



Lesson 3: The Jewish Legacy - Study Materials

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Right: Judaica (clockwise from top): Shabbat candlesticks, handwashing cup, Chumash and Tanakh, Torah pointer, shofar, and etrog box (Source: Wikipedia)

Slide 2: History of the Jewish People

Judaism is the diverse tradition associated with the Jewish people

Jews - history experienced as a continuing dialogue with God

Right: Overview map of the ancient Near East
(Source: Wikipedia)
(click on image to enlarge)



Meanings of “Israel”

- the semi-nomadic tribes who answered God’s call to use the divine law
- those who answer the call and strive to obey the law through the Torah

Geographical location today: Israel, diaspora
(i.e., outside of Israel)

Left: Map of the Middle East today
(click on image to enlarge)

Slide 3: History of the Jewish People (cont'd)

Jewish history starts with the stories recounted in the Hebrew Bible

(Tanakh in Hebrew, "Old Testament" for Christians)

Stories such as....

- creation of the world by a supreme deity or God
- patriarchs and matriarchs
- Moses, who spoke with God and led the people according to God's commandments
- prophets who heard God's warnings for sinners

Post-biblical evolving teachings and practices are collected in the Talmud - a great compendium of Jewish law and lore

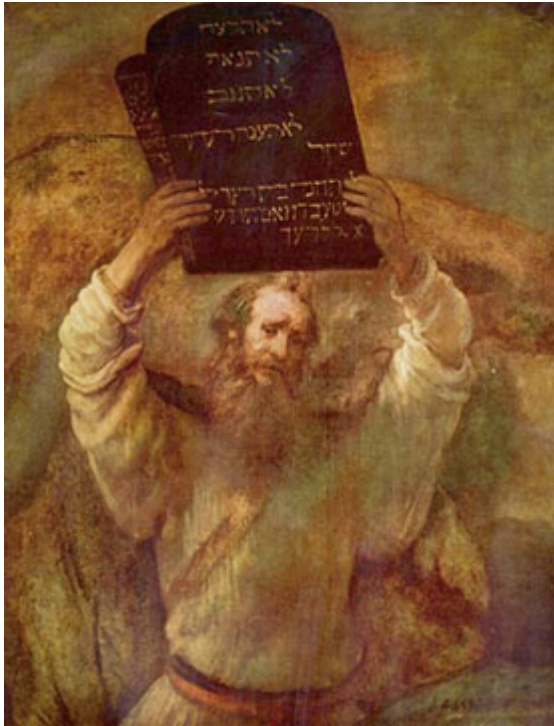



Year 70 AD: Romans destroy the Jewish temple in Jerusalem and disperse the Jews throughout the world

Left: The Siege and Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans Under the Command of Titus, painting by D. Roberts (1850)
(Source: Wikipedia)
(Click on image to enlarge)

Slide 4: Biblical Stories

Problem of Historicity: Scholars are uncertain about the historical accuracy of the early biblical stories because no other evidence exists about certain events and people genealogies mentioned in the Bible.

Tradition holds:	Scholars hold:
<p>Torah (Five Books of Moses) were revealed by God directly to Moses, who wrote them down</p>	<p>Torah was an oral tradition reworked and redacted by later authors</p>
	
<p>Moses with the Ten Commandments by Rembrandt (1659) (Source: Wikipedia)</p>	<p>Sefer Torah at old Glockengasse Synagoge, Cologne (Source: Horsch, Wikipedia)</p>

Slide 5: Biblical Stories (cont'd)

Final form of Torah around 430 BCE: created by Ezra the Scribe and Priest and his editorial team

Intent of later authors: interpreting the formation of Israel from a religious point of view as the results of God's actions in human history

Similarities of biblical stories with Mesopotamian legends: creation, the Garden of Eden, the great flood, the tower of Babel

Despite concerns about accuracy, biblical stories are religiously significant for both Christians and Muslims



God creates Adam by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel, Vatican City, Rome (Source: Wikipedia)
(Click on image to enlarge)

Slide 6: From Creation to the God of Abraham

Genesis 1.1-2.4 - "Priestly" source (God - referred to as Elohim) dates from after 586 BCE

- creation of heaven and earth by God in six "days"
- creation of material universe
- creation of man and woman in the divine "image"
- humans placed as masters of the earth

Genesis 2.4 - The "Yahwist" source (God - referred to as Yahweh) is thought to be an earlier account than Genesis 1.1-2.4

- God is a transcendent creator, without origin, gender, or form, a being utterly different from the created world

The Adam and Eve story:

- theme of exile from paradise is present throughout Jewish history
- either punishment or straightening of the world through Jews

Right: Adam and Eve painting by Lucas Cranach the Elder
(Source: Wikipedia)
(Click on image to enlarge)



Slide 7: Creation to the God of Abraham (cont'd)



Noah's story and the flood

Ten generations after Noah:

- the "patriarchs" (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob)
- the "matriarchs" (their wives - Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel)


Left: Painting by the American Edward Hicks (1780–1849) showing the animals boarding Noah's Ark two by two (Source: Wikipedia) (*Click on image to enlarge*)

Abraham

- born in Chaldean City of Ur, Mesopotamia, migrated to Haran, and then called by God to Canaan
- shows an example of obedience to God's commandments through:
 - circumcision - sign of the covenant with God
 - ready to sacrifice his son Isaac (from Sarah) upon request from God
- Abraham's son Ishmael and his mother (slave Hagar) are driven into the desert - Ishmael is an ancestor of the Arabs
- Abraham is taught by God to be monotheistic

God was perceived as a ruler in relation to the people, like a parent to a child, or a sovereign to vassals, like a husband to a wife


Slide 8: Birth of Israel



- Jacob, Isaac's second son, receives the new name "Israel" after wrestling for a whole night with an angel of God
- Israel - the one who struggled with God
 - names are indicative of the person's character
 - a new name means a new character, in this case of one reborn at a higher level of spirituality
- Jacob is given the promise that many nations will be born from him

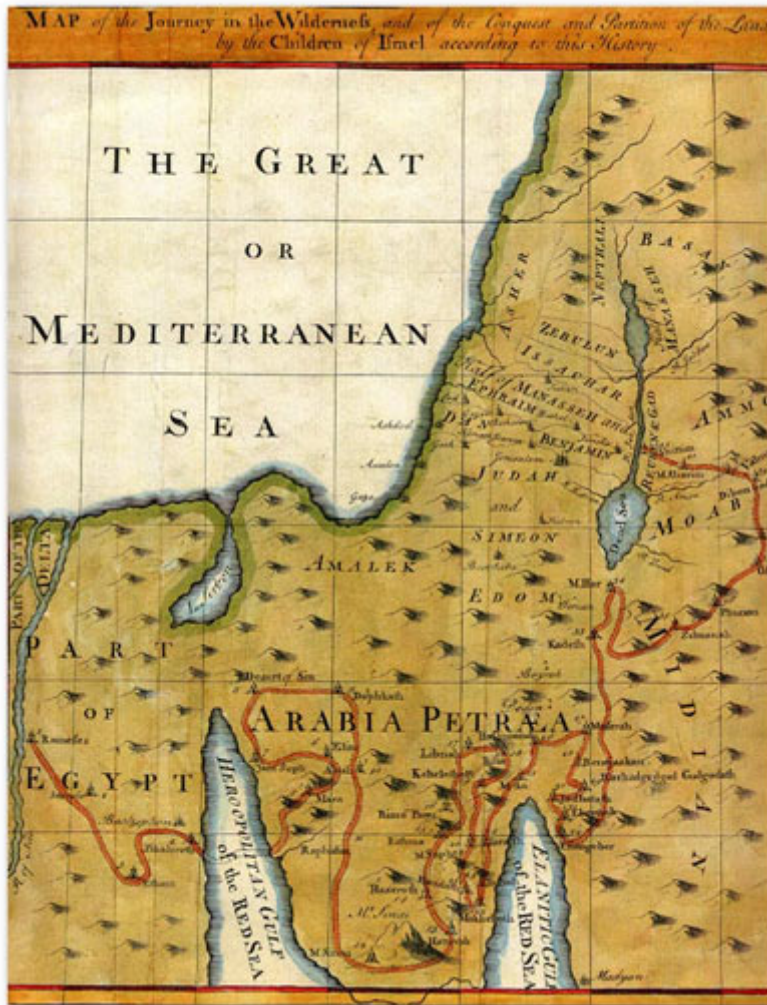
The genealogy of the kings of ancient Israel and Judah

(Click on the image to enlarge)



Above: Jacob Wrestling with the Angel, by Gustave Doré, 1855 (Granger Collection, New York)
(Source: Wikipedia)

Slide 9: Egypt: Bondage and Exodus



The Twelve Tribes of Israel

Jacob/Israel had 12 sons and one daughter from his two wives.

The 12 sons become heads of the twelve tribes of Israel.

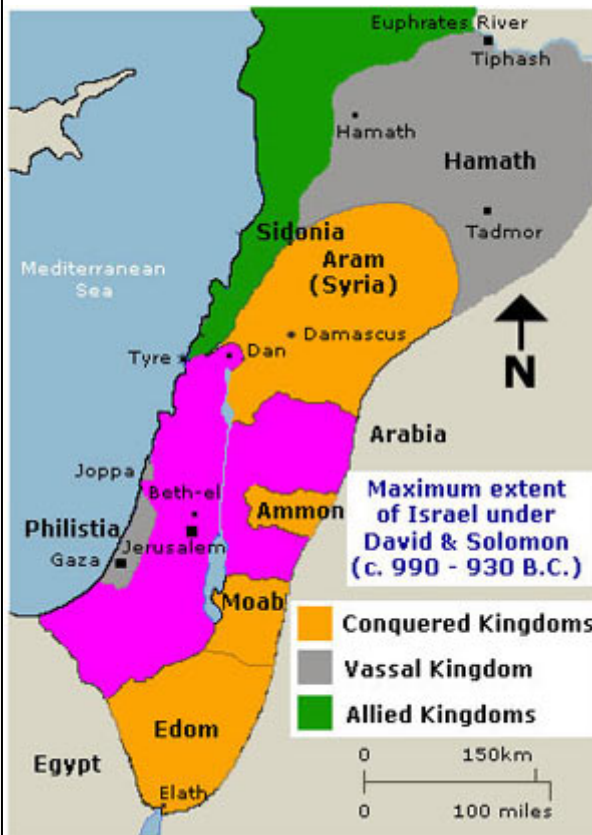
Biblical stories:

- Joseph and the Egyptian Pharaoh
- Moses and the burning bush
- Exit from Egypt: signs, plagues, Passover, redemption from bondage, crossing of the Red Sea
- God's presence as a pillar of cloud/fire; then, Ark of the Covenant
- the Ten Commandments

Left: Map of Israelites' exodus from Egypt and entry into Canaan (Source: 1712 Map of the Exodus, [Lambert Dolphin's Library](#))

Slide 10: The First Temple of Jerusalem

<p>1010-970 BCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King David establishes Jerusalem as the capital
<p>961-931 BCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King Solomon builds a great Temple in Jerusalem Burnt offerings of animals, grain and oil were made to God in the Temple Solomon ended up an idol worshipper and womanizer Division of Israel follows into the northern and southern kingdom (Israel and Judah)
<p>722 BCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel is conquered by Assyria - most Jews are sent into exile in Assyria
<p>586 BCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judah is conquered by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar and the Temple is destroyed The destruction of the Temple is interpreted as divine punishment for Israel's infidelity toward God



Map showing the extent of David and Solomon's Kingdom of Israel (Source: Wikipedia)

Slide 11: Return to Jerusalem

530 BCE	King Cyrus of Persia allows the Jews to return to the land of Israel
515 BCE	The Temple is rebuilt
430 BCE	Ezra, a priest and scribe, coordinates the redaction of the Torah
Judaism becomes contaminated with foreign influences (Persian, Greek Parthian, Roman)	
175-164 BCE	Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a Hellenistic ruler of Syria, forces Greek ways upon the Jews
164 BCE	The Maccabean revolt rejects Antiochus IV's rule and manages to re-establish a Jewish independent kingdom
63 BCE	Roman general Pompey conquers Israel



King Cyrus the Great allowed the Hebrew exiles to resettle and rebuild Jerusalem, earning him an honored place in Judaism, painting by Jean Fouquet (1470-1475) (Source: Wikipedia)

Slide 12: Jewish Groups around the Year 0

Listen to your professor discuss various Jewish groups.

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The Psalms scroll, one of the Dead sea Scrolls
(Hebrew transcription included)
(Source: Library of Congress, Wikipedia)
(Click on image to enlarge)

Sadducees	Pharisees	Essenes	Zealots
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ priests and wealthy businessmen ▪ conservatives who provided a literal interpretation of the Bible ▪ rejected oral law and traditions ▪ denial of an afterlife and coming of a messiah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ more liberal citizens of all classes ▪ studied the applications of Torah to everyday life ▪ in 1st century. BCE - civil war between Sadducees and Pharisees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ monastic community disgusted with what they considered a corrupted priesthood ▪ apocalyptic group who wrote The Dead Sea Scrolls (discovered in 1947) ▪ some retreated to Qumran on the shore of the Dead Sea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ militias who in 66 CE revolted against the Romans <p>Roman general (later emperor) Vespasian and his son Titus suppressed the revolt and destroyed the Second Temple in the year 70 CE</p>

Slide 13: Rabbinic Judaism

Listen to your professor explain Rabbinic Judaism.

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Destruction of the Temple by the Romans brought some revisions:

- synagogues replaced temple
- rabbis replaced priests
- prayers replaced sacrifices

Emphases on the Book and literacy (not for women, however)

Revelation was closed (with the completion of the Bible), but Interpretation (midrash) of the Bible has been encouraged in legal decisions (halakhah) non-legal teachings (haggadah) - folklore, historical knowledge, theological arguments, sermons and mystical teachings

Two messianic movements survived the destruction of the Temple:

- Rabbis - inheritors of the Pharisee tradition; rabbis are teachers, religious decision-makers, creators of liturgical prayer
- Jesus of Nazareth's followers - Christianity

Slide 14: Rabbinic Judaism (cont'd)



- Interpretation led to the Mishnah (oral Torah) - completed in about 200 CE
- Mishnah is divided into six sections: seeds, festivals, women, damages, holy things and purities
- Subordination of women to men, but also directions for responsibilities
- Mishna + rabbinic commentaries on it = The Talmud
- The Jerusalem Talmud (completed c. 400 CE) emphasizes continual study of the Torah as a spiritual practice
- The Babylonian Talmud (completed c. 500 CE) the dominant version in theology and law
- The Talmud continues to grow to this day

Right: An 1878 painting by Maurycy Gottlieb depicting Ashkenazi Jews praying in the synagogue on Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of atonement (Source: Jewish Art, Wikipedia)

Slide 15: Perceptions of God

In early biblical narratives, God is perceived as a:

- burning bush
- pillar of cloud/fire
- smoking mountain

In the prophets, God is present through:

- visits by angelic messengers
- inner voices

Rabbinical tradition:

- God's presence in the world is called Shekinah.
- Shekinah is a feminine quality representing God's nurturing, motherly aspect.
- this is a non-anthropomorphic, transcendent presence
- sometimes Shekinah is depicted as a radiant, winged presence



Yemeni Jew in traditional costume, March 1914
National Geographic Magazine (Source: Wikipedia)

Slide 16: Location of Israel Today



Map location of Israel today (Source: Wikipedia)