

Appendices to the EHV Bible

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Appendices to the *EHV Study Bible*

These appendices were written to serve as a portion of the print and electronic editions of the EHV Study Bible. They are offered here as a stand-alone edition that may be used as a companion to the basic print edition.

The Wartburg Bible series

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In the EHV logo, the circle of light or the rainbow radiating from the cross is divided into three parts to symbolize the three *solas* of the Reformation: by grace alone, by faith alone, and by Scripture alone. This semi-circle, together with the base, forms the Latin letter D, which means 500 and honors the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, the year in which the first edition of the EHV was published.

Appendix 1 The Biblical Text

There are hundreds of handwritten manuscripts of the books that make up the Hebrew and Greek Bibles. There are many small differences of spelling and wording between these handwritten copies. Copyists are not inspired or inerrant, and it is possible, maybe even likely, that the printed versions of the EHV will also contain some typos that escape detection despite careful checking.

Most of the variants in the handwritten manuscripts fall into the same category as typos—they do not raise any question about the meaning of the text. Correcting them is as easy as correcting obvious typos in an English manuscript. Many of variants are simply different spellings of the same word. But occasionally manuscripts have copying differences that add or omit some words, or even whole verses, from the text. It is this type of variant that a textual apparatus (a list of textual variants) must deal with.

New Testament

Recent English translations fall into two general camps in their approach to the text of the New Testament. Some translations closely follow the so-called *Textus Receptus* (TR, Received Text) which was the basis of the King James Version. The so-called *Majority Text* (MT) is not identical to the *Textus Receptus*, but both reconstructions of the text rely heavily on late medieval manuscripts. These text types are also called the Byzantine text. Translations that closely follow this textual tradition have a somewhat longer text of the New Testament than translations which do not. The King James Version, the New King James, and some of their children and cousins are examples of translations in the *Textus Receptus* or *Majority Text* tradition.

The second major approach follows a critically reconstructed text which relies more heavily on several older Greek manuscripts, with an emphasis on certain texts from Egypt, where a greater number of very old manuscripts have survived because of the dry climate. This text type is sometimes called the *Alexandrian Text*. A preference for this tradition is incorporated into the critical editions of the New Testament which are known as the United Bible Society (UBS) and Nestle editions (Nestle/Aland, NA). Overall, this approach results in a slightly shorter text of the New Testament. The NIV, ESV, and CSB are translations that lean in the direction of the UBS/Nestle tradition.

The EHV approach to the text of the New Testament is balanced in that it avoids a bias toward any one textual tradition or group of manuscripts. An objective approach considers all the witnesses to the text, without showing favoritism for one or the other, since each of these has its own strengths and weaknesses as a witness to the biblical text. In dealing with New Testament variants, the textual evidence should be weighed on a case-by-case basis.

From a set of variants, the EHV adopts the reading that best fits the criteria of having manuscript evidence that is early and that is distributed throughout more than one geographical area of the church. The other readings in a set of variants are dealt with in one of three ways:

- A reading that has very little early or widespread support in the textual witnesses is usually not cited in a footnote, in order to avoid an overabundance of textual notes that bog down the reader.
- A reading with significant early and/or widespread support but not as much early or widespread evidence as the reading that was included in our translation may be reported in a footnote that says, “*Some* witnesses to the text read/omit:”
- A reading that does not have early or widespread support, but that is familiar to Bible readers because it was present in the King James tradition (for example, the addition or omission of a whole verse) may be reflected in a footnote that says, “*A few* witnesses to the text *read/omit*:” or a similar explanatory note.

The EHV does not attempt to provide a comprehensive listing of variants, but only a representative sample of the more significant variants.



Papyrus 46: 2 Corinthians 11:33–12:9.

P46 is one of the oldest extant New Testament manuscripts in Greek, written on papyrus, with its most probable date between 175 and 225 AD.

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In summary, a significant number of variants and verses that are omitted from translations that are based on the United Bible Societies/Nestle editions of the New Testament are included in the EHV translation if they have manuscript support that is early and widespread. Some variants that are included in these other editions but that are marked with brackets to identify them as belonging to a lesser rank (such as the long ending of Mark) appear in the EHV without negative markings, if they have early, widespread support. If there are cases in which the evidence for or against inclusion is not clear-cut, our default option is to include the reading in the text with a footnote that not all manuscripts have it. The result is that the EHV New Testament is somewhat longer than many recent translations of the New Testament, since it includes readings that other translations relegate to the footnotes or omit entirely. This practice is not adding to God's Word. It is recording the textual evidence that has been preserved for us by the church.

Old Testament

In the Old Testament the EHV follows the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) version of the Leningrad Codex of the Masoretic Text as our base text, but we also consider variants from the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls, the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint), and other ancient versions.

We use the following terms in our textual footnotes to identify the source of the variant readings:

Hebrew: This term refers to the consonantal reading found in the main body of the text of the BHS version of the Masoretic Text (the *kethiv*=what is written).

Alternate Hebrew reading: This term includes readings written in the margin of the Masoretic text (the *qere*=what is to be read). In some EHV textual notes, the *qere* is also called *the reading from the margin of the Hebrew text*.

The term *alternate Hebrew reading* also includes readings that occur as the *kethiv* in a few Hebrew manuscripts. It includes all other types of Hebrew variants, such as the *tiq soph*, and other rabbinic lists of variants.

Dead Sea Scrolls: The footnotes use the general term *Dead Sea Scrolls*, not the names of specific Hebrew manuscripts. An exception to this is the Great Isaiah Scroll when it is cited in the footnotes to Isaiah.

Samaritan Pentateuch refers to the Samaritan partial edition of the Hebrew Old Testament.

Targum refers to Jewish paraphrases of the Old Testament without identifying specific editions.

The translation does not provide a footnote for every departure from the Masoretic punctuation.

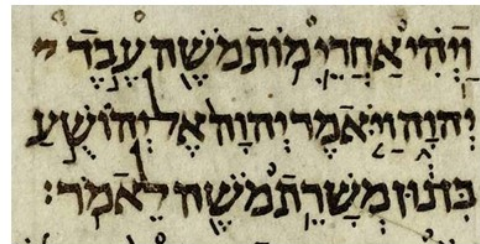
Greek or the Greek Old Testament: In the textual footnotes, *Greek Old Testament* most often refers to readings from the Septuagint. The Septuagint served as the Bible of the early Christian church throughout most of the Mediterranean basin. The main manuscripts of the Septuagint are the same Greek manuscripts that provide our earliest relatively complete New Testament texts.

Alternate Greek reading is the term used if a reading occurs only in some manuscripts of the Septuagint or in an alternate Greek version, like those of Aquila or Symmachus or in papyri. In most cases, the existence of variants within the Septuagint tradition is not noted.

Versions or ancient versions is the term used when more than one ancient version supports a reading (The main ancient versions are the Greek Septuagint, plus the Latin Vulgate, and various versions in Eastern languages, such as the Syriac, Coptic, and so on).

The EHV does not attempt to provide a full apparatus, but only to alert English readers to the existence of significant variants and to demonstrate that the existence of textual variants does not undermine any doctrine of Scripture. To undertake a serious study of textual variants, readers must turn to the textual apparatuses of Hebrew and Greek Bibles and to commentaries on the text.

Rather than undermining confidence in the message of Scripture, a proper use of textual criticism increases confidence in the message of Scripture, because it demonstrates that there is no doctrine of Scripture that is seriously challenged or changed by textual variants.



Aleppo Codex of the Hebrew Bible

(10th Century AD)

Page from Deuteronomy and close-up of Joshua 1:1

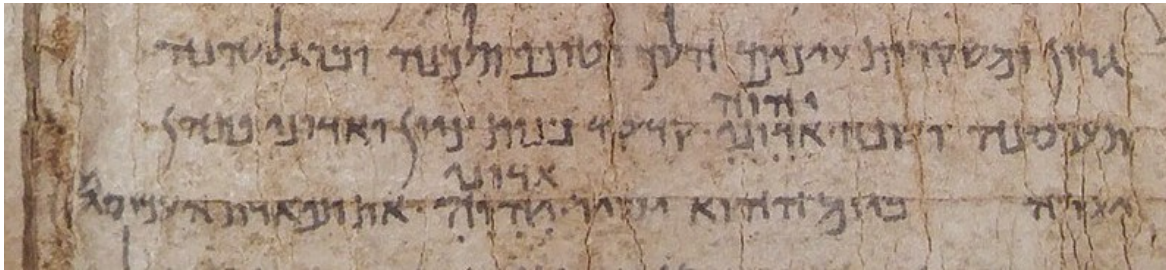
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The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa) (2nd Century BC) is the only complete biblical scroll found among the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran.



Facsimile close-up showing corrections between the lines and cancellation dots below the line



Appendix 2 Biblical Chronology

Events in the Bible are not dated according to a system of absolute dating like our BC/AD calendar, which uses one unified system of continuous dates, such as 4 BC or 30 AD. Biblical events are generally dated in relative terms, which state how many years before or after some other event that specific event occurred, or they are dated by the year of a certain ruler's reign in which they occurred. Some of these biblical events can be connected to specific years of Roman and Greek calendars, which can in turn be connected to our present calendar, and by this means, these events can be assigned approximate years in our calendar system. Using links between biblical events and the Assyrian calendar system, events during the Israelite monarchy can be connected to our calendar in the same way.

Using this method, many of the events of the Old Testament back to Abraham can be dated to our calendar with a relatively small margin of error, often with a plus or minus of just one year for dates in the first millennium BC, or with a plus or minus of ten years for events before 1000 BC.

Because the number of days in a month and the number of months in a year in ancient biblical calendars were based on astronomical observation rather than mathematical calculation, all systems for calculating exact dates for biblical events in our calendar by using computer calculations are unreliable. See FAQ 45 on the Wartburg Project website for further explanation.

For the time before Abraham, the dating is dependent on the completeness of the genealogies in Genesis 1–11. If these genealogies list every generation, the biblical date for Creation would be shortly before 4000 BC. But if these genealogies are not complete and have gaps, the date would be earlier.

Old Testament Chronology

All dates are approximate because the anchor date, which is the building of the Temple in 966 BC, which occurred 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt, is not certain to an exact year. If this date is off by one or more years, all the other dates will be off by the same margin.

Abraham moves to Canaan	2091 BC
Jacob flees to Haran	1929 BC
Joseph sold into slavery	1898 BC
Jacob and his family move to Egypt	1876 BC
The Exodus from Egypt	1446 BC
Israel enters the Promised Land	1406 BC
The era of the Judges	1370–1050 BC
Saul's reign as king	1050–1010 BC
David's reign as king	1010–970 BC
Solomon's reign as king	970–931 BC
The division of the kingdom of Israel	931 BC
The Assyrians capture Samaria (the Northern Kingdom of Israel)	722 BC
The first Jewish exiles are taken to Babylon	605 BC
The Babylonian army destroys Jerusalem	586 or 587 BC
Cyrus decrees that Jewish exiles may return to Jerusalem	539 or 538 BC
The Second Temple is completed	516 BC
Ezra arrives in Jerusalem	458 BC
Nehemiah arrives in Jerusalem	445 BC

For a detailed Old Testament chronology, which differs in some points from this one, see *The Lutheran Bible Companion, Volume 1*, Concordia, 2014, p lxxiv-xciv.

New Testament Chronology

In New Testament chronology, the biggest uncertainties are the dates of the birth and death of Christ. Jesus' birth must be dated before the death of Herod, which commonly has been believed to have occurred in 4 BC, though this date is disputed in favor of a more recent date, 1 or 2 BC. Jesus' death is dated by a cross-connection between the beginning of his ministry and the reign of the Roman emperor Tiberius. Depending on how this connection is interpreted, Jesus' death occurred in either 30 AD or 33 AD. Each of these dates has pluses and minuses. The year 30 AD as the year of Jesus' death seems to correlate better with the life and ministry of Paul, but 33 AD is also widely accepted as the year of Jesus' death. The chart below is based on the 30 AD date. For an example of a system which follows the 33 AD date, see *The Lutheran Bible Companion, Volume 1*, Concordia, 2014, p xcv-xcvix.

Birth of Jesus Christ	c. 6–2 BC
Baptism of Jesus Christ	Fall 26 AD
Death and resurrection of Jesus Christ	April, 30 AD
Paul’s first mission journey	c. 46/47–48 AD
Jerusalem council of Acts 15	49 AD
Paul’s second mission journey	c. 49/50–52 AD
Paul’s third mission journey	c. 53–57 AD
Paul’s imprisonment at Caesarea	c. 57–59 AD
Arrival of Festus, Paul’s trip toward Rome	c. 59 AD
Paul’s first captivity at Rome	c. 60–62 AD
Paul’s death at Rome	c. 64–67 AD
The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans	70 AD
John writes Revelation, the last book of the Bible	c. 95 AD

See also:

Andrew E. Steinman, *From Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology*, St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2011.

Steven L. Ware, *When Was Jesus Really Born?* St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2013.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Isagogics Notes, Chapter 43. Posted as an article, “Old Testament Biblical Chronology,” in the online library on the Wartburg Project website.

“New Testament Chronology,” an article posted in the online library on the Wartburg Project website.

A number of other articles on chronology are posted in the online library on the Wartburg Project website.

Appendix 3 Biblical Weights and Measures

The EHV translates ancient measurements into modern American measurements, such as feet, pounds, gallons, etc., except when it is necessary to keep the ancient measurement in order to preserve the symbolism in the text. For example, if a city measures 12,000 x 12,000 stadia, or when one ancient measurement is explained in terms of another ancient measurement (an omer is ten ephahs), the ancient measurement is retained in the translation. When a modern measurement is used in the text of the translation, footnotes may provide the ancient measurement, and vice versa.

The EHV uses the American system of weights and measures, with occasional reference to metric measurements. The American system is similar to the Imperial system, which was used in the British Empire. WP will produce a metric version of the EHV if there is interest.

Ancient measurements were not based on a universal standard, but varied depending on the body size of the measurer or on the size of the container used to make the measurement, so all measurements in the EHV are approximate. Calculations are also rounded off.

A *cubit* was the distance from the fingertip to the elbow.¹ Scholars use a standard cubit of 18 inches. The cubit of a typical 6-foot-tall man is 19½ inches. There also was a long cubit of about 21 inches.

A *span* is the distance from the tip of the little finger to the tip of the thumb with the hand spread out. Scholars use a span of 9 inches. The span of a typical 6-foot-tall man is 10 inches.

Each specific temple, palace, administrative unit, or building project may have had its own standard, which was recorded on a set of measuring sticks or cords. What was important to them was not that the same standard was used everywhere, but that individuals used the same standard when buying and when selling commodities.

For this and other reasons, the precise value of many of the ancient units of measurement is uncertain, so all figures are approximations. Values of a unit of measurement may also vary with time and place. Calculations in the EHV are often rounded off to the nearest full unit.

This uncertainty about the size of measurements applies especially to the Old Testament measurements of dry and liquid capacity and to the weight of the talent. Estimates of the value of these units vary widely.

Measurements of length:

cubit=pechus=2 spans=18 inches, or a long cubit of 21 inches (a cubit and a handbreadth)
span=half a cubit=3 handbreadths=9 inches
handbreadth=3 inches
thumb or finger=1 inch
reed or rod=6 long cubits=10½ feet
fathom=6 feet
stadium/stadia=200 yards, but not all actual stadiums were the same length
Roman mile=4,854 feet (1000 paces)
Sabbath day's journey=3/5 mile

The stadium at Nemea



A *stadion* or *stadium* was the name of a race in the ancient Olympics and the course or arena in which it was run. The course was approximately 200 meters

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Dry measure:

cor/kor=homer=10 ephahs=6 bushels or a bit more
(a bushel is about 1.25 cubic feet or 64 pints)
ephah=0.6 bushel or 20 quarts
one tenth of a ephah=2 quarts
two tenths of a ephah=4 quarts
three tenths of an ephah=6 quarts
letheke=3 bushels

¹ Compare the English *foot* which was the length of a man's foot and the *yard* which was the distance from the tip of the nose to the end of fingers.

seah=saton=1/3 ephah=7 quarts ??
modios=7.7 quarts
omer=1/10 ephah=2 quarts
choenix=quart=1 quart or a bit less

Liquid measure:

cor=10 baths=60 gallons
bath=ephah=6 hins=6 gallons
hin=4 quarts or 1 gallon
kab=4 logs=1.4 quarts
log=0.35 quart
xestes=1 pint
Greek metretes/measure=10 gallons

Weights:

kikkar=talent=60 minas=75 pounds (estimates vary from 50–120 pounds)
mina=1.25 pound=20 ounces
shekel=2 bekas=0.4 ounce, or as much as 0.5 ounce
pim=0.3 ounce
beka=half shekel=0.2 ounce
gerah=.02 ounce? /half a gram
daric=0.3 ounce
Roman pound/litra=0.75 pound
denarius=this coin did not have a standard weight, in part, because of currency debasement

LOGOS Bible Software provides good pictures and illustrations of biblical units of measure.

For time of day, the EHV usually uses the ancient system of *third hour*, *sixth hour*, etc., with a footnote to the equivalent modern time. This may be especially necessary in some places in which it is uncertain which time system is being used (see the footnotes in John's Gospel). Since the daylight and dark period were each divided into twelve hours, the length of the hour varied with the seasons.

Addendum 3B Biblical Measurement, Metric Version

All measurements are approximate and rounded off.

They are not precise enough for exactly calculating large quantities.

Separate sources were used for American and metric comparisons, and any discrepancies were left unreconciled to illustrate the uncertainties about these measurements.

Measurements of length in meters:

cubit=pechus=2 spans=0.46 m, or a long cubit of 0.53 m (a cubit and a handbreadth)
span=half a cubit=3 handbreadths=23 cm
handbreadth=8 cm
thumb or finger=1.8 cm
reed or rod=6 long cubits=2.7 m
fathom=1.8 m
stadium/stadion=183 m, but not all actual stadiums were the same length
Roman mile (1000 paces)=1479.5 m
Sabbath day's journey=0.97 km

Measurements of volume

Dry measure in liters:

cor/kor=homer=10 ephahs=220 liters
ephah=22 liters

one tenth of a ephah=2.2 liters
two tenths of a ephah=4.4 liters
three tenths of an ephah=6.6 liters
letheke=110 liters
seah=saton=1/3 ephah=7.3 liters
modios=8.7 liters
omer=1/10 ephah=2.2 liters
choenix=quart=1 liter

Liquid measure:

cor=10 baths=220 liters
bath=ephah=6 hins=22 liters
hin=3.7 liters
kab=4 logs=1.2 liters
log=0.31 liters
xestes=0.5 liters
Greek metretes/measure=38 liters

Weights in grams and kilograms:

kikkar=talent=60 minas=34 kg (estimates vary greatly)
mina=0.57 kg
shekel=2 bekas=11.3 g
pim=9.5 g
beka=half shekel=5.7 g
gerah=0.57 g
daric=8.5 g
Roman pound/litra=0.34 kg
denarius=this coin did not have a standard weight, in part, because of currency debasement

Appendix 4 Israel and the Nations

Israel and the Great Powers During the Old Testament: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia

Israel's geographic location posed two special tests to its faith.

Israel's agriculture was dependent on sufficient rain, especially in the crucial fall and spring seasons. Israel had to make a choice: Who provides the rain? The LORD or Baal? Often the Israelites made the wrong choice, especially under Ahab and Jezebel.

Israel was also caught in the middle of the wars between two sets of world powers: the ancient empire of Egypt to the south and whoever was the current empire emerging from Mesopotamia to the north: Hittites, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Macedonian Greeks. These international conflicts had a great influence on the political history of Israel and Judah. Though the prophets warned the kings of Israel and Judah against trusting in international alliances, they too often looked to other nations rather than to the LORD to rescue them.

Egypt

Egypt was one of the cradles of civilization, beginning in about 3000 BC. Old Kingdom Egypt produced the pyramids in about 2500 BC. During the early periods of Egyptian history, Egypt's interests in Asia were largely commerce, acquiring raw materials like lumber and metals, and establishing a secure

buffer for its border.

Egypt was not only an enemy of Israel but was also a country where Israelites frequently sought refuge. Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 12:10-20), King Jeroboam of Israel (1 Kings 11:40), Judean refugees fleeing from the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:26 and Jeremiah 43:5-7), and the baby Jesus and his family (Matthew 2:13-15) are among the many refugees from Israel to Egypt. The emerging nation of Israel itself spent 430 years in Egypt, from about 1877 BC to 1447 BC according to biblical chronology.²

Led by Jacob and Joseph, Israel went down to Egypt during the 12th dynasty of the Middle Kingdom Egypt. For part of the 430 years during which Israel was in Egypt, Egypt was ruled for a time by foreign rulers from Canaan called Hyksos. This disruption of native Egyptian dynasties lasted from about 1730 to 1570 BC. The expulsion of the Hyksos led to the establishment of New Kingdom Egypt and to the oppression of Israel. The New Kingdom pharaohs of the 18th dynasty were more militaristic and more interested in exerting control over Canaan in order to prevent a re-occurrence of the Hyksos domination.

Some scholars date the exodus to the 13th century BC, during the 19th dynasty of the New Kingdom, but this date cannot be reconciled with the data in 1 Kings 6, in Judges, and in Joshua. The Merneptah Stele, the only mention in ancient Egyptian records of Israel in its homeland, dates to about 1210 BC, during this period. This shows that Israel was already an established entity in Canaan by this date.

During much of the first millennium BC, Egypt was no longer ruled by native pharaohs but by Libyan and Nubian (Cushite) pharaohs, whose people had long served in Egypt as mercenaries. During this period, Israel's contacts with Egypt were largely with pharaohs who were trying to establish or maintain a foothold in Canaan as a buffer against encroaching Mesopotamian powers. Despite the prophets' warnings, Israel frequently allied itself with Egypt against either Assyria or Babylon. But Egypt always either oppressed Israel or failed them.

During the 10th century BC, an unnamed pharaoh of Egypt gave a daughter to Solomon in marriage in order to seal an alliance with him. The same ruler captured the Canaanite city of Gezer and gave it to Solomon as a wedding gift (1 Kings 3:1; 1 Kings 9:16). Pharaoh Siamun of the 21st dynasty (986–967) is the most commonly proposed candidate for this role.

1 Kings 14:25-26 and 2 Chronicles 12:2-4 report an invasion of Israel during the reign of Jeroboam I by Pharaoh Shishak and a subsequent raid on Jerusalem and the temple. Shishak is generally identified with Shoshenq I of the 22nd dynasty (943–922).

2 Kings 17:4 says that King Hoshea of Israel sent letters to “So, King of Egypt” to help him resist Assyria. No pharaoh with the name So is known from Egyptian records from the time of Hoshea (about 730 BC). During this time Egypt had three dynasties ruling contemporaneously. Of the pharaohs of this dynasty Osorkon IV (730–715) is the pharaoh commonly identified with So.

2 Kings 19:9 and Isaiah 37:9 mention the 25th dynasty pharaoh Tirhakah (690–664) as an ally of Judah against Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 BC. Tirhakah is called the King of Cush because he was a member of a Nubian dynasty. (Nubia is the territory south of Egypt.) His efforts to help Judah, probably undertaken when he was still crown prince, failed.

2 Kings 23:29 and 2 Chronicles 35:20-25 say that the 26th dynasty pharaoh Neco II (610–595) was responsible for the death of Josiah of Judah in battle at Megiddo in 609 BC. Josiah was trying to stop Neco from going to help Assyria against the rising power of Babylon.

Jeremiah 44:30 warns Judah that Neco's successor Apries (also called Hophra) (589–570) will be defeated by Babylon and will not be able to help Judah.

Further information about some of these incidents is reported in the next two sections of this

² All dates are approximate. There are many uncertainties concerning specifics of the chronology.

appendix.



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Assyria

Assyria was an important commercial power already in the second millennium BC. Located along the Tigris River, in what today is the northern part of Iraq, it had trading ties westward into present-day Turkey and eastward into present-day Iran. It had several periods of prominence and decline during this early period.

Assyria did not, however, have any direct influence on Israel until the 9th century BC. In 853 BC Ahab of Israel joined with an Aramean (Syrian) coalition that was resisting Assyrian expansion into Syria-Palestine. This first Assyrian attempt to push south into Syria-Palestine failed. Assyrian records say that King Jehu of Israel paid tribute to Assyria in 841 BC, in effect being a reluctant “ally” of Assyria versus Aram.

As a result of Assyrian decline, Israel enjoyed comparative peace, freedom, and power during a vacuum of international powers. During this period, the LORD sent his prophet Jonah to preach to the city of Nineveh in Assyria, a world power which was temporarily in eclipse (2 Kings 14:25). The result of his preaching was a short-lived repentance in Nineveh. Assyria was the very power which had already threatened Israel once, in 853 BC, and would later return to destroy it in 722 BC. This explains Jonah’s unwillingness to preach to Assyria. He was afraid his mission might succeed, and Nineveh would escape judgment.

Through the mid-8th Century BC both the kingdom of Israel in the north and the kingdom of Judah in the south enjoyed a period of prominence and prosperity due to the vacuum of superpowers on the international scene. Egypt was a washed-up has-been of an empire, and Assyria was in temporary decline. Under Jeroboam II (781-753) the northern kingdom of Israel reached the zenith of its power. Under Azariah/Uzziah (791-739) Judah also prospered for a time, both militarily and economically. Both kingdoms, situated as they were on the important trade routes between the Fertile Crescent and Egypt,

were political and economic centers of importance.

Spiritually, Israel was already in its death throes. Amos warned: “Woe to you who are complacent in Zion, you who feel secure on Mount Samaria.... I am about to raise up a nation against you, O house of Israel, declares the LORD, the God of Armies” (Amos 6:1-14). The prophet Hosea also issued prophetic warnings against the Assyrian threat to Israel and Judah.

Assyria revived as an imperial power under the great Tiglath Pileser III (745-727). He invaded Aram (Syria), defeated a western coalition that had formed against him, subdued Merodach-Baladan of Babylon, and when Israel’s power rapidly disintegrated after King Jeroboam II, he subjected King Menahem of Israel (752-741) to tribute and began deportations of captives from Israel in the 730s. (He is the “Pul” mentioned as “king of Assyria” in 2 Kings 15:19-20.) According to one interpretation of Assyrian records, Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah participated in a league against Tiglath Pileser but had to submit to him. Ahaz of Judah allied himself (that is, subjected himself) to Assyria to gain help against Aram and Israel. Ahaz became completely subservient to Tiglath Pileser, even to the point of introducing symbols of his submission into the temple at Jerusalem (2 Kings 16:7-18).

Shalmaneser IV (727-722) succeeded Tiglath Pileser as king of Assyria. When Israel’s King Hoshea (731-722) tried to enlist Egypt’s help in a rebellion against Assyria, Shalmaneser imprisoned Hoshea and began a siege against Samaria that lasted three years (2 Kings 17:3-6). Apparently Shalmaneser died during the final stages of this siege of Samaria, and the work of destroying Samaria was completed by Sargon (722-705). The disintegration of the Northern Kingdom of Israel followed, and the people who eventually became the Samaritans were imported into Israel to replace the deported Israelites.

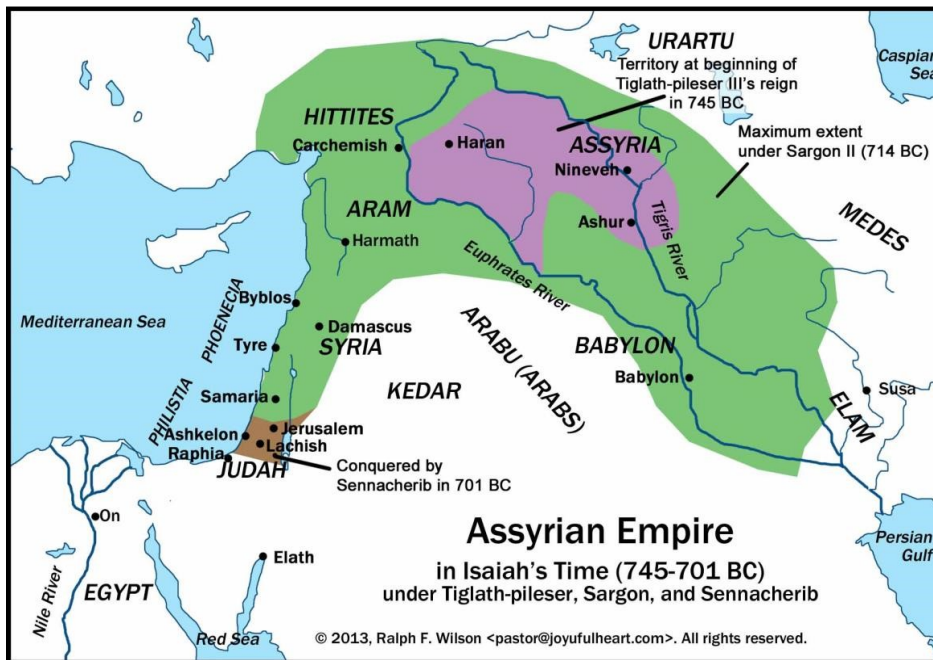
Sargon was followed by Sennacherib (705-681). Early in Sennacherib’s reign Merodach-Baladan of Babylonia plotted against Assyria with Hezekiah of Judah (2 Kings 20:12-19). It was during this alliance that Hezekiah (729/715-686) foolishly showed the Babylonians all his treasures (Isaiah 39). (Incidentally, the events as reported in 2 Kings and Isaiah are not in chronological order. The illness of Hezekiah and the embassy from Merodach Baladan must have preceded Sennacherib’s attack in 701 BC.) Sennacherib first marched against Babylon, which was the nearer threat to him, and subdued it. Hezekiah knew that he was in danger and prepared for the coming siege of Jerusalem by cutting a water tunnel from the spring of Gihon on the east side of Jerusalem into the central part of the city (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:30). It is still possible for tourists to Jerusalem to walk through this tunnel, 2700 hundred years after its construction.

Having subdued Babylon for the time being, Sennacherib turned on Judah, captured most of its key cities including Lachish, made Hezekiah a tributary, thwarted Egyptian efforts to interfere, and sent his commander, the Rab Shakeh (translated “herald” in 2 Kings 18:17, 37) to threaten Jerusalem. The siege of Jerusalem is reported in 2 Kings 18 and 19 and in Isaiah 36 and 37. After the sudden destruction of 185,000 Assyrian soldiers by an angel of the LORD at Jerusalem, Sennacherib was forced to return to Nineveh, where he was killed by two of his sons some years later (2 Kings 19:37).

Sennacherib was succeeded by Esarhaddon (681-668), who carried on successful campaigns against Phoenicia and Egypt. Manasseh, the wicked king of Judah (687-642), was allowed to rule in relative freedom as long as he paid tribute to Assyria, but he was briefly taken to Babylon as a prisoner when he was suspected of disloyalty (2 Chronicles 33:11-13). Assurbanipal (668-626) succeeded Esarhaddon as king of Assyria. He conducted a number of successful campaigns and was noted for his rebuilding of Nineveh, but after his reign, the decline of Assyria was rapid. Egypt revolted. The Medes conquered Asshur in 614 BC, and Nineveh fell to the Medes and Babylonians in 612 BC.

With the decline of Assyria, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed its last brief period of spiritual revival under good King Josiah (640-608), who tried to renew the spiritual life of all of Israel, including the north, during his great reform. When Neco of Egypt passed through Palestine in 609 BC to prop up Assyria versus Babylon, Josiah tried to stop him at the Megiddo pass and was killed in battle. Judah’s

fortunes quickly deteriorated under Josiah's sons Jehoahaz (609), who was deported to Egypt, and Jehoiakim (609-598), who came to power as an Egyptian puppet. Israel was now caught in the middle of the showdown between Egypt and Babylon, which is reported in the next section.



Babylon

Babylon is mentioned as a center of world power and culture already in Genesis 10. During the second millennium BC, Babylon was a cultural center whose influence was felt even in Israel. Babylonian Akkadian was the international language of this period.

Direct Babylonian contact with Israel began during the Neo-Babylonian Empire, which was ruled by the Chaldeans. This new Babylonian kingdom rose to power under Nebopolassar near the end of the 7th century BC and pushed westward under his son Nebuchadnezzar (605-562). Nebuchadnezzar was the commander of Babylon's army which defeated Egypt at Carchemish in 605 BC. Soon thereafter Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem for the first time and made the first deportation of Judean captives, including Daniel and his friends (2 Kings 24:1, Daniel 1:1-4). This occurred during the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598), who was caught between declining Egypt and rising Babylon.

In 598 BC, Jehoiakim revolted against Nebuchadnezzar with the aid of Egypt. During the subsequent siege of Jerusalem Jehoiakim died, and he received "the burial of a donkey" for his disloyalty (Jeremiah 22:18-19; 36:30; 2 Kings 24:2-6).

When Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin became king, Nebuchadnezzar completed the siege of Jerusalem in 597 BC. He took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon, along with the second deportation of Jewish notables, including Ezekiel (2 Kings 24:12-16; Ezekiel 1:1-2).

Nebuchadnezzar placed Josiah's son Zedekiah (597-586) on Judah's throne, but when Zedekiah rebelled in 589 BC, the Babylonian king decided to break Judah's power for good. The Edomites took advantage of Nebuchadnezzar's siege and also invaded Judah (Obadiah 1:10-14; Psalm 137:7; Lamentations 4:21-22). Nebuchadnezzar destroyed one Judean city after the other: Ramat Rahel, Beth Shemesh, Lachish, Arad, and En Gedi. Finally the walls of Jerusalem were breached, and the city and the temple were destroyed (in 586 or 587 BC). Zedekiah's sons were killed before his eyes. He was then

blinded and led captive to Babylon (2 Kings 25:1-21). Jeremiah the prophet records these final events in Jerusalem, particularly his own dealings with King Zedekiah, in chapters 37 to 39 of his book.

During his exile in Babylon, Daniel had significant interaction with Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, the first and last kings of Babylon (Daniel 1-6). Babylon was captured by the Persians in 539 BC, and Cyrus of Persia allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem.



Persia

The Persians and their cousins the Medes were Indo-European peoples, who lived in what is today Iran. They were on the sidelines of world power until the sudden rise of the Persian Empire under the leadership of Cyrus the Great. They built the greatest empire the world had seen up to that point, an empire that extended from Greece to India.

Four Persian Kings had a significant influence on Israel. Their story is told in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther and in the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah.

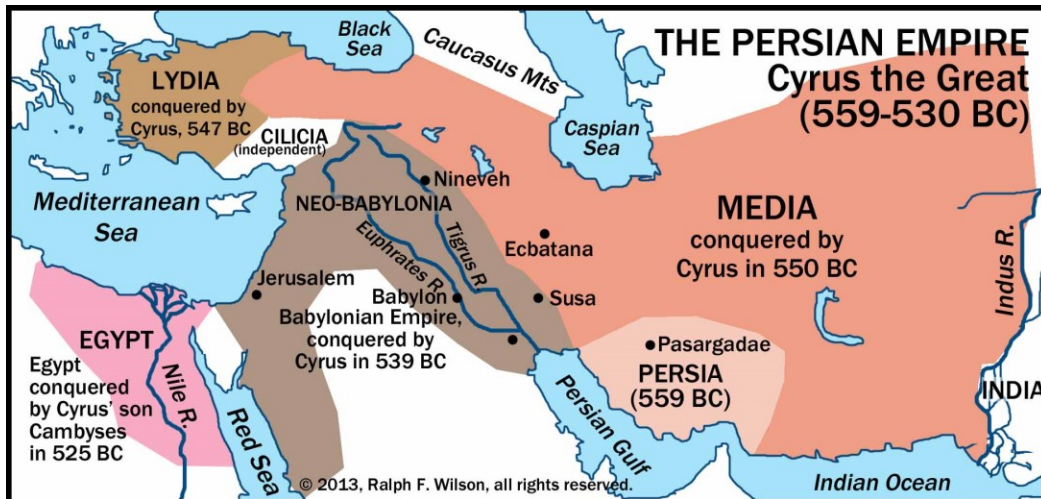
Cyrus, the founder of the empire, allowed the Jews who wished to do so to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple, shortly after the beginning of the Persian Empire in 539 BC.

Darius, the great organizer of the empire, who came to power in about 522 BC, after a period of disorder in the Persian Empire, reaffirmed the right of the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem, and they finished the rebuilding of the temple in about 516 BC.

Xerxes (Ahasuerus) was the husband of Esther. He is most famous for his failed attempt to conquer Greece in 480 BC. During his reign, Esther and Mordecai played a role in saving the Jews from being exterminated by the plot of Haman.

Artaxerxes was the king who was served by Ezra and Nehemiah. He permitted them to return to Jerusalem in the 450s and 440s BC to rebuild the spiritual and physical walls of Jerusalem.

Israel remained under Persian control until the arrival of Alexander the Great in about 330 BC. The rule of Alexander's empire over Israel lies outside the bounds of biblical history, but it plays a role in the prophecies of Daniel. See Appendix 6 on the intertestamental period.



Israel and her Neighbors During the Old Testament: Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia, Phoenicia, and Aram

This list is not intended to provide a detailed history but just to serve as a quick reference to be used with those books in which these enemies appear. More detailed information about a specific time period will be provided at appropriate places in the relevant books.

Edom, Moab, and Ammon were three cousin nations of Israel.

Edom

The Edomites were Israel's bitter enemies, whose territory extended from the southern end of the Dead Sea to the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. Their heartland was the area east of the Arabah Valley (the Great Rift), but they also claimed land west of the Arabah and encroached on the territory of Judah from the south.

The Edomites were descendants of Jacob's brother Esau, and the hostility of these two brothers set the pattern for the hostility between the two nations. This hostility began when Edom refused to let Israel pass through its territory on their journey from Egypt to Canaan. During the following centuries, Edom raided Israel, and after the time of David, Judah and Israel attempted to rule Edom. When Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC, Edom celebrated Judah's downfall and infiltrated its land from the south. There they established themselves as the Idumeans, the ancestors of King Herod the Great.

See the map at the end of this section.

Moab

Moab, Israel's neighbor located on a high plateau along the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, was related to Israel through their ancestor, Lot, the nephew of Abraham.

At times there were friendly relationships with Judah due to the Moabite heritage of David's ancestor Ruth, but for the most part, the relationship was hostile, with Israel trying to rule over Moab from the time of David, and Moab trying to assert its independence.

See the map at the end of this section.

Ammon

Ammon was Israel's neighbor east of Samaria, on the east side of the Jordan, located in the bend of

the Jabbok River. Like Moab, Ammon was related to Israel through their ancestor, Lot, the nephew of Abraham. Like Moab, Ammon was in conflict with the tribes of Reuben and Gad, who had received land east of the Jordan. Two of Ammon's chief wars with Israel were at the time of the judge Jephthah and when David sent Joab to destroy Rabbah, the capital of Ammon. The Ammonites also were implicated in the assassination of Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had installed as governor of Judah, an event which is recorded in Jeremiah 41.

See the map at the end of this section.

Philistia

In the book of Genesis, the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac at times had a tense relationship with their Philistine neighbors along the south coast of Israel. These Philistines were relatively peaceful herdsmen, whom Genesis 10 classifies as a Canaanite people. They seem to be a significantly different people from the later Philistines.

The Philistines seem to have taken on a new character when they were joined by immigrants from various regions of the Mediterranean coast. From the late period of the judges to the early monarchy (Samson, Samuel, Saul, David), the Philistines were a hostile, militaristic people, who threatened the very existence of Israel. After the time of David, the Israelites had the upper hand in the relationship, with the Philistines being largely limited to short-term raids against Judah, and Israel forcing the Philistines to participate in their anti-Assyrian and anti-Babylonian alliances.

See the map at the end of this section.

Phoenicia

Phoenician is the Greek term for Canaanite. The Israelites were supposed to destroy all the Canaanites, but they allowed some pockets to remain. One such pocket was around the maritime cities of Tyre and Sidon, on what today is the coast of Lebanon. During the time of David and Solomon, under King Hiram, the Phoenicians were allied with Israel and supplied the timber for the temple, and they assisted Israel with other building projects and with later maritime ventures on the Red Sea.

When their eastern homeland in Lebanon was subdued by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Greeks, the Canaanites enjoyed a second life through the Punic Empire of Carthage. Carthage ruled much of the western Mediterranean basin until it was destroyed by Rome.

See the map at the end of this section.

Aram (Syria)

Aram is the ancient name for Syria. The Israelites themselves were of Aramean origin since the family of Abraham and the four wives of Jacob were all Arameans.

In regard to their dealings with Israel, we can divide the Arameans into two main groups.

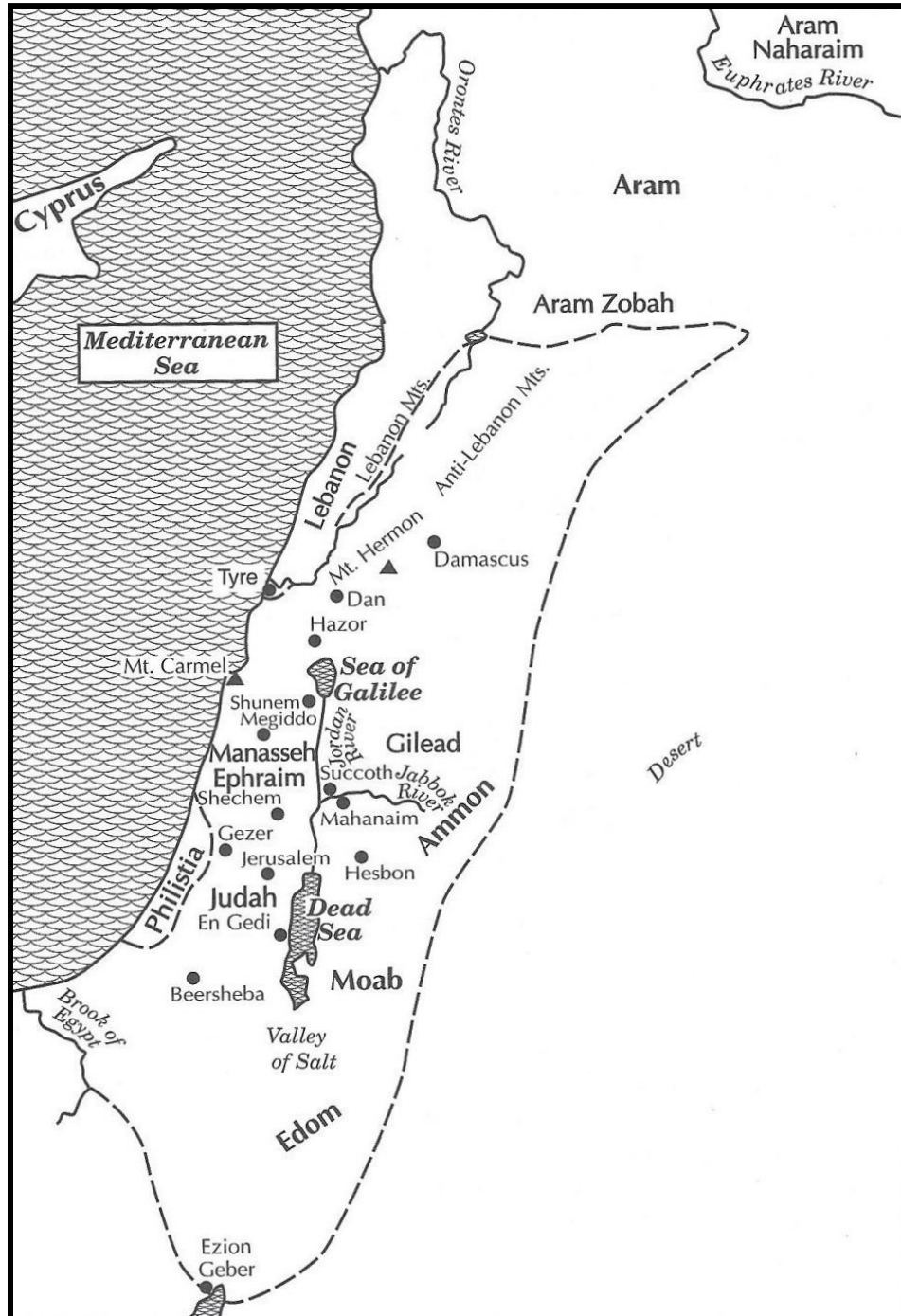
Damascus was the chief city of the southern Arameans. It was an important commercial city on the trade routes between Mesopotamia and Egypt and Mesopotamia and Arabia, and its territory bordered directly on Israel.

The northern Arameans of Hamath, Zobah, and Aram Naharaim were more distant and less of an immediate threat to Israel.

Hostilities between Israel and Aram became more intense during the reign of David. Aramean armies failed in their attempts to help the Ammonites repel David, and as a result the nearby Arameans were subjected to the direct rule of David. The more distant Arameans were subjected to a tributary status. After the time of David and Solomon, Israel seldom had any direct control over Aram.

As often happens in international intrigues, during the time of David some Arameans were allied with David against their fellow Arameans. In the later period, either Israel or Judah was allied with Arameans against their brother nation or against Assyria, but they were also at times allied with Assyria against Aram. When Israel and Aram were enemies during this period, Aram in general had the upper hand, especially during the days of Ahab and thereafter.

The shifting alliances were a futile game and led to the destruction of Judah, Israel, and Aram by Assyria.



Appendix 5 The Historical Setting of the Prophets

In a sense, prophecy began when God gave the promises of the Savior to Adam and Eve, and later to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses was the first and greatest practitioner of the office of prophet. Samuel, the last of the judges, was the other great prophet during the period before Israel had a king. During the beginning of the monarchy, some of the prophets kept written records, but they did not write biblical books of prophecy. Among the prophets of this time period were Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, and Micaiah, and the greatest of these non-writing prophets, Elijah and Elisha.

We tend to think of prophets as men who foretold the future, but that was just a small part of their work. Their work can be summarized under three headings: for-telling, forth-telling, and fore-telling.

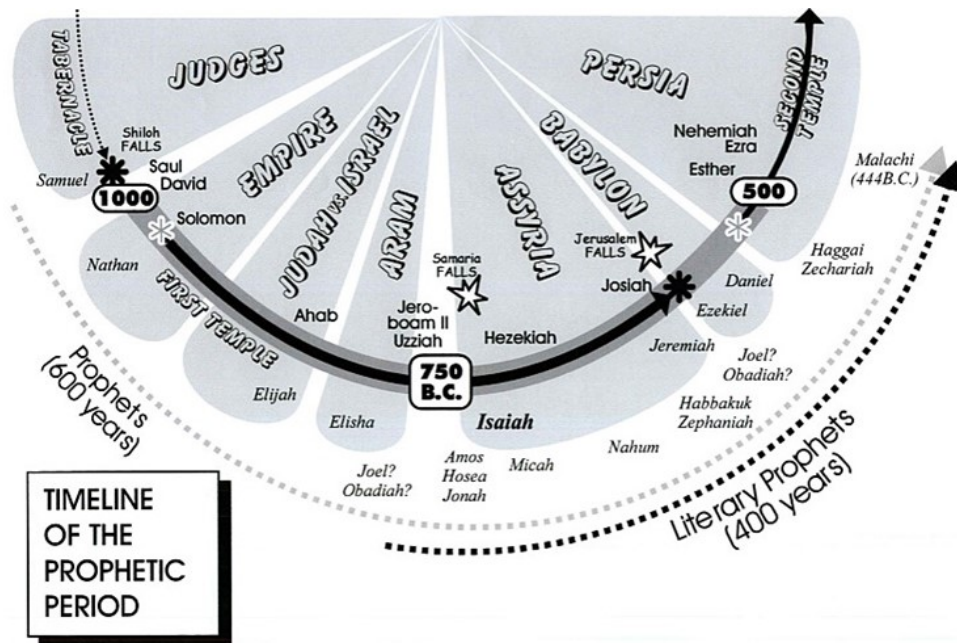
1. To *speak for*, as the messenger of another; to serve as spokesman for God.
2. To *speak forth*, to proclaim or announce clearly or publicly.
3. To *speak fore*, to announce in advance. “Predictive prophecy” is about 20% of Old Testament prophetic content. The prophets’ chief job was serving as preachers of law and gospel to their contemporaries and to us.

In the placement of the Old Testament prophets in our Bibles, the prophetic books are not arranged in chronological order. The major prophets (that is, the longer ones) come first. The minor prophets (the shorter ones) come second. Within these groups there is a general chronological order.

The prophets can be divided into three chronological groups:

- 1) Those who prophesied during the Assyrian threat to Israel and Judah.
- 2) Those who prophesied during the Babylonian threat.
- 3) Those who prophesied during the period when Judah was ruled by the Persian Empire.

These three groups are illustrated in the following chart:



The prophets of the Assyrian period in the order they should be read are:

- Joel Joel cannot be dated, but this book can be placed here as an introduction to prophetic themes. The occasion of his message was a devastating locust plague, which warns of the Day of the LORD when God will punish the world for their sin.

- Jonah** Jonah prophesied during the period of Assyrian weakness, before the Assyrians would return to destroy Israel. It is understandable why Jonah did not want the Assyrians to receive the gospel and repent. This book demonstrates that God's love is universal, embracing even pagan nations. The time is in the early 700s BC.
- Hosea** Hosea bore a heavy cross in his own life—his wife was unfaithful. His bitter experience pictures God's love for unfaithful Israel, a love that will not let Israel go. Hosea provides one of the last warnings to the northern kingdom. The date is about 740 to 730 BC, or a bit earlier. The destruction of Israel began near the end of the 730s.
- Amos** A rancher and a native of Judah, Amos was called by God to prophesy against the northern kingdom of Israel during their last days. Although the dominant note of the book is judgment, Amos's final words promise the restoration of a righteous remnant. His prophecies dated to around 740 to 730 BC, or a bit earlier.
- Isaiah** The first half of his book was delivered during the Assyrian threat to Israel and Judah, from the 730s to 701 BC (Isaiah 1–39). The second half looks ahead prophetically to the return from Babylon and to the more distant coming of the Messiah (40–66). Some of the most important prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament are found in these messages of encouragement.
- Micah** Micah's book is a miniature Isaiah. He delivers the same message of sin and grace. While announcing God's certain judgment upon sin, he also spoke of a sure deliverance to come through the Messiah, whose place of birth he predicts.

The prophets of the Babylonian period in the order in which they should be read are:

- Nahum** This book is a vivid prediction of the approaching downfall of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, which will open the door to the coming of Babylon. The time is the last decades of the 600s.
- Habakkuk** This book contains the prophet's complaints (questions) and God's reply to them. Through God's answers, Habakkuk discovers that the solution to his questions is faith in the salvation which is coming. The coming of Babylon will punish corrupt Judah, but only the coming of Christ will bring a lasting solution to injustice. The time of writing is the last decades of the 600s.
- Zephaniah** This book embraces the two great themes of prophetic teaching: judgment and salvation—both extending to all nations. This prophecy anticipates the coming judgment on Jerusalem. The time is the last decades of the 600s.
- Jeremiah** Jeremiah was God's spokesman during the decline and fall of the southern kingdom of Judah, culminating in 586 BC. This book is a sharp condemnation of sin, with a few bright spots of hope for a new covenant. The time is from about 627 to 585 BC.
- Lamentations** is a collection of five poems by Jeremiah, lamenting the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. The time is about 586 BC.
- Obadiah** This shortest of the prophetic books is a scathing denunciation of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, who from the beginning had been hostile to Israel. It warns of judgment against all the enemies of God's people. It is a parallel to Jeremiah 49:7-22. The time may be about 586 BC, but that is not certain.
- Ezekiel** Ezekiel was carried into exile in Babylon in 597 BC, where he received his call and exercised his prophetic ministry. The first half of the book, written before the fall of Jerusalem is chiefly messages of condemnation upon Judah for her sin. Following the

city's fall, the prophet speaks to the captive people about the certainty of restoration to their homeland and about worship again in a new Jerusalem and a new Temple.

Daniel Daniel was carried into exile in 605 BC. The first half of his book tells the story of Daniel and his friends in Babylon (ch 1–6). The second half provides detailed prophecies about the history from Daniel's lifetime until the coming of Christ (ch 7–12). He prophesies from the beginning of the Babylonian period into the beginning of the Persian period, from 605 BC to about 538 BC.

The prophets during the Persian period in the order in which they should be read are:

Haggai This book, written about fifteen years after the return from the exile, encourages the returnees to get to work and finish the Temple to prepare for the coming of Christ. It was written in 520 BC.

Zechariah Zechariah, who was a contemporary of Haggai, also looks ahead to Christ. The first eight chapters are primarily visions concerned with the rebuilding of the Temple. Chapters 9 to 14 deal with the Messiah, the Last Things, and the End Time. It was written in 520 BC.

Malachi The last book of the Old Testament warns against Israel's laxness and gives the last prophecy pointing to the coming of Christ. It may have been written about 430 BC, though this date is uncertain.

The following dates provide a framework for marking phases of the work of the prophets:

- 931** The division of the kingdom into Judah and Israel
- 853 The Assyrian threat against Israel begins with a failed invasion during the reign of Ahab.
- 722** The destruction of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria
- 701 The Assyrian threat to Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah
- 605 The arrival of the Babylonians in Jerusalem and Daniel's deportation
- 586** The destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon
- 539** Release from the captivity in Babylon
- 450s and 440s Ezra and Nehemiah rebuild the nation.

The dates in bold are the most crucial turning points.

Appendix 6 The Intertestamental Period

Most readers of the Bible are aware that something must have happened between the end of the Old Testament era and the beginning of the New Testament. But for many readers of the Bible those four centuries are “the silent years.”

The closing years of Old Testament history are recorded in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther and in the last three books of prophecy—Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, some of the Jewish exiles in Babylon returned to Israel to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple beginning in about 539 BC. Around 480 BC, the LORD saved Israel from the plot of Haman through the intervention of Queen Esther. The walls of Jerusalem were finally completed under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah around 450 BC. Then came 400 years of silence.

Judah was a tiny province on the western edge of the vast Persian Empire. Jewish resettlement in Palestine was difficult, partly because many Jews, who attained some measure of privilege and wealth during the exile, found it easier to remain in Babylon or Persia than to return to Jerusalem. The land was

sparsely populated. There were disputes with their neighbors. The rebuilt Second Temple did not have the grandeur of Solomon's Temple.

When readers turn the page from Malachi to Matthew, they see a very different landscape than in the time of Nehemiah. In the intervening centuries, Palestine had become one of the most densely populated areas in the eastern Mediterranean world. In the north, the old tribal territories of Naphtali, Asher, Zebulun, and Issachar, now known as the Galilee, contained hundreds of villages in which both Jews and non-Jews lived, worked, and conducted business. Immediately apparent also is that the Persian Empire is gone. In its place the Roman Empire now occupies Palestine and controls the daily lives of the Jews.

The books of the New Testament were written in Greek, not in Hebrew or Aramaic. This was one of the results of the sweeping conquest of Alexander the Great in the fourth century before Christ. His empire stretched from northern Greece to northern India. Although he died as a young man, Alexander was able to introduce enormous changes into all the territories he conquered, by bringing Greek language, architecture, philosophy, and religious ideas into the East. It became fashionable, especially among the upper classes, to adopt Greek customs and language. This trend, however, caused difficulties for pious Jews, who believed there was only one God and he had given his law to Israel. The presence of Roman soldiers in the streets and the Greek language in the shops and market places helps to explain why many Jews longed for the freedom and power which they had enjoyed in the days of King David and King Solomon.

In time, it became impossible for most Jews to remain neutral about Greek ideas and culture. Four Jewish parties arose in the centuries before the time of Jesus. All of them were formed to respond to the question, "How much can a Jew become a Greek and still be a Jew?" In the 2nd century BC a Jewish family of priests received the nickname the *Maccabees* (the hammers) because they fought guerilla-type battles against the Greek rulers of the land. Their militant approach was continued by the *Zealots*, who sought to overthrow the occupying Romans by revolt and terrorism. Another group, the *Pharisees*, did not support the Zealots' call for armed revolt. They instead urged their Jewish countrymen to remain faithful to God through obedience to the many laws given at Sinai, as well as to many layers of rules and traditions. A third group, the *Sadducees*, was composed of a smaller group of temple priests and the wealthy aristocracy in Jerusalem. They advocated cooperation with, and even accommodation to, the occupying Greek and Roman forces. A fourth group, the *Essenes*, is not mentioned by name in the New Testament, but they were similar to the members of religious communes today. The Essenes accused most of the groups and people in Judah of being hopelessly corrupt, and they waited for God to return in judgment, when they believed that they alone would be found righteous.

The clash between Jewish and Greek culture reached a crisis point in 168 BC, when the Seleucid king Antiochus IV instituted an intense religious persecution against the Jews. (The Seleucids were the Macedonian successors of Alexander the Great who were ruling in Syria.) A long-running revolt sparked by the priest Mattathias and led by his sons Judah and Simon, known as the Maccabees (hammers), led to the establishment of a dynasty of priest/kings known as the *Hasmoneans*. From about 140 to 116 BC, this dynasty ruled Judea semi-autonomously from Seleucid control. From about 110 BC, with the Seleucid Empire declining, the dynasty became fully independent and expanded forcibly into the neighboring regions of Samaria, Galilee, Iturea, Perea, and Idumea. The Hasmoneans formally took the title king, although they were not descendants of King David from the royal tribe of Judah. This regime is sometimes referred to as an independent kingdom of Israel, but throughout this whole time Judea was, in fact, under Roman control). The Hasmonean dynasty was plagued by infighting and was often oppressive and corrupt. The dynasty survived for 103 years before being displaced by the Herodian dynasty in about 37 BC.

Anyone who visits Israel today will soon come to know the name *Herod the Great*. New Testament readers know him as a ruthless murderer, guilty of slaughtering baby boys in Bethlehem in a futile effort to get rid of a rumored new-born king. Extra-biblical history confirms his ruthlessness and murderous

ways, but it also reveals that Herod was a clever politician, an able administrator, and a genius as a builder. He greatly increased the size and majesty of the Jerusalem Temple. Other impressive building projects of Herod include forts and palaces at Jericho, the Herodium, and Masada, as well as the great port city of Caesarea. His goal was to turn Judea into a Greek-like architectural jewel. Most Jews, nevertheless, hated him because he ruled Judea on behalf of Rome and he did not have a pure Jewish background.

The New Testament mentions several other rulers named Herod, but none of them possessed the genius or political skill of their ancestor. The story of the Herodian dynasty is told in Appendix 7.

It soon became clear to Rome that Palestine required the presence of Roman governors or *procurators*, who were usually career military men assigned to keep the peace and to control the land for Rome's benefit. By far the most famous of these Roman procurators was Pontius Pilate.

While the Jerusalem Temple remained the center of Jewish worship life and featured regular sacrifices performed by the priests, local religious activity centered in the many *synagogues*. The Gospels mention synagogues in Capernaum and Nazareth. In the book of Acts, Peter and Paul visited numerous synagogues throughout the Mediterranean world. Synagogue worship did not feature sacrifice but focused on the study of Scripture, on prayer, and on education. Synagogues also served as gathering places for Jews living outside Palestine in predominantly non-Jewish environments.

Synagogue worship became so ingrained in Jewish religious habits that by Jesus' time several synagogues thrived within walking distance of the Temple. Many Jews had moved out of Palestine and settled throughout the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean worlds. Alexandria in Egypt was believed to have had more than a million Jewish residents in the first century. The Apostle Paul was a child of the synagogue in Tarsus and visited synagogues in southern and western Turkey and throughout Greece. James said that Moses was read "in every city" (Acts 15:21).

Various books written between the Old and New Testaments were gathered into a collection called the *Apocrypha*. Some Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Bibles include some or all of these books in their canon, but Protestant Bibles generally omit them or treat them as an appendix. Two of the books of the Apocrypha are books of history (*1 and 2 Maccabees*). Others are works of religious fiction (*Judith, Tobit*), legendary additions to biblical accounts (*Susannah, The Prayer of Azariah, Bel and the Dragon, Additions to Esther, The Prayer of Manasseh*), wisdom literature (*Sirach*, also known as *Ecclesiasticus*), and works that present themselves as having been written centuries earlier by long-dead biblical figures (*The Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch, The Letter of Jeremiah*). Protestants have omitted these books from the Bible because they contain numerous historical errors and dubious doctrinal statements. These books were never recognized as part of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Protestants, nevertheless, consider these books "useful to read" because they fill in the historical gaps between Malachi and Matthew.

Religious life during Jesus' time seems to have been weighed down with a bewildering combination of rules, traditions, and expectations. Jesus frequently came into conflict with religious leaders over questions of Sabbath behavior and the meaning of certain laws. "What is the greatest commandment of the Law," a question put to Jesus during the last week of his life on earth, is highly relevant in a religious environment that included more than 600 rules and traditions designed to direct people in observing God's laws. Jesus frequently criticized the Pharisees for insisting on hair-splitting interpretations of these rules.

The Jewish people held great hope for change when the Messiah would come, but they had differing ideas of what the Messiah would be like. The promise of a champion who would crush the serpent's head went back to the Garden of Eden. Isaiah voiced the hope that a divine intercessor would arise to make the earth tremble before him. The succession of brutal foreign invaders in Palestine—Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman—caused many Jews to envision the Messiah as a military and political champion, a new

King David. The Old Testament prophets picture the coming age of the Messiah as one of great harmony, safety, and fruitfulness of the land, but the prophets also pictured in stark detail a Messiah who would suffer and die as a substitute for the people to free them from the consequences of sin and the fear of death.

“When the time had fully come,” Paul wrote, “God sent his Son” (Galatians 4:4). Much of what made the first century AD “the right time” for Jesus’ ministry was the result of events during the time between the testaments.

The Time Between the Testaments

The Persian Period 450–330 B.C.

For about two hundred years after Nehemiah and Malachi, the Persians continued to rule Judea. For the most part this period was uneventful. The Jews were allowed to carry on their religious observances, and they enjoyed limited autonomy.

The Hellenistic (Greek) Period 330–166 BC

In a very rapid campaign, Alexander the Great of Macedon conquered the whole Persian Empire. His premature death led to the breakup of his empire among feuding generals. Israel was caught between the Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Syria. See the notes on Daniel 11 for a chart and discussion of this period. The establishment of Greek culture in the area, particularly in Alexandria, Egypt, led to the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, beginning around 250 BC.

The Hasmonean Period 166–63 BC

After the Seleucids took control of the land of Israel from the Ptolemies, the Jews were severely persecuted by Antiochus IV. This led to a revolt led by the priestly family of the Maccabees, in which Israel gained semi-independence under the Roman umbrella. The descendants of Judas Maccabeus ruled Israel as a dynasty of priest/kings known as the Hasmoneans. Sad to say, this dynasty, which began as freedom fighters, became despots.

The Roman Period 63 BC—

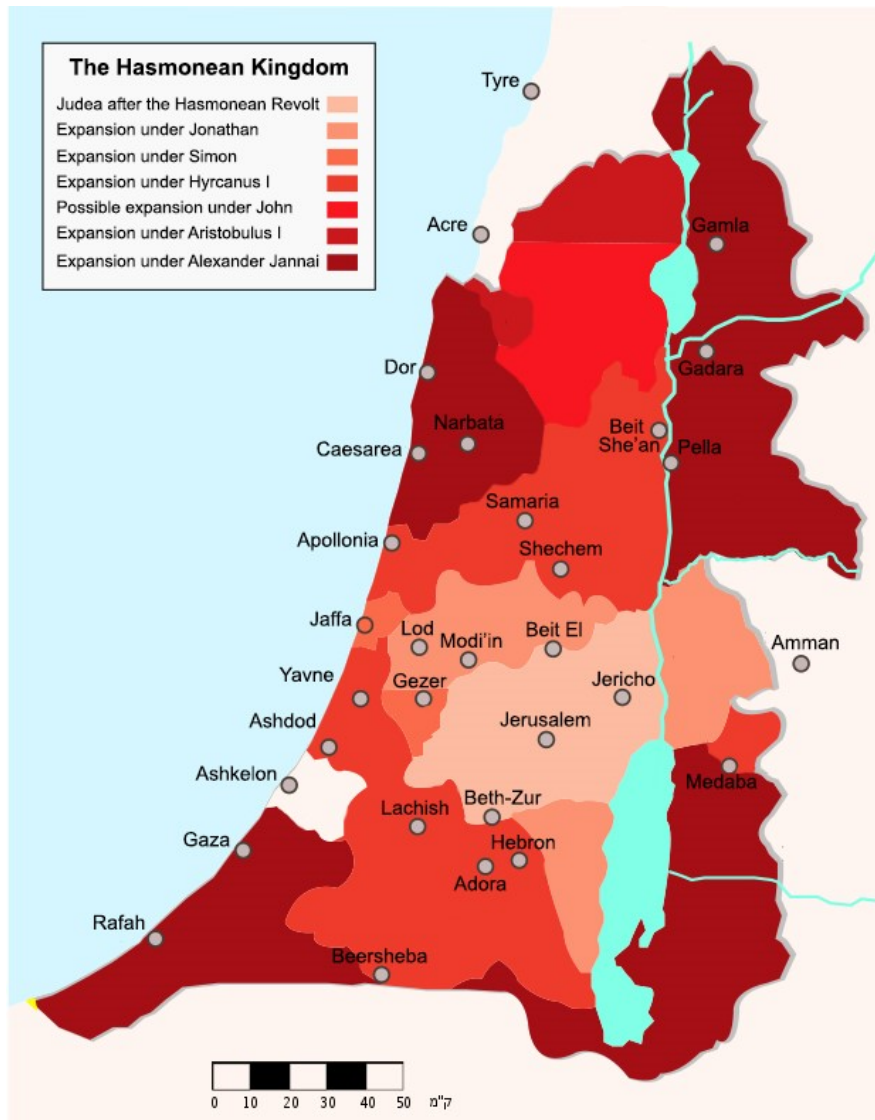
The Romans took direct control of Israel in 63 BC under Pompey the Great, but they allowed the Hasmoneans to remain on the throne until Herod managed to displace them in a power struggle ending in about 40 BC.

Time Line

450 BC	The time of Nehemiah
332 BC	The arrival of Alexander the Great and Greek culture
320– 200 BC	Israel under Ptolemaic rule from Egypt
250 BC	The Greek Old Testament
200 to 168 BC	The Ptolemies lose control of Israel to the Seleucids
168–164 BC	The persecution by Antiochus IV
167-142 BC	The Maccabees establish power as the Hasmonean dynasty.
142- 63 BC	The Hasmonean Dynasty
63 BC	Rome assumes direct rule of Israel
63-40 BC	The last Hasmonean kings rule under Rome
47–40 BC	The Hasmoneans lose a power struggle with Herod the Great
19 BC	Herod the Great begins rebuilding the Temple
4–1 BC?	The death of Herod the Great

The dates for events vary in different sources because the changes of power were often see-saw battles, in which the change of power can be placed at more than one point.

The Hasmonean rulers gradually expanded Jewish power until they controlled a territory nearly as large as Old Testament Israel.



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Appendix 7 The Herods

The story of the Herod family has all the ingredients for a great soap opera: glamour, fabulous wealth, sexual misconduct, wife swapping, murder, plots, political intrigue, etc. The Jewish historian Josephus provides us with a lot of dirt on the members of the Herod family, who were one of the great scandals of the day, a time which was not short of scandals.

Four generations of Herods played a significant role in the New Testament.

Herod the Great, who killed the babies at Bethlehem.

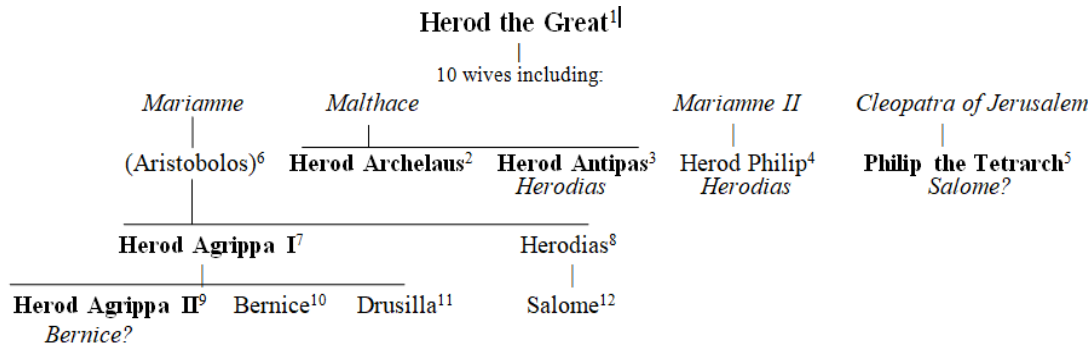
Herod Antipas, who killed John the Baptist and participated at Jesus' trial.

Herod Agrippa I, who killed the apostle James.

Herod Agrippa II, who participated in Paul's hearing before the Roman governor Festus.

Here is a short version of the story of the Herods and their kin. For more about their despicable deeds you have to read the Jewish historian Josephus.

Family Tree of the Herods



The superscript numbers indicate the location of that person in the list below and indicate when the persons appears more than once in the list. Rulers are bold; wives are italic.

The First Generation

Herod the Great¹ (Governor 47–37 BC; King 37–4 BC), the founder of the dynasty, tried to kill the infant Jesus by the “slaughter of the innocents” at Bethlehem.

Herod was born around 73 BC in Idumea, south of Judea. He was the second son of Antipater the Idumaeen (Edomite), who was a high-ranking official under the Hasmonean ruler Hyrcanus II. The Hasmoneans were a Jewish dynasty descended from the Maccabees, who were ruling Israel as Roman clients. The Idumeans had been forcibly converted to Judaism by the Hasmoneans, and Herod was raised as a Jew.

Antipater appointed his son Herod as governor of Galilee in 47 BC, when Herod was about 25 or 28 years old. Herod's elder brother, Phasaël, was appointed governor of Jerusalem. In 41 BC, Herod and his brother Phasaël were named as tetrarchs³ by the Roman leader Mark Antony, who was the rival of Octavian (later known as Caesar Augustus) for control of the Roman Empire. In these arrangements the Herods were supposedly serving in a supporting role to the Hasmonean Hyrcanus. Later, Hyrcanus' nephew Antigonus seized the throne from his uncle with the help of the Parthians, a people from Iran. Herod fled to Rome to plead with the Romans to restore Hyrcanus to power (actually he was pleading for himself). In Rome, Herod was unexpectedly appointed King of the Jews by the Roman Senate. Herod went back to Judea to win his kingdom from Antigonus. Toward the end of the campaign against Antigonus, Herod married the granddaughter of Hyrcanus II, Mariamne (known as Mariamne I). Herod did this in an attempt to secure his claim to the throne and to gain some favor with the Jews. However, Herod already had a wife, Doris, and a young son, Antipater, but he chose to dump Doris and her child in favor of Mariamne.

After three years of conflict, Herod and the Romans captured Jerusalem, and Herod sent Antigonus to Mark Antony to be executed. Herod received the role of sole ruler of Judea and the title of king, ushering in the Herodian Dynasty and ending the Hasmonean Dynasty.

³ Literally, *tetrarch* means *rulers of a fourth* but the term was not always applied literally. The title designates a ruler with less status than a king.

Herod was a brilliant politician, who outmaneuvered the Hasmoneans and held his own against the formidable Cleopatra of Egypt, who was the ally/paramour/wife of Mark Anthony and a bitter enemy of Herod. Herod managed to survive the downfall of his patron Mark Anthony and to be retained by the winner of the civil war, the ruthless and totally unscrupulous Caesar Augustus. Augustus recognized Herod as a useful tool, someone whom Augustus could rely on to be as totally unscrupulous as he himself was, in taking care of affairs in the east for Rome. Herod was not averse to using whatever despotic means were necessary to maintain control, including the execution of members of his own family. Herod was a major player in the cut-throat politics of the Roman world.

Herod was the greatest builder of Israel's history. He spent lavish sums on his various building projects and on generous gifts to other regions, including Rome itself. His major projects included the reconstruction and expansion of the Temple Mount, the tomb of the patriarchs at Hebron, the great harbor city at Caesarea, and fortresses at Masada, Herodium, Alexandrium, Hyrcania, and Machaerus. Herod also built Sebaste (Samaria) and other pagan cities because he wanted to appeal to the country's substantial pagan population.

The tomb of the patriarchs at Hebron, the only intact Herodian building



Public domain Credit: eman



The Herodium, site of Herod's fortress and tomb

Public Domain Asaf T

Below: Close-up of the interior of the cone

Public Domain Eitan Ya'aran



In spite of all his efforts Herod never achieved acceptance from the Jewish population. He died as a hated tyrant. His death is usually dated to 4 BC, but some historians date it closer to 2 BC. This is relevant to the dating of Christ's birth because the visit of the Wise Men must antedate Herod's death.

Herod had three wives whose children played a prominent role in his dynasty.

Mariamne I, the Hasmonean princess, who was his favorite wife, was the grandmother of King Herod Agrippa I and of Herodias through her son Aristobolos.⁶ She and her sons Alexander and Aristobolos, as well as other members of her family, were murdered by Herod because of his jealous suspicion. Herod's suspicions of Mariamne were both political and sexual. At Mariamne's insistence, Herod had made her brother Aristobulos high priest, but shortly thereafter this Aristobolos was drowned in a tragic swimming accident at one of Herod's swimming pools. Herod's firstborn son, Antipater the son of Herod's first wife Doris, was made his heir for a time, but he also was executed. (Killing babies at Bethlehem would mean nothing to Herod.)

Malthace the Samaritan was the mother of Herod Archelaus and Herod Antipas, two sons who managed to survive the royal carnage and to succeed Herod the Great as rulers of parts of his kingdom.

Cleopatra of Jerusalem was the mother of Philip the Tetrarch, who ruled territories on the northeast corner of Israel, east of the Sea of Galilee.

Mariamne II of Jerusalem was the mother of the Herod Philip, who was the first husband of his niece Herodias.

The Second Generation

Herod Archelaus,² son of Malthace, did not receive the title of king but ruled as ethnarch of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea (4 BC–6 AD). His accession to the throne upon the death of Herod the Great was the signal for Mary and Joseph to return with Jesus from Egypt to Nazareth. After a relatively short reign, Archelaus was deposed as king of Judea and was replaced by a series of Roman governors, including Pontius Pilate (26–36 AD).

Herod Antipas³ (Antipater), also a son of Malthace, ruled as tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 BC–39 AD). Though he was not granted the formal title of king by the Romans, he was commonly called King Herod. His capital was at Tiberias, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. He was the murderer of John the Baptist and was the Herod who participated on Jesus' trial, hoping to see a miracle.

Antipas divorced his first wife Phasaelis, the daughter of King Aretas IV of Nabatea, in favor of his niece Herodias, who had formerly been married to his half-brother Herod Philip.⁴ Antipas had more of a conscience than his wife/niece Herodias, and he liked to listen to the teaching of John the Baptist (Mark 6:20) but he did not follow through on what he heard. Herodias hated John because he had condemned Antipas's marriage to her. Herodias instigated John's death through the dance of her daughter Salome¹²

when Antipas felt obligated to fulfill the rash promise he had made to Salome to give her whatever she asked for.

Philip the Tetrarch,⁵ son of Cleopatra of Jerusalem, ruled over territories on the northeast corner of Israel (4 BC–34 AD). His capital was Caesarea Philippi. He married Herodias's daughter Salome, his grandniece, who was more than thirty years younger than him.⁴

Herod Philip,⁴ the son of Mariamne II of Jerusalem, the uncle and first husband of Herodias, was not a ruler.

Third Generation

King Herod Agrippa I⁷ (37–44 AD) executed James the son of Zebedee and imprisoned Peter, but Peter was delivered by an angel. Because Herod arrogantly acted like a god, he was put to death by an angel of God (Acts 12).

Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great through Herod's Hasmonean wife Mariamne I. His father Aristobolos was one of Herod's Hasmonean sons whom Herod murdered. Agrippa lived in Rome where he became friends with the future emperors Caligula and Claudius. After a number of setbacks and intrigues, Agrippa was made king of the territories of Gaulanitis, Auranitis, Batanaea, and Trachonitis, which his uncle Philip the Tetrarch had held, with the addition of Abila. Agrippa instigated the banishment of his uncle, Herod Antipas. He was then granted his uncle's tetrarchy, consisting of Galilee and Perea. This created a fairly large Jewish kingdom which, however, did not include Judea as its center. Agrippa was a skilled politician who was good at maintaining Jewish/Roman relations. An irony in the kingships of the two Agrippas is that they were in a way a restoration of the Hasmonean dynasty through their descent from Mariamne.

Herodias,⁸ sister of Herod Agrippa I, left her first husband, her uncle Herod Phillip, to marry his half-brother, her uncle Herod Antipas. She instigated the death of John the Baptist. When Antipas was exiled to Gaul, she went with him.

Fourth Generation

King Herod Agrippa II⁹ (50–93 AD) was asked by the Roman governor Festus to hear Paul's defense at Caesarea (Acts 25 and 26). Paul made an appeal to Agrippa to believe in Christ, but Agrippa brushed it off.

Because of his youth at the time of his father's death, Agrippa did not succeed his father as king, but later he became king of Chalcis in Lebanon and gradually received additional territory. He collaborated with Rome throughout the Jewish revolt which led to the destruction of Jerusalem.

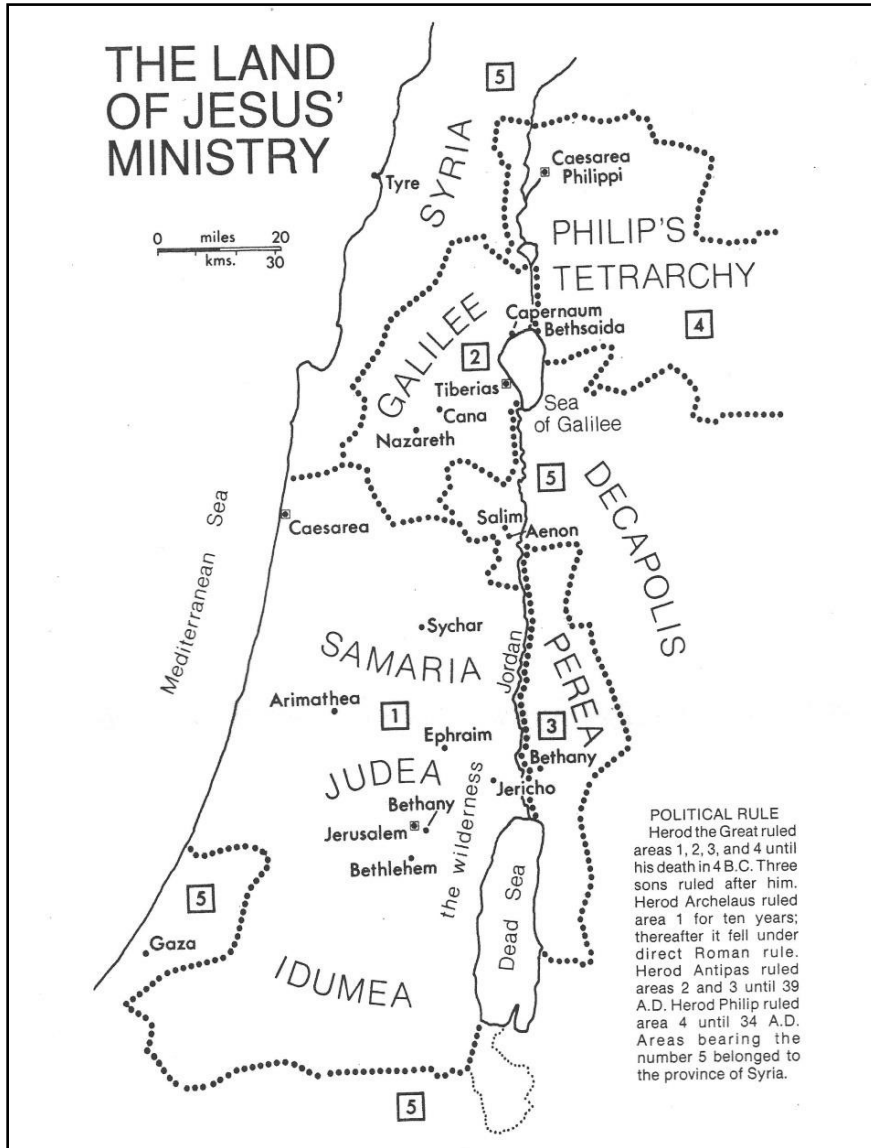
Salome,¹² daughter of Herodias, danced for Herod Antipas and, at Herodias's direction, requested the beheading of John the Baptist. Later she married her great-uncle Philip the Tetrarch.

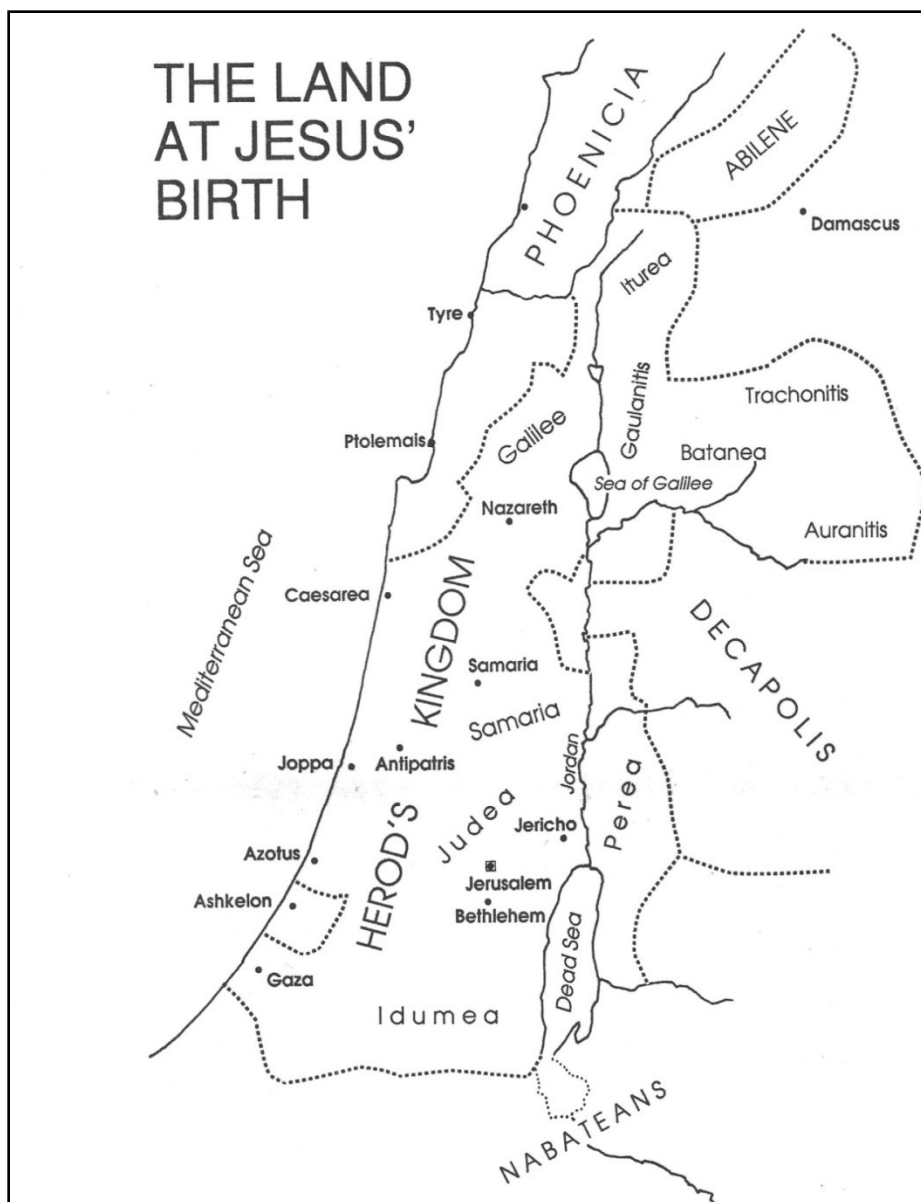
Bernice,¹⁰ daughter of Herod Agrippa I, twice widowed, left her third husband to be with her brother Herod Agrippa II, her rumored lover, and was with him at Festus's trial of Paul (Acts 25:13-27). She had a long-running affair with Roman emperor-to-be, Titus, despite being twelve years his senior. He had to dismiss her when he became emperor, so she fell short of her ambition to be empress in Rome.

Drusilla,¹¹ daughter of Herod Agrippa I, left her first husband to marry the Roman governor Felix, before whom Paul was interrogated (Acts 24:24) before he was tried by Festus (Acts 25 and 26).

⁴ This connection is not certain because the same names were shared by multiple persons within the dynasty. It may have been a different Salome who married Phillip. Adding to the confusion is that different sources use different names to refer to the same person. We cannot be certain that all the connections presented in this article are accurate.

This much simplified account of the Herods (there is enough material in their lives for years of a soap opera) gives a picture of the toxic atmosphere in which John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul conducted their ministries, and that picture is ugly enough without even taking into consideration the corrupt atmosphere provided by the Hasmoneans, the high priests, and the Roman emperors.





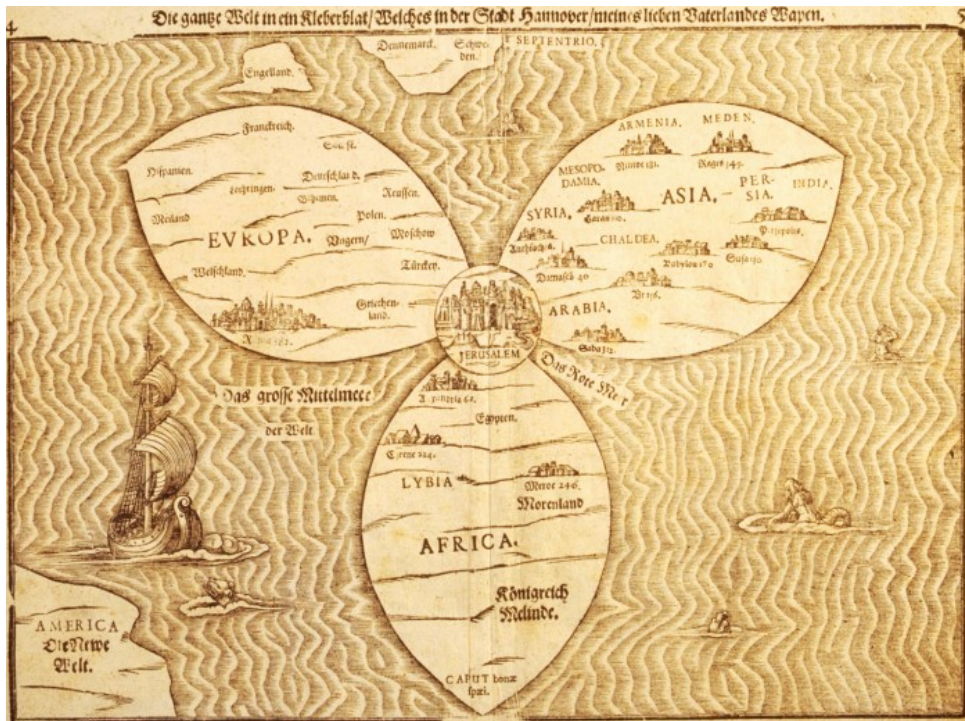
Appendix 8 Israel's Climate and Calendar

Of all the world religions Christianity is the one that is most closely tied to specific historical events that occurred at real places. That is why knowledge of geography is very important for clarifying our understanding of many biblical events. This topic is discussed in the article *Translation and Geography* in the Wartburg Project online library. For a technical study of the interrelationship of geography, archaeology, and translation, see the article *Excavating a Battle: The Intersection of Textual Criticism, Archaeology, and Geography* in the library section of our web site. In this appendix we will consider only two aspects of the issue: the relationship of Israel's climate and its agricultural calendar to its history and life.

The Navel of the Earth

Israel is at the crucial crossroads where Africa, Asia, and Europe meet and collide. This Reformation-era map (the Bunting Map) pictures Jerusalem as the navel of the earth, where the descendants of Shem,

Ham, and Japheth meet. The mapmaker was not trying to present a literal view of the world but a spiritual view. The Bunting Map is also called the Cloverleaf Map, and the cloverleaf also symbolizes the Trinity.



Israel was the crossroads where the Egyptian empire, the empires from Mesopotamia (Assyria and Babylon) and the Persian Empire, and the western invaders coming across the Mediterranean Sea met and collided. It is at a crucial crossroads where commerce on the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and the Nile River meet. It is the point where the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth meet and collide.

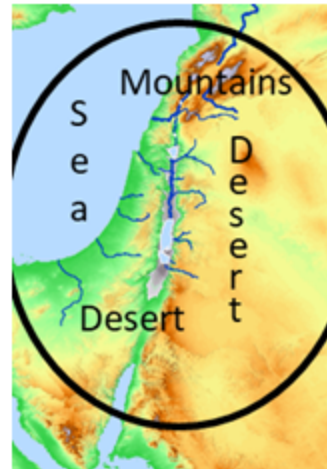
The Meeting Point



The Early and Late Rains

The other crucial test of Israel's faith was its dependence on the LORD for rain. Unlike the irrigation cultures of Mesopotamia and Egypt, Israel was dependent on the early fall and late spring rains at the beginning and end of the grain growing season. Without these crucially timed rains, the harvest would fail. Israel lies within a narrow rain belt surrounded by sea, mountains, and desert.

**Between Mountains,
Sea, and Desert**



In the eastern half of the Fertile Crescent, Mesopotamia depends on irrigation from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. In the western part, the Levant (Israel and Syria) depends on rain from the Mediterranean Sea.

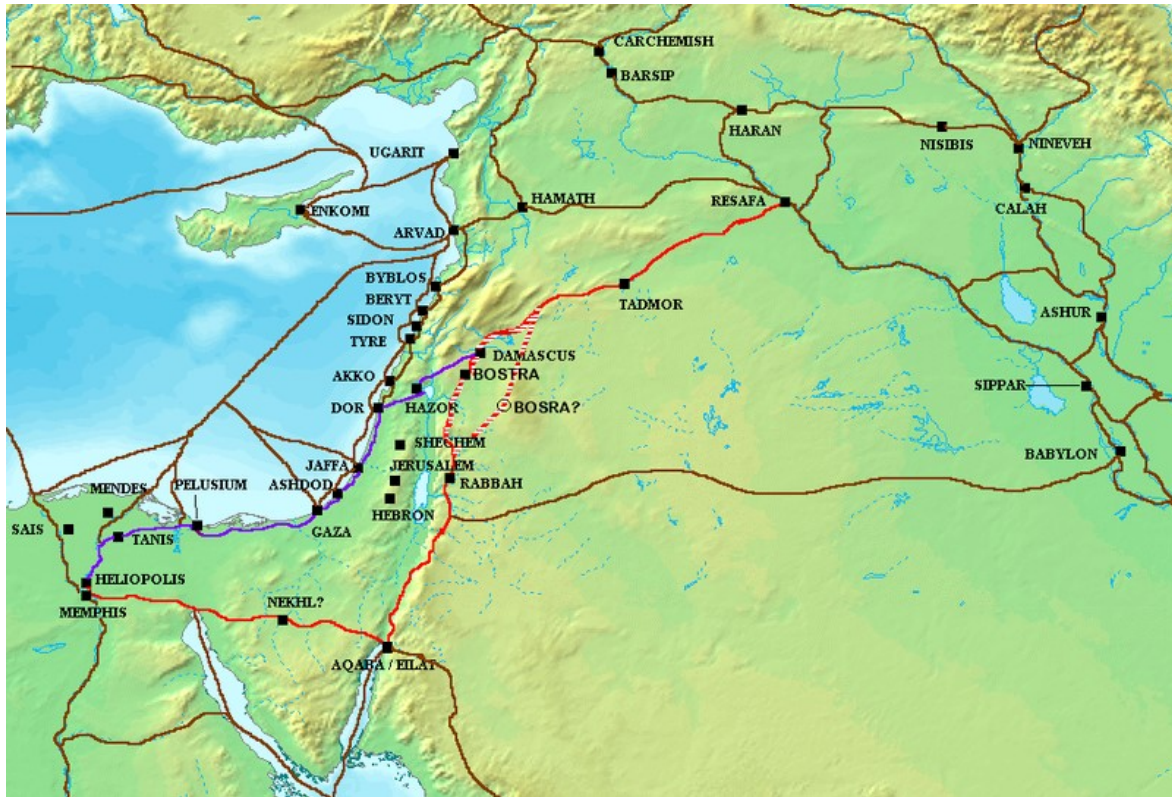


Routes of Trade and War

The main international roads that had an impact on Israel were the so-called *Way of the Sea* or *Great Trunk Road*, which connected Mesopotamia and Egypt (the blue line on the map), and the *Kings' Highway*, which connected Mesopotamia and Arabia (red-dashed line and part of the red line on the map). The Great Trunk road was the crucial war road between Egypt and Mesopotamia and an important route of commerce. The Kings' Highway controlled the incense trade with Arabia.

The full map below shows these roads in their larger context,

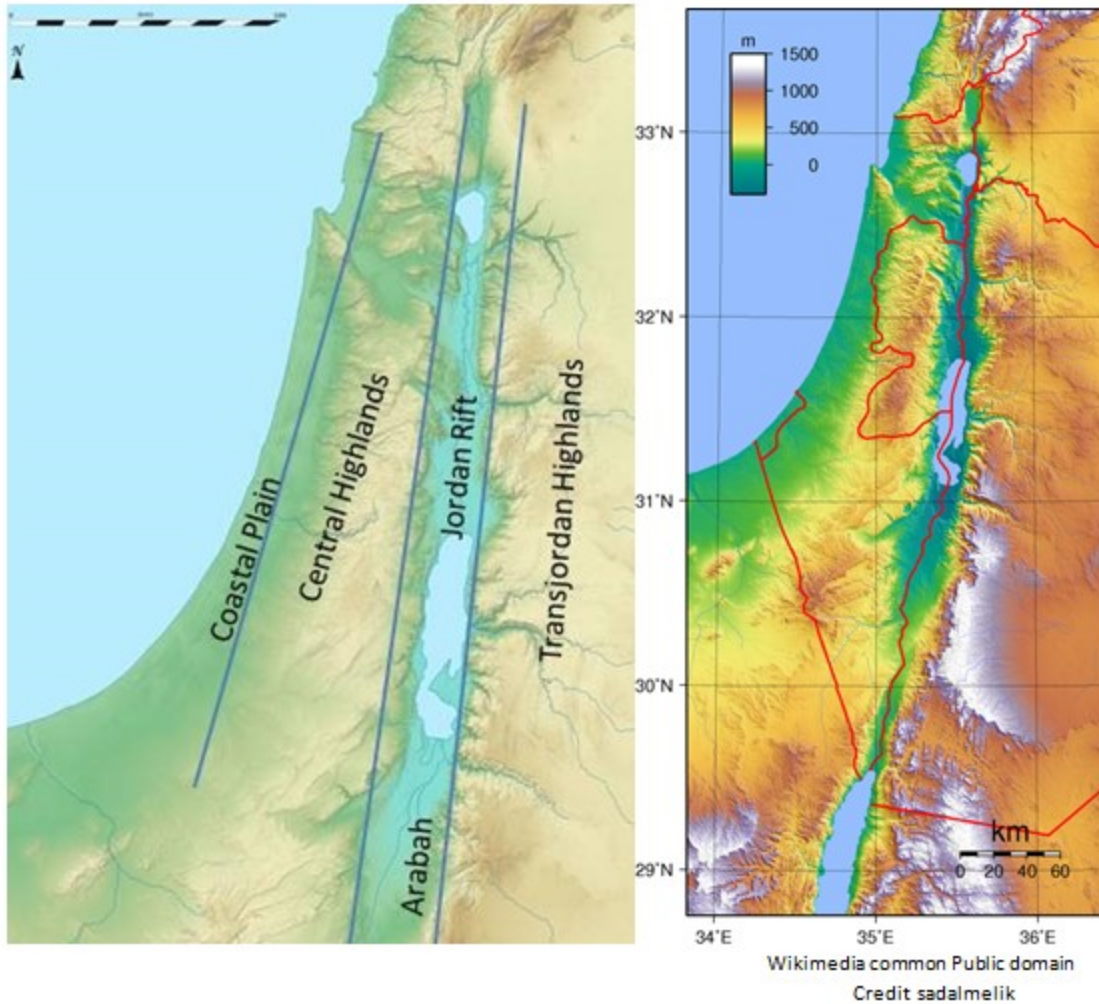




Briangotts, Wikimedia commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ancient_Levant_routes.png
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The Lay of the Land

The four main topographical regions of the land are the Coastal Plain, the Central Highlands, the Jordan Valley, and the Transjordan Highlands.

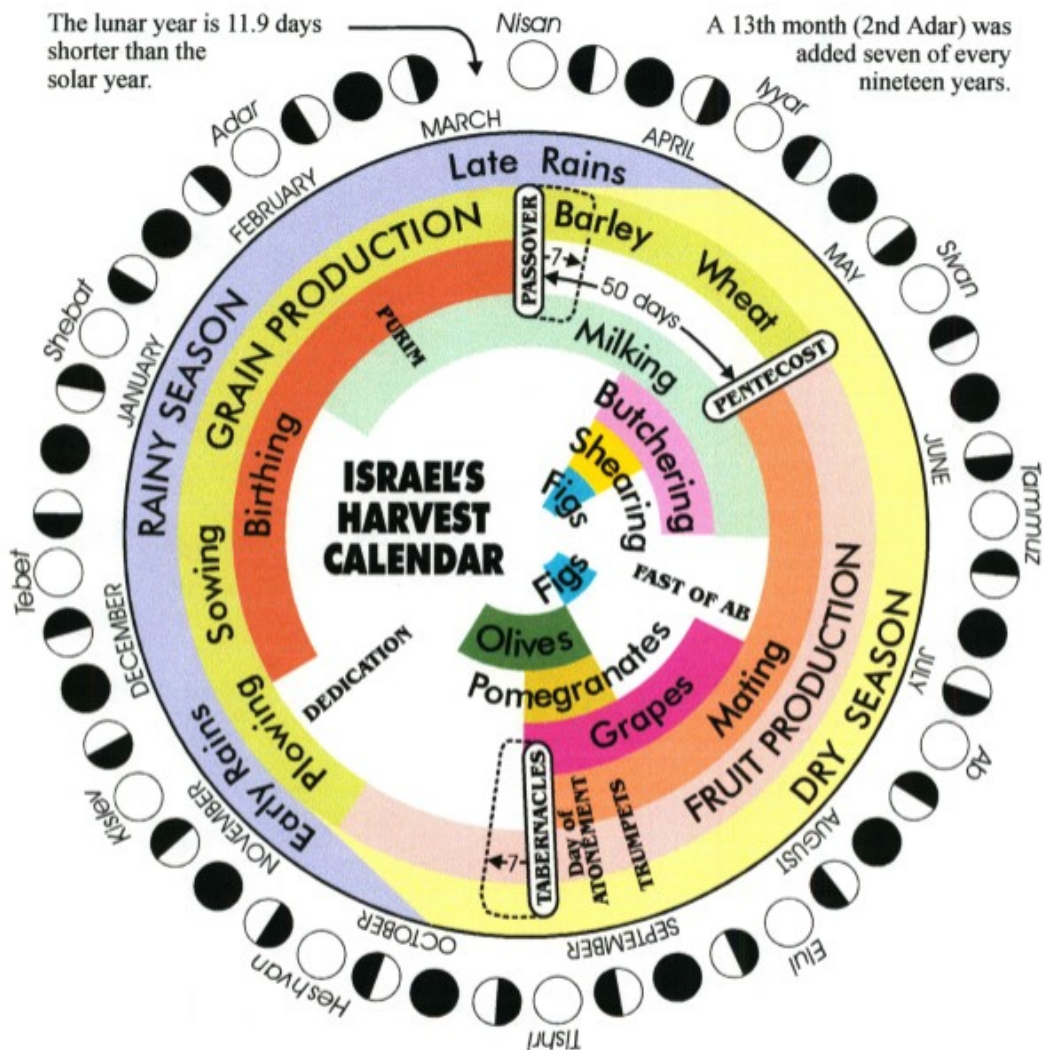


Calendar and Climate

Israel had two main agricultural seasons. The grain grew during the rainy, cold winter season. The early rain in September and October was needed to get the grain growing. The heavy rains came in January and February, but the late rain in March and April was needed for the heads of grain to fill out. The grain was harvested between Passover and Pentecost.

The fruit crops, especially grapes and olives, grew during the hot, nearly rainless summer months and were harvested in fall, just before the Festival of Shelters (Tabernacles).

The following charts present three views of how the seasons and agricultural year dove-tail with the religious year.



Israel's Harvest Calendar - Israel was a land of "milk and honey." Milk refers to food produced by animal husbandry. The Israelite tended sheep, goats, and cattle. Honey is more than bee sugar. It embraced all fruits of the farm, which included vegetables and the six items listed alongside honey in Deuteronomy 8:8 - wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, and olives. Farming and the tending of animals depended on rain. Rain and lack of rain created the two seasons. Israel's pilgrim festivals occurred as one season gave way to the next, Passover and Pentecost at the grain harvest and Tabernacles after the fruit harvest.

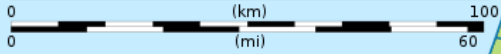
8B Mini-Atlas of Political Divisions

The four maps are Wiki Creative Commons License 3.0



THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Around 1200-1050 B.C.
(according to the Book of Joshua)



THE UNITED KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Around the time of SAUL AND DAVID

EDOM Vassals and defeated peoples





Appendix 9 Resources

For further maps, pictures, and charts on these topics, we recommend using the LOGOS version of the EHV Study Bible along with:

- FaithLife Study Bible Infographics
- FaithLife Study Bible Photos
- FaithLife Study Bible Videos
- Logos Deluxe Map Set

Also see *The Lutheran Bible Companion*, 2 volumes, Concordia, for additional viewpoints and information on all of these topics.

Download the free Access Foundation Bible Atlas online or from the Wartburg Project library.

For geographic pictures to use in your presentations see Holy Land Photos.