



# Ancient Israel

## Judaism



# The Big Picture

- ▶ Ancient Israel is the birthplace of the 3 great **monotheistic** religions of the world: Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- ▶ Great **patriarchs** of Judaism: Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua
- ▶ **Hebrews, Israelites, Jews, Semites:** have all undergone persecution throughout history; from Babylonian Captivity, Exodus, Diaspora, Spanish Inquisition, Holocaust





# The Torah



- The first 5 books of the Hebrew Bible.
- The most sacred text in the Jewish religious tradition.

# Tracing Roots of Israel's History

Historians have difficulty tracing the roots of Judaism.

- ▶ Remember that Mesopotamian society was polytheistic.
- ▶ According to the book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible, **Yahweh** appeared to Abraham (a citizen of Ur) and told him "*to go and raise a great nation.*"
- ▶ Historians do know that nomadic tribes wandered into Palestine from east in approximately 1900 BCE.
- ▶ Abraham and his clan settled in Canaan and considered themselves to be God's "Chosen People" and Canaan to be the "Promised Land."
- ▶ Story: Sacrifice of Isaac



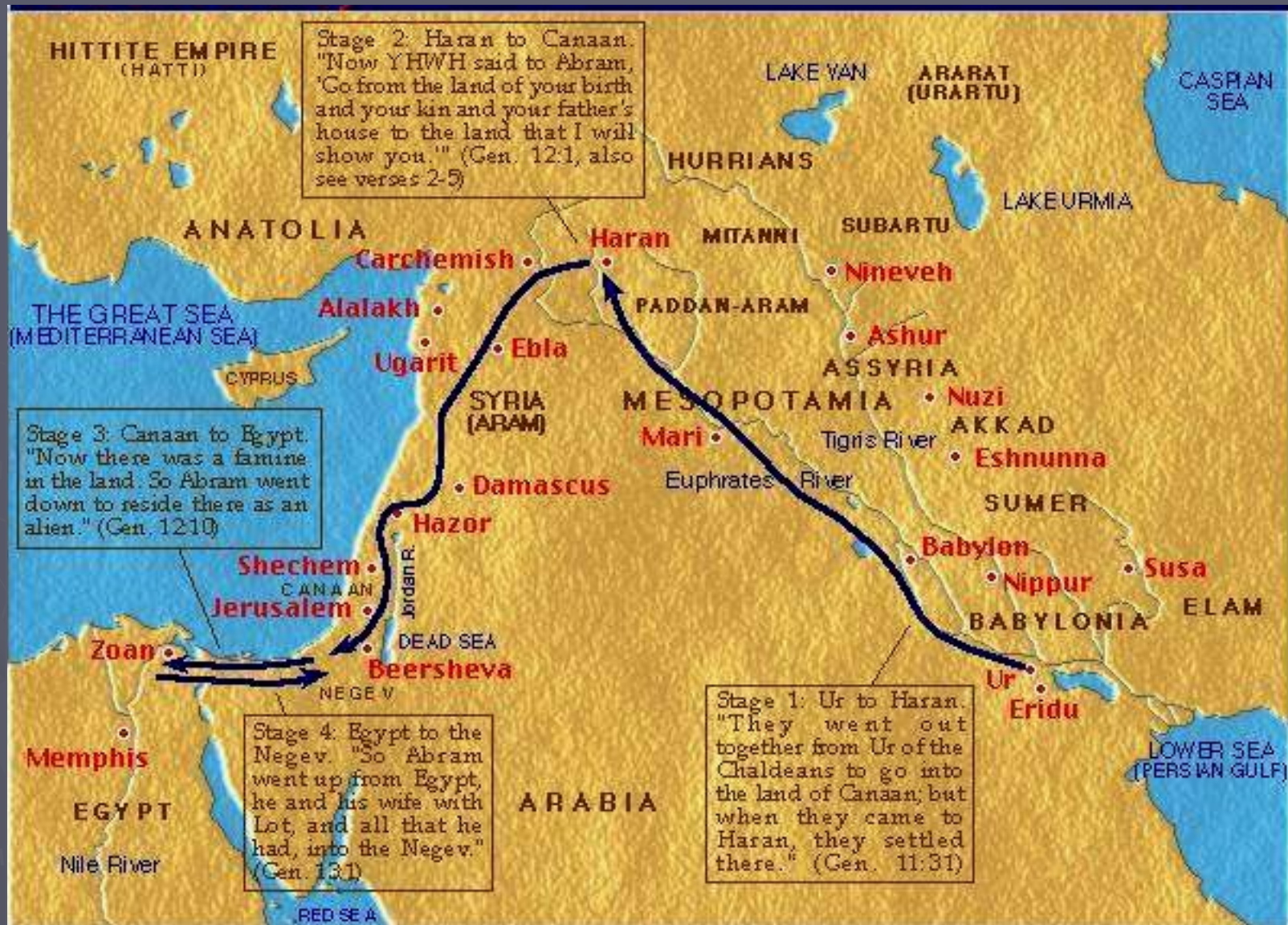
# Abraham's Journey from Ur



**Canaan = The “Promised Land”**



# Abraham's Journeys



# Abraham's Genealogy

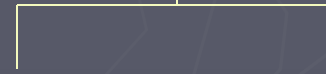
**HAGAR** ..... **ABRAHAM** ===== **SARAH**

**Is hmael**



**12 Arabian  
Tribes**

**Isaac**



**Jacob**

**Es au**



**12 Tribes of  
Is rael**

# What's in a name?

- ▶ **Hebrew** means "From across"- name given to Abraham and his followers
- ▶ **Israelites**: Abraham's grandson Jacob renamed Israel which means "he who has wrestled with God". His descendants were called "Israelites"
- ▶ **Jews**: named after Jacob's son Judah, ancient father of tribe of King David's dynasty





# Jacob (grandson of Abraham)

- ▶ Abraham's grandson Jacob took name "**Israel**" which means "*God ruled*" and had 12 sons which later became the **12 tribes of Israel**
- ▶ Due to drought and famine, Jacob and his sons migrated to Egypt where their descendents were subjected to slavery under Pharaoh's rule



## Twelve Tribes of Israel

Manasseh	Asher
Naphtali	Zebulun
Issachar	Gad
Ephraim	Dan
Benjamin	Reuben
Simeon	Judah

# Moses



**“Prince of Egypt”**

**“Shepherd of His People”**

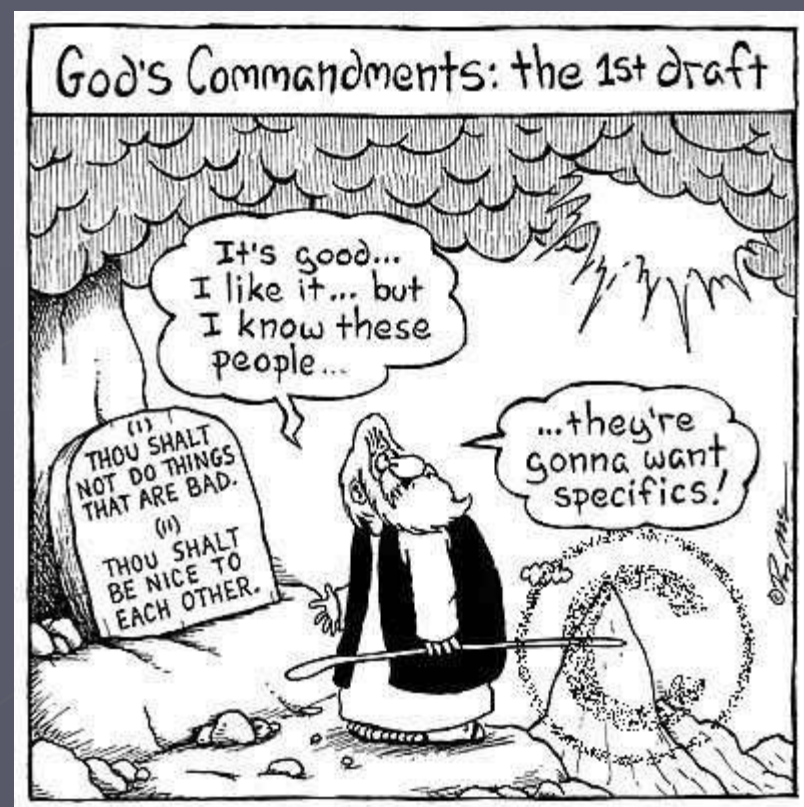


# Moses & Exodus: “Let My People Go!”



- ▶ Moses received **revelations** from God: rod / staff, 10 plagues, parting of the Red Sea, burning bush
- ▶ The Exodus – End of 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE (?) - Moses led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt.
- ▶ Moses led the 12 Tribes of Israel to Mount Sinai where Yahweh gave him the **10 Commandments**, uniting the Hebrews under one God.
- ▶ Moses and Hebrews headed for the “*Promised Land*,” however they **wandered in the desert** for 40 years





# Moses and the 10 Commandments



**A new “covenant”  
with Yahweh**

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Exodus 20:1-17

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make any graven images
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy Father and Mother
6. Thou shalt not kill
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not steal
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness
10. Thou shalt not covet

# Mount Sinai





# St. Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai



# Joshua and the Conquest of Canaan

After wondering in the wilderness for 40 years, Joshua (Moses' successor) led the Israelites on a conquest of the Land of Canaan.

*"And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword." Joshua 6:21*

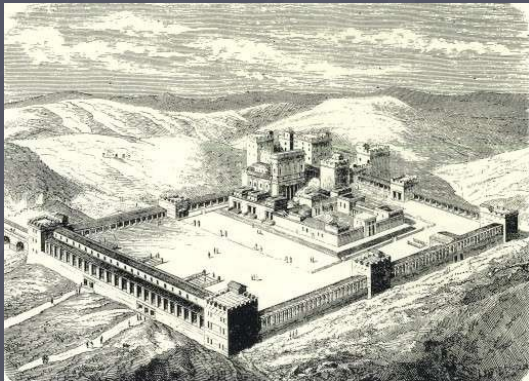
*"So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded. And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon." Joshua 10:40-41*



# Kings of Israel



- ▶ 1020 BCE: first king of Israelites was **Saul**, then **David**, then **Solomon**.
- ▶ David is the first historically verifiable figure in the history of the Ancient Hebrews.
- ▶ Under King David the Israelites captured city of Jerusalem
- ▶ King Solomon built the **Temple of Jerusalem**, to house the Ark of the Covenant
- ▶ Solomon's Temple was **destroyed** during Babylonian invasion, rebuilt in 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and **destroyed again** in 70 CE by the Romans
- ▶ Only remaining part of last Jewish Temple is the **Western Wall**





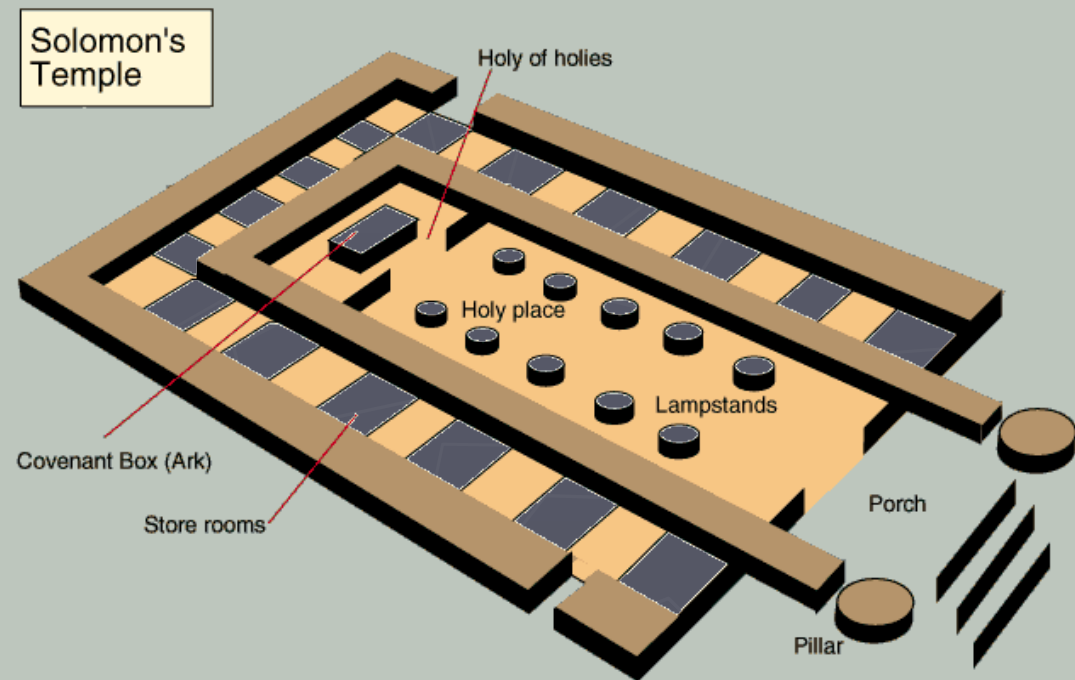
# Recreation of Ancient Jerusalem



# Inside Solomon's Temple



**The Ark  
of the  
Covenant**



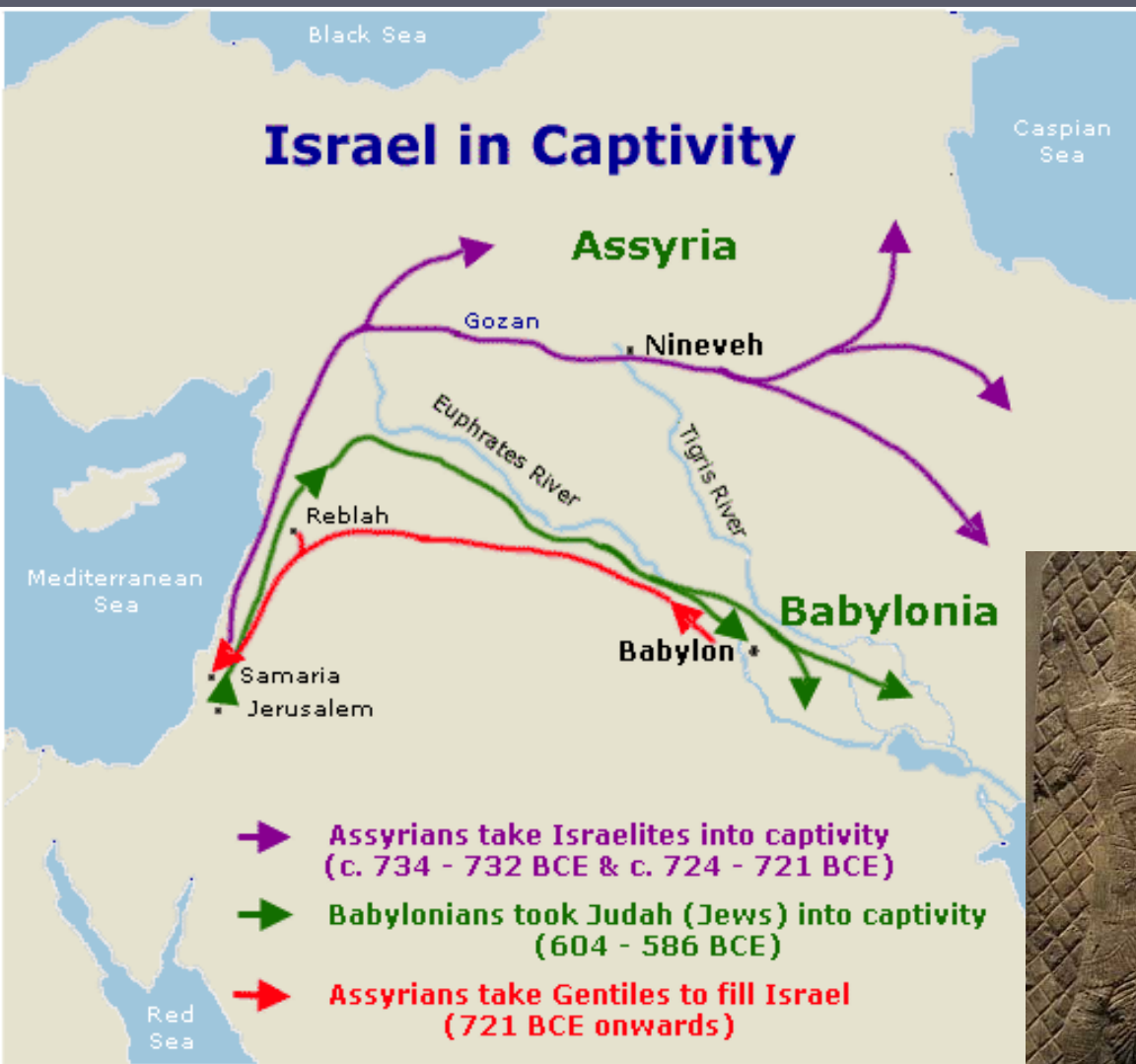
# Kingdoms of Judah & Israel

- After Solomon's death, the previously unified 12 tribes split into two kingdoms. Israel in the north and Judah in the south.
- In 722 BCE, the Assyrians defeated the Kingdom of Israel and removed the citizens from the land.
- In 586 BCE, the Babylonians defeated the Kingdom of Judah, destroyed Jerusalem (including the temple), and deported the Jewish people to Babylon. This is called the Babylonian Exile/Captivity.





# Israelites in Captivity



# The Babylonian Captivity

For the Jewish people, the Babylonian Captivity brought much sorrow and some hard feelings.

***Psalm 137:*** "By the rivers of Babylon— there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy. Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem's fall, how they said, "Tear it down! Tear it down! Down to its foundations!" O daughter Babylon, you devastator! Happy shall they be who pay you back what you have done to us! Happy shall they be who take your babies and dash them against the rock!"

During the Babylonian Exile, the Jewish people had to rethink their belief system. This rethinking led to the emergence of synagogues and rabbis.

# The Return and the Diaspora

The Jewish exiles were released by the Persians in 538 BCE and returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.



- ▶ In 332 BCE, Jewish people fell under **Hellenization** (Greek culture) as Alexander the Great conquered Persia, Egypt and India
- ▶ 164 BCE, group of Jews called the **Maccabees** revolted against Greek rule, took control of Jerusalem and rededicated the Temple to God (Hanukkah)
- ▶ 64 BCE, Jerusalem fell to the **Romans** and the Kingdom of Judah became one of the provinces of the Roman Empire (*Judea*). The people living there were called *Judeans*, and it is from this word that we get the word *Jew*
- ▶ In 66 CE the people of Judea **revolted** against Rome. This uprising was crushed and the temple was destroyed for a second time in 70 CE. The Jewish people were dispersed from Judea (**the Diaspora**) and spread throughout Egypt, Europe, and Mesopotamia.



# The Temple Mount, Jerusalem Today



The “Wailing” Wall