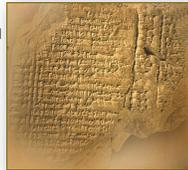
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### Story & History The Origins of Israel



#### 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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### Neo-Babylonian Empire (c.587 BCE)




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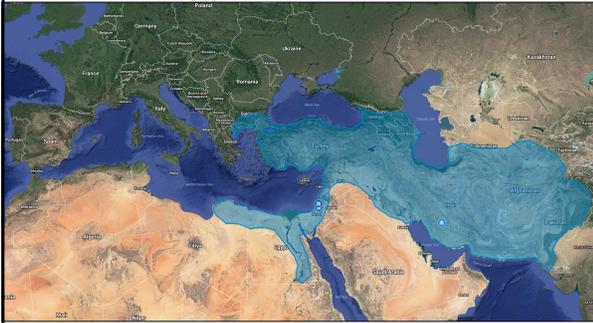
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Persian (or Achaemenid) Empire (c.530 BCE)



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Story & History  
The Origins of Israel



Post-exilic Regrouping & Composition of Tanak

- Some of 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
- In contrast to the earlier monarchies, no idol figurines are found in this period



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Hellenistic Empires (c.330 BCE)



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## Story & History

### The Origins of Israel



#### The Dead Sea Scrolls: Our Earliest "Bibles"

- Bedouin shepherds found seven largely intact scrolls in a cave in 1947
- Archaeologists and Bedouin shepherds found tens of thousands of fragments more in ten additional caves between 1947–1955
- Our earliest copies of all but two of the Jewish biblical books, plus dozens of additional books, some written by the community whose compound was found nearby
- Multiple copies of the same books differ from each other and from our Bibles



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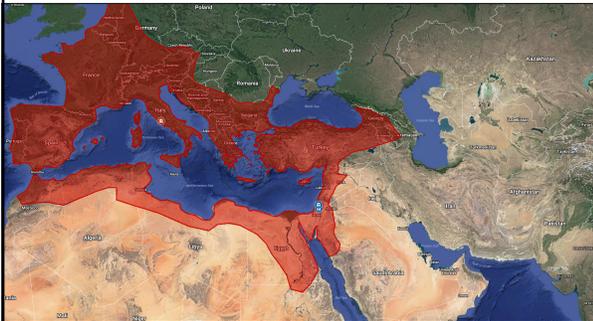
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### Roman Empire (c.31 BCE)



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