

# Lecture 6: Biblical History

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/xa9ds52rl9l9twz6lbhq4/Video-Lecture-6-Biblical-History.mp4?rlkey=7yb1s1gusdbe9r3trl0s67y9r&dl=1>

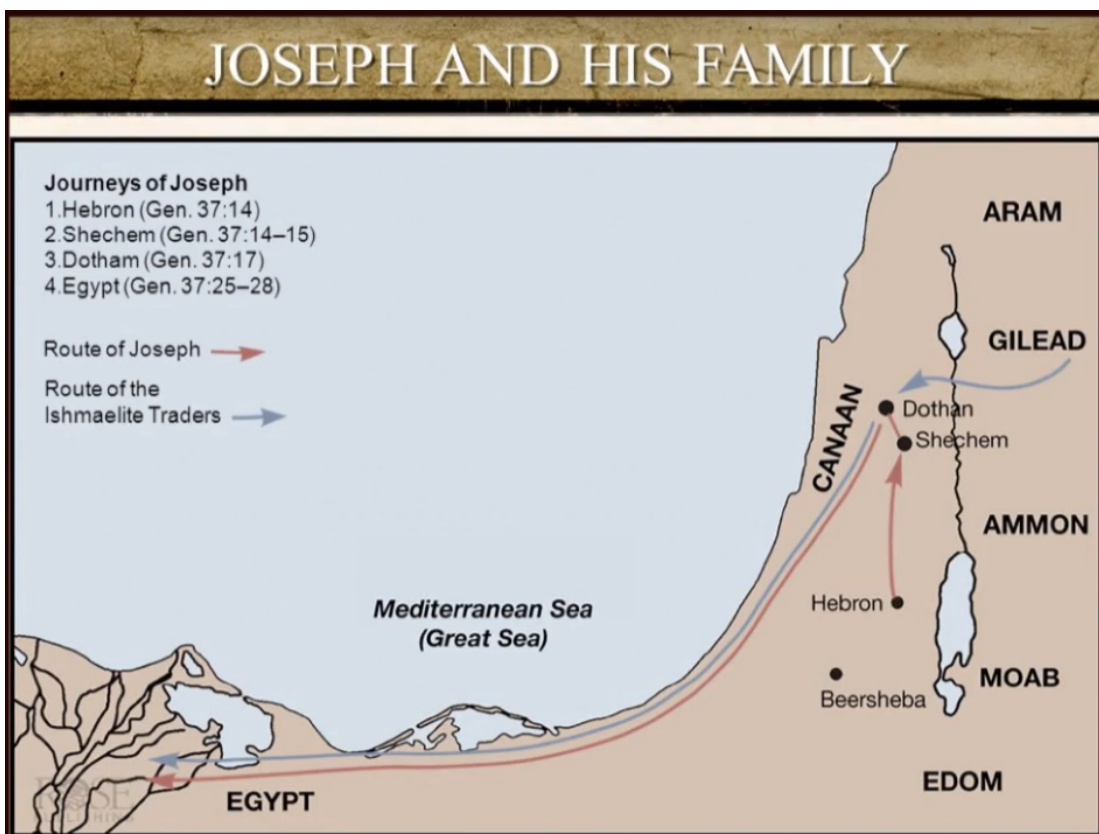
## Biblical History

### Pre-History

- Noah's Three Sons
  - Ham - Founder of Hamitic tribes found in Africa
  - Shem - Founder of Semites (Eastern Semites like Akkadians and Western Semites like Hebrews)
  - Japheth - Founder of Indo-Europeans

### Middle Bronze Age (2000-1550 BC)

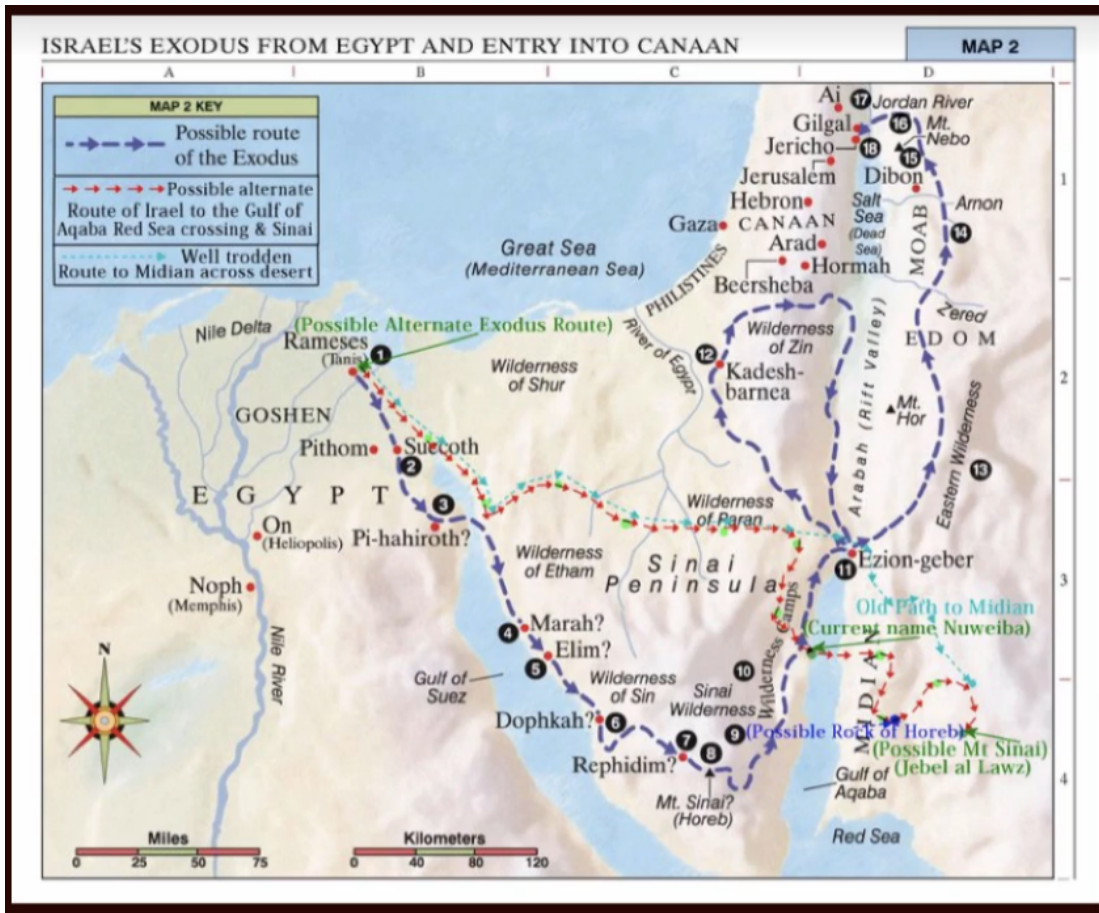
- Biblical History begins in the Middle Bronze Age with the time of Abraham (Genesis 12) around 1800 BC when he is living in Ur of Chaldea which is the southern point of Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq and the Persian Gulf).
- He is a little before, or just contemporaneous with the reign of King Hammurabi of Babylon (1750 BC).
  - King Hammurabi commissioned a stele to be erected with the code of Laws - oldest written code of laws. 282 Paragraphs.
  - Casuistic Law ("if... then...")
    - e.g. "If a man steals an egg, his hand should be cut off"
  - Contrast with the apodictic law of the Decalogue (e.g. "You should not commit murder") because God is more than a simple lawgiver - He is an Instructor, a Father who tells His children what is good for them to do.
  - Both Hammurabi and Abraham are from Western Semitic Cultures
- Joseph went to Egypt as a slave and later as Pharaoh's vizier
  - Before 1700 BC, Egypt was ruled by Hamites (African tribes)
  - From 1700-1550 BC, Egypt is dominated by the Hyksos (Semites)
    - It makes sense considering Joseph's ascension to vizier in Egypt. If Egypt was being ruled by Hamitic tribes, it would have been difficult.



## Late Bronze Age (1550-1200BC)

- 1550-1200 BC
- 14th Century BC: Amarna Letters on clay tablets - correspondence between pharaoh and various kings of the city-states of Syria-Palestine (e.g. Salem, Megiddo, Hazor)
- 1250 BC: The Exodus Event - Moses and the Decalogue; crossing the Red Sea, etc.
- 1210 BC: Beginning of the Israelite Conquest, led by Joshua, and the settlement in Canaan

- 1209 BC: Merneptah Stele - From Egypt, first extra-biblical mention of Israel ("Israel is laid waste, her seed is not")



## Early Iron Age (1200-900 BC)

- 1200 BC: Invasion of the Indo-European "Sea Peoples" (e.g. Philistines) settling on the coastal plain
- 1200-1050 BC: Period of the Judges - Judges are not legal persons, but military charismatic individuals called on by God
- 12th Century BC: The "Emar Tablets" which mention high priestesses and prophetesses which witness to a "matriarchal phase" in Syria-Palestine (e.g. Miriam, Deborah)



- 1050-930: The United Kingdom
  - 1050-1010 BC: King Saul - first king of Israel; chosen by prophet Samuel and public proclamation; central shrine and Ark of Covenant was at Shiloh, Saul fought against the Philistines
  - 1010-970 BC: King David - centralized politics and religion; Jerusalem is captured and becomes the capital of the United Kingdom
  - 970-930 BC: King Solomon - marries Pharaoh's daughter, builds the Temple
  - 930 BC: The assembly at Shechem and schism; Rehoboam and Jeroboam I





## Middle Iron Age (900-586 BC)

- Divided Monarchy
- Israel: 930-722 BC
  - Jeroboam I is the first king
  - Capital: Samaria
  - Tribes: 10 (all but Judah and Benjamin)
  - The Assyrians under King Sargon II destroy the capital and take Israelites to different parts of the empire

- Prophets: Elijah, Elisha (9th Century BC), Hosea (8th Century BC; only writing prophet from the North). Amos prophesied in the Northern Kingdom but is originally from Judah
- Judah: 930-586 BC
  - Rehoboam is the first king
  - Capital: Jerusalem
  - Tribes: 2 (Judah and Benjamin)
  - The Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar destroy Jerusalem and its temple (586 BC) and deport the population to Babylon
  - Prophets: Isaiah, Micah, Amos (8th Century BC), Ezekiel, Jeremiah, etc.
  - Babylonian Exile: 596-539 BC

## Persian Period (539-330 BC)

- 539 BC: The edict of King Cyrus of Persia allows the Hebrews to return to their homeland
- 520-515 BC: The Second Temple is built
  - High commissioner: Zerubbabel
  - High priest: Joshua
  - Prophets: Haggai, Zechariah
- 458 BC: Ezra's mission: Religious Reform
- 445 BC: The 1st Mission of Nehemiah - Restoration of the walls of Jerusalem
  - Prophets: Malachi, Obadiah



## Hellenistic Period (330 BC-63 BC)

- 336-323 BC: Alexander the Great, prophet Jonah, book of Tobit
- 250 BC: The Septuagint (starting with the Pentateuch)
- 180 BC: Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Sirach) - one of the earliest anaginoskomena books of the OT (not part of the Jewish canon)
- 170 BC: Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the pillage of the Temple (2 Macc)
- 167-164 BC: The Great Persecution started by Antiochus Epiphanes and the desecration of the Temple (sacrifices offered to Zeus, pig slaughtered on the altar, etc.); The Maccabean revolt; the Book of Daniel is written; Purification of the Temple and its dedication (1 Macc)
- 150 BC: Foundation of the Essene community at Qumran near the Dead Sea



## Roman Period (63 BC - 323 AD)

- 63 BC: Pompey takes Jerusalem, names Hyrcanus as high priest
- 37-4 BC: Herod the Great is King
- 20-19 BC: Rebuilding and renovation of the Temple
- 6-4 BC: The Birth of Christ

Revision #5

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