

ISRAEL and HEBREW LITERATURE



Fast Facts on The State of Israel (Medīnat Yisraēl)



Capital:	Jerusalem (disputed)
Financial Center:	Tel Aviv
Currency:	Israeli new shekel
Anthem:	"Hatikvah" (The Hope)
Demonym:	Israeli
Religion:	Monotheistic (Jehovah)
Date of Establishment:	May 14, 1948
Type of Government:	Unitary Parliamentary Republic
Head of Government	Prime Minister
Legislative Body:	Knesset
Total Land Area:	8,019 / 8, 522 sq. miles

The Map of Israel



History of the Name

Israel

- New name of Jacob after he wrestled with an angel

Memeptah stele

- First record of the name "Israel"
- It said "Israel is laid waste. His seed is no more".

The "Israel" Merneptah Stele (1205 BC)

"Israel is laid waste. His seed is no more"



www.bible.ca



The Flag

Blue stripes – symbolizes the stripes on the tallit (prayer shawl)

Star of David (Magen David or Shield of David) – symbol of the Jewish people and of Judaism

Color white – Chesed (divine benevolence)

Blue – Gevurah (God's severity), God's glory and purity



The Tallit (Prayer shawl)



Some Tourist Spots



The Wailing
Wall or
Western Wall,
Jerusalem



Church of the
Nativity,
Bethlehem



Open Doors,
Rishon Lezion
Memorial Park



Interesting Fact

Most
powerful
army in the
world (#11)



NUCLEAR WEAPONS
80-200
TANKS
3870
PLANES
680



Some Key Figures in Hebrew History



The Patriarchs

Abraham

Isaac (son of Abraham)

Jacob (Israel, son of Isaac)



THE MATRIARCHS



SARAH



RIVKA



LEAH



RACHEL

The Matriarchs

Sarah (wife of Abraham)

Rebekah (wife of Isaac)

Leah and Rachel
(wives of Jacob)

King Saul

First King of Israel



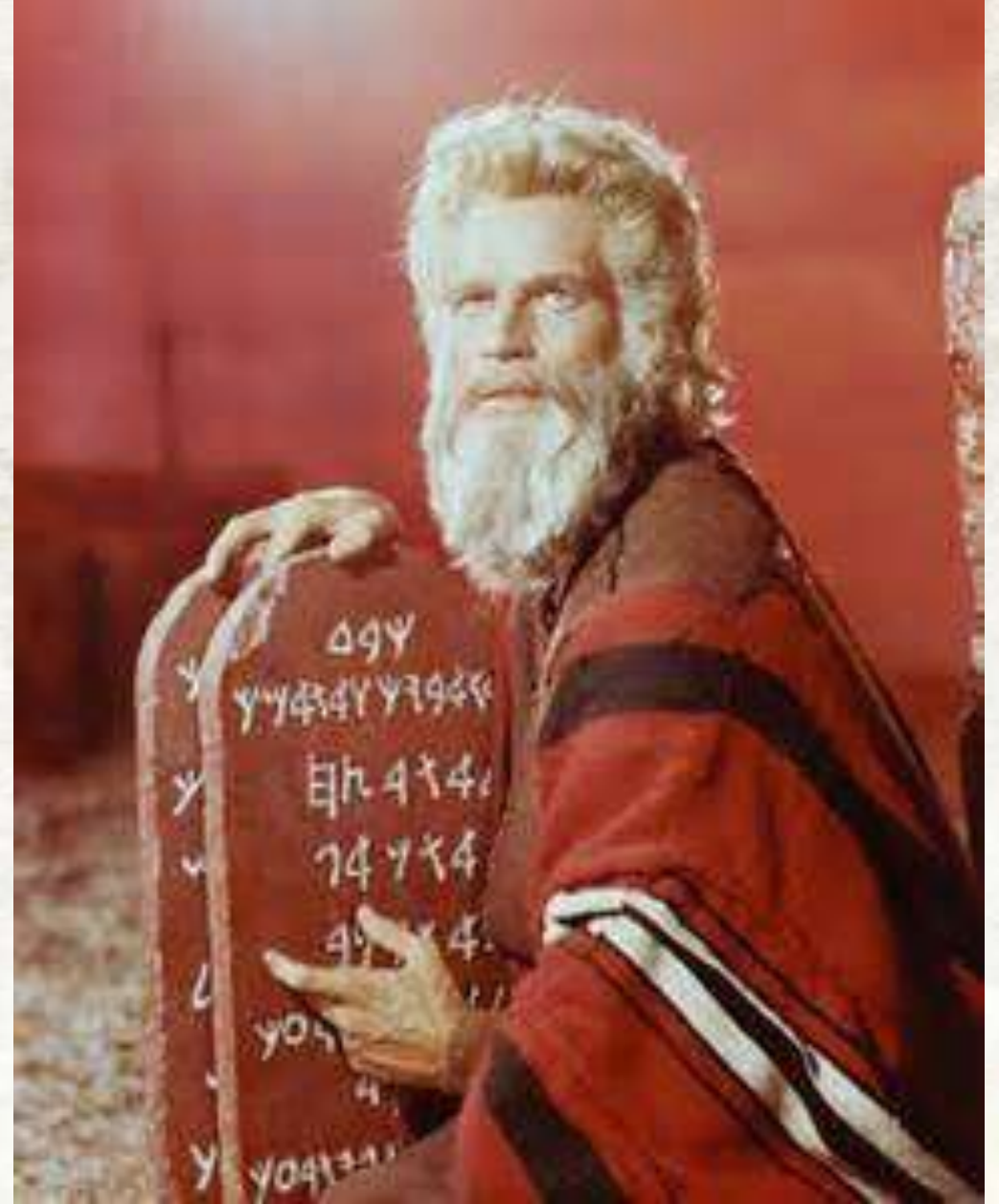
King David

- Second king of Israel
- United the people of Judah and Israel
- Killed Goliath as a shepherd boy
- Great poet and musician



Moses



- Great legislator
- Former Egyptian prince
- Attributed to be the author of the Torah
- 10 commandments



Hebrew Literature



The Language and Alefbet

- 23 consonants, including  which has a two-fold sound
- 4 have secondary vowel values 
- Written from right to left
- Alef (first letter). Tav (last letter)
- Each letter has numerical values



FORM	NAME	PHONETIC VALUE	MEANING	NUMERICAL VALUE
א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י	Aleph	* Spiritus lenis	Ox	1
	Beth	b or v	House	2
	Ghimel	g hard, gh	Camel	3
	Daleth	d or dh	Door	4
	He	h	Window	5
	Waw	w	Hook	6
	Zayin	z	Weapon	7
	Heth	— German ch	Fence	8
	Teth	t explosive	Serpent	9
	Yodh	y	Hand	10
כ ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת	Caph	c hard, k	Bended Hand	20
	Lamedh	l	Gourd	30
	Mem	m	Water	40
	Nun	n	Fish	50
	Samech	s	Prop	60
	Ayin	Peculiar guttural	Eye	70
	Pe	p or ph	Mouth	80
	Tsade	s explosive, ts	Fish-hook	90
	Qoph	q	Back of the head	100
	י ק ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת	Resh	r	Head
Sin		s	Tooth	300
Shin		sh	Tooth	300
Tau		t or th	Sign	400

Hebrew Literature

- consists of ancient, medieval, and modern writings in the Hebrew language
- written by Jews on Jewish themes in any language; works of a literary character written by Jews in Hebrew or Yiddish or other recognized languages, whatever the theme; literary works written by writers who were essentially Jewish writers, whatever the theme and whatever the language
- Characterized by love of God, being emotional, showing great love of the country and (poetry) having no rhyme or regularity of rhythm

Ancient Hebrew Literature

- began with oral literature of the *Leshon HaKodesh* (לְשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ),
"The Holy Language"

Important works:

- **Tanakh** (the Hebrew Bible)
- **Mishna** - primary rabbinic codification of laws as derived from the Torah

Foundations of Hebrew Literature

- *Bible (Tanakh)* – which are chiefly dedicated to the ancient history of the Jews, their laws and social aspirations
 - *written Torah (Teachings of Law)*
- *Talmud* – collection of numerous treatises which are chiefly dedicated to the laws and legends of the Jews
 - marked by its precise terminology and strict logic. It is predominantly prosaic
 - *oral Torah*
 - codification of laws (Mishna)
 - commentary on the Mishna (Gemara)

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Biblical Period

- a union of legend and fact, imagination and speculation
- A great part is historical narrative which is interrupted by legal narrative
- terse and written in rhythmic poetry; prophecy is written in the parallelistic form of poetry.

Post-Biblical Period

- an extension of the Biblical period
- Apocryphal and apocalyptic books belong to a literature of epigones
 - a. **Septuagint** – the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible (or Old Testament)
 - includes the Apocrypha (14 books of unknown authorship, or of doubtful authenticity)
 - b. **Halakah** – the most popular Hebrew literature; came from the Hebrew word "halak" (go or a rule to go by)
 - c. **Haggadah** – comes from the Hebrew word "higgid" (to tell); It is a Jewish text that sets forth the order of the Passover Seder

The Haggadah



Middle Ages

- intellectual models were patterned after Arab models, and later the Western cultures
- latent and new poetic devices came to the form; rhymes and meters were introduced, as well as European form, like the sonnet
- Arabic influence permeated even the themes of poetry – themes such as wine, nature, sensual love and friendship.

Writers:

- N.R. Wesley (*Mosiad*, an epic poem)
 - Shalom Cohem (*Davidiad*, an epic work on King David)
 - J.M. Gordon, the most powerful poet of the period.
- After World War I, Lyric poetry reached its maturity in the works of Slikine, Ginzburg, Bavli, Balkan, Boguizon, Efros, Lisitzky and Peril.

Famous Contemporary Hebrew Writers

Shmuel Yosef Agnon

- foremost writer in modern Hebrew literature
- Most important work:
 - *I havets mitt (In the Heart of the Seas)*
 - *HakhnasatKalah (The Bridal Canopy)*
 - a story, Jewish counterpart of Don Quixote
 - *Oreach Nata Lalun (A Guest for the Night)* – his greatest achievement, a novel
 - first Jew to receive Nobel Peace Price for Literature, 1966



Famous Contemporary Hebrew Writers

Nelly Sachs

- outstanding lyrical and dramatic writer, interpreting Israel's destiny with touching strength
- Most important works:
 - *Fahrt ins Staublose (Journey to the Beyond)*, lyric poetry
 - *Zeichen im Sand (Signs in the Sand)*, dramatic poetry
 - *Eli*, mystery play
 - first Jew to receive Nobel Peace Prize for Literature, 1966



The Bible



Jewish / Hebrew Bible

- includes only the books known to Christians as the Old Testament
- 39 books

The TANAKH

Ta – Torah (or Instruction)

Na – Nevi'im (or Prophets)

Kh – Khetuvim (or Writing)

The Hebrew Bible

Torah (Instruction)

5 books

Genesis

Br'eišyt

Exodus

Šemot

Leviticus

Wayiqra

Numbers

Bamidbar

Deuteronomy

Devarim



Nevi'im (Prophets)

19 books

Former

Joshua

Yehoshua

Judges

Shofetim

Samuel

Shemuel

Kings

Melakhim

Latter

Isaiah

Yeshayahu

Jeremiah

Yirmeyahu

Ezekiel

Yekhezqel

Minor

Hosea

Nahum

Joel

Habakkuk

Amos

Zephaniah

Obadiah

Haggai

Jonah

Zechariah

Micah

Malachi

Ketuvim (Writings)

11 books

Poetic

Psalms

Təhillîm

Proverbs

Mishlei

Job

Iyov

Five Megillot (Scrolls)

Song of Songs

ShirHashirim

Ruth

Rut

Lamentations

Eikhah

Ecclesiastes

Qoheleth

Esther

Ester

Historical

Daniel

Daniyyel

Ezra–Nehemiah

Ezra

Chronicles

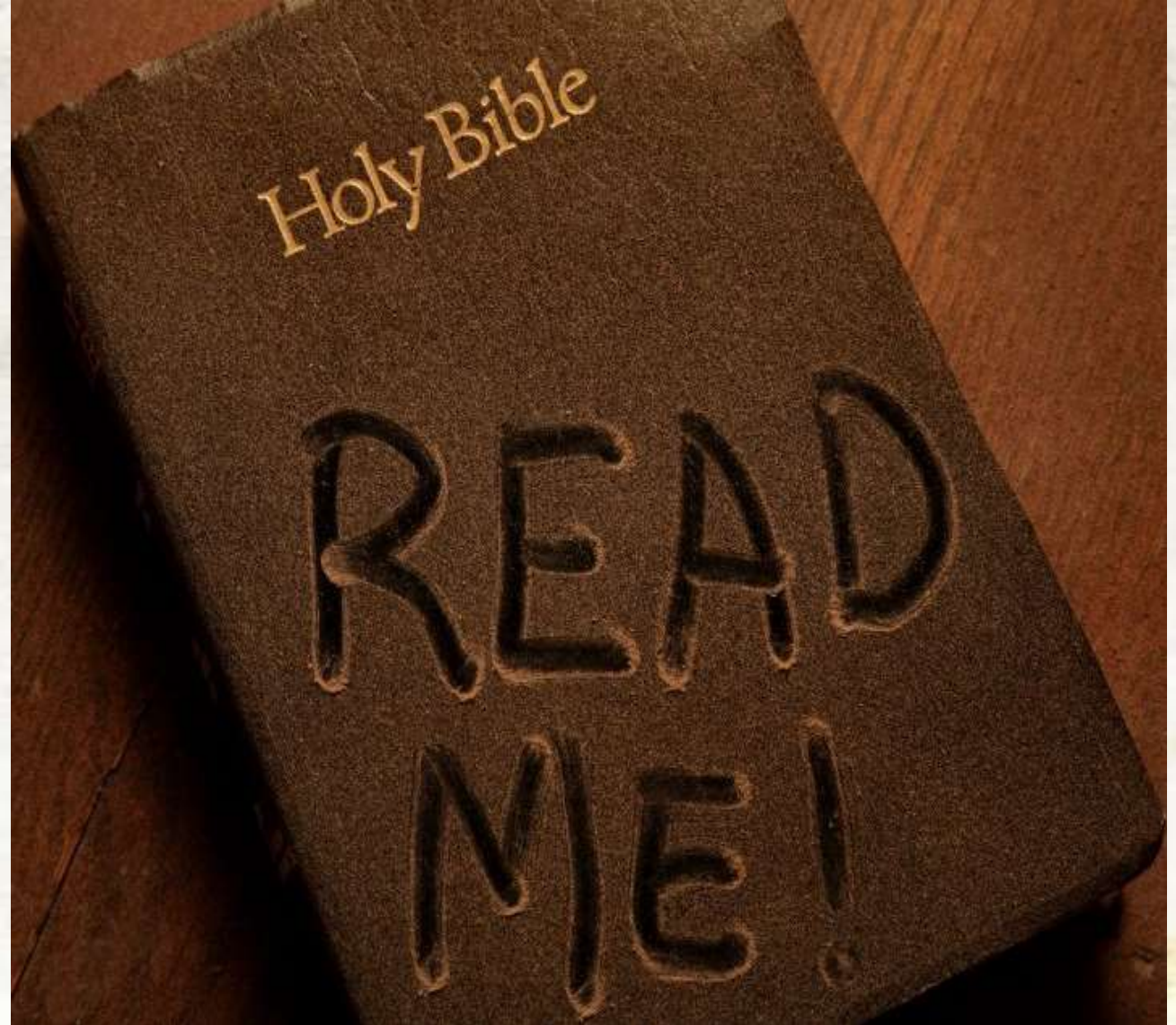
Dibh'reHayyamim

The Christian Bible

- “biblia” (Latin) and “biblos” (Greek)
- Holy Scriptures, Holy Writ, Scripture, or the Scriptures (sacred writings)
- compilation of 66 books (72 for the Catholics) and letters written by more than 40 authors during a period of approximately 1,500 years (c. 750 to c. AD 100).

Sections:

- The Old Testament
- New Testament
- Apocrypha



Old Testament

- a collection of ancient writings of the Hebrew patriarchs, the teachings of later prophets, as well as psalms and hymns
- our greatest and most lasting religious and moral heritage from the Hebrews
- 39 books
- Classified into: History, Prophetic Books, Lyric Poetry, Drama, Wisdom Literature and Tales



Classification according to Literature

Title

History

Hexateuch
(first 6 books)

Pentateuch
(first 5 books)

Genesis

Exodus

Leviticus

Numbers

Deuteronomy

Joshua

Judges

I Samuel

II Samuel

I Kings

II Kings

Nehemiah

Classification according to Literature

Prophetic Books

Title

Isaiah

Jeremiah

Ezekiel

Amos

Hosea

Micah

Lamentations

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Nahum

Obadiah

Zechariah

Classification according to Literature

Title

Lyric Poetry

The Psalms

Classification according to Literature

Title

Drama

Job

Song of
Songs
(Song of
Solomon)

Classification according to Literature

Title

Wisdom Literature

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Classification according to Literature

Title

Tales

Ruth

Jonah

Daniel

Esther

New Testament

- account of the origin and early development of Christianity
- 27 books:
 - 4 biographies of Jesus (The Gospels)
 - 1 church history
 - 21 epistles
 - 1 apocalypse



Classification according to Literature	Title
Gospel	Synoptic Gospels
	Matthew
	Mark
	Luke
	John

Classification according to Literature		Title		
Church History		The Acts of the Apostles		
	Epistles	Epistles of Paul	Epistles of Paul,	
			I Thessalonians	
			II Thessalonians	
			Galatians	
			I Corinthians	
			II Corinthians	
			Romans	
			Hebrew	
			By other authors	James
				I John

Classification according to Literature

Title

Apocalypse

The Revelation
to St. John The
Divine

The Apocrypha

- 14 books which were included in the Septuagint, not in the original Hebrew
- Excluded from the Sacred Canon, but are included in the King James version
- 4 books of history, five tales, and two books of wisdom, one epistle, one song and one prayer



History	Not accepted	I Esdras
	Not accepted	II Esdras
	Accepted	I Maccabees II Maccabees
	Accepted	
Tales	Accepted	Judith
	Accepted	Susanna and the Elders
	Accepted	Tobit
Wisdom Literature	Accepted	Ecclesiasticus or the Wisdom of Jesus, Son of Sirah
	Accepted	The Wisdom of Solomon

Additional Books of the Apocrypha

Not accepted	The Prayer of Manasses	This work dates from the first century B.C. It was intended to be used in connection with the story of Manasseh's Babylonian captivity (2 Chron. 33). Parts of the Prayer have found their way into Protestant liturgy.
Not accepted	The Song of the Three Holy Children	This addition to the Book of Daniel was written about 100 B.C. and was found inserted in his book, in the third chapter, right after the 23rd verse.
Accepted	Baruch	The greater part of this book was written in the 1st century A.D. under the assumed name of Baruch, the private secretary of Jeremiah. The 6th chapter is known as the Epistle of Jeremiah. Both books contain a series of exhortations, encouragements and severe denunciations.
Accepted	Esther (additional verses)	This work, written about 100 B.C., consists of a number of additions to the Biblical book of Esther. The additions were added for detail and to make up for some of the spiritual deficiencies of the canonical book. The added verses greatly enhance the apocalyptic nature of the story and bring enormous symbolic understanding to it, dramatically enhancing its relationship to God. It is replete with dragons, and images easily reminiscent of the most important tenants and personages involved in the last-day warfare between Satan and Christ. The symbolism it brings to the Book of Esther is powerful prophecy.
Accepted	Bel and the Dragon	Written about 100 B.C., this story reveals Daniel's wisdom in exposing the falsehood of idolatry and those who promote it. The book also reveals the existence in Babylon of a dragon-god. Information about this idol is available from no other source, but it is particularly relevant in light of dragon prophecies relative to the last days, scattered throughout the scriptures.

Some Biblical Pieces



The Creation (Genesis 1:1–2:3)

- **Day 1** – God created light and separated the light from the darkness, calling light “day” and darkness “night.”
- **Day 2** – God created an expanse to separate the waters and called it “sky.”
- **Day 3** – God created the dry ground and gathered the waters, calling the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters “seas.” On day three, God also created vegetation (plants and trees).
- **Day 4** – God created the sun, moon, and the stars to give light to the earth and to govern and separate the day and the night. These would also serve as signs to mark seasons, days, and years.
- **Day 5** – God created every living creature of the seas and every winged bird, blessing them to multiply and fill the waters and the sky with life.
- **Day 6** – God created the animals to fill the earth. On day six, God also created man and woman (Adam and Eve) in his own image to commune with him. He blessed them and gave them every creature and the whole earth to rule over, care for, and cultivate.
- **Day 7** – God had finished his work of creation and so he rested on the seventh day, blessing it and making it holy.

Psalm 23

(Psalm of David / The Lord Is My Shepherd)



The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Yes, though I walk through the dark valley, I will fear no evil. His rod and His staff they comfort me.

He prepares a table before me in the presence of my enemies, my cup runs over.

Surely, goodness and mercy, shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD, forever.

Psalm 23

Ecclesiastes

- 12 chapters
- Wisdom literature, Old Testament
- Ketuvim (Tanakh)
- Written by Koheleth (a pseudonym, "teacher" / "preacher" / "gatherer")
- "all is vanity"

To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:
A time to be born, And a time to die;
A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted;
A time to kill, And a time to heal;
A time to break down, And a time to build up;
A time to weep, And a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, And a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones, And a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to gain, And a time to lose;
A time to keep, And a time to throw away;
A time to tear, And a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, And a time to speak;
A time to love, And a time to hate;
A time of war, And a time of peace.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity
in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God
does from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, 11)

Story of Joseph (starting from Gen. 37)

- 17 yr old shepherd-boy; Isaac's favorite, 2nd to the youngest (of 13 siblings)
- Dreamed that he will eventually have dominion over his brothers
- Was plotted against by his brothers (due to jealousy), left him in a pit, and bringing home to Jacob Joseph's blood-stained many-colored coat
- Merchants lifted Joseph out of the pit and sold Joseph for 20 silvers
- Joseph was brought to Egypt
- In the slave market, Potiphar, an officer of the Pharaoh, bought him
- Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph but he refused
- Joseph was imprisoned on the wrong account that he slept with Potiphar's wife
- While in prison, Joseph interpreted correctly the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker

cont. Story of Joseph

- Pharaoh's dream was interpreted correctly by Joseph (7 years of bounty then 7 years of famine)
- Because of that, he became ruler of Egypt
- During the famine, Jacob asked his sons to go to Egypt to buy corn
- 10 went (except Benjamin, the youngest)
- Joseph, the governor of the land, recognized his brothers but pretended to be otherwise
- He did not allow them to return to Canaan unless Benjamin will be brought to him
- After 3 days, he allowed them to go home, leaving one man behind, and to return with Benjamin with them
- Without their knowing, Joseph returned their money to them along with the corn they bought
- Arriving home, they asked Jacob to allow them to bring Benjamin to Egypt.

cont. Story of Joseph

- When their corn was finished, they needed to return to Egypt to buy more.
- Though hesitating, he eventually allowed Benjamin to go with his brothers to Egypt
- Joseph received them well in his house, feasting with them
- After the feast, he instructed his servant to "fill their sacks with as much food as they can carry. Place my silver cup into the sack of their youngest.
- In the morning, the brothers left but were soon stopped because they were accused of stealing
- Upon checking their sacks, Joseph's silver cup was found inside Benjamin's sack
- Being that Benjamin will be punished, Judah pleaded that he will take Benjamin's place instead
- Eventually, Joseph revealed himself.

The Story of Ruth (Book of Ruth)

- Elim'e-lech and Naomi, sons Mah'lon and Chil'i-on moved from Bethlehem-Judah to the country of Moab due to famine
- Elim'e-lech died and his sons married Moabite women Orpah and Ruth
- After 10 years, the sons died leaving Naomi, Orpah and Ruth
- Naomi decided to return to the land of Judah and asked her daughters in law to return to their families
- Orpah and Naomi said they will go back with Naomi to her land but Naomi insisted that she doesn't have anymore sons for them to marry
- Orpah returned to her family
- Ruth did not leave Naomi, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."
- Ruth eventually married Boaz and from them came the great grandparents of David (and Jesus)

Parable of the Talents (Mt 25: 14-30)

- A man who was travelling called his servants and left one of them with 5 talents, the other 2 talents and to another 1.
- The man with the 5 talents went and traded it, getting 5 more
- The man with 2 talents, gained also another 2
- The man with 1 talent, buried his talent
- The lord of the servants eventually returned and called his servants
- They came and brought their talents with them
- The man with 10 talents was eventually made a ruler of the land, as well as the man who had 4
- "You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest."
- The man who buried his talent was told to give his talent to the man who has 10
- For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."