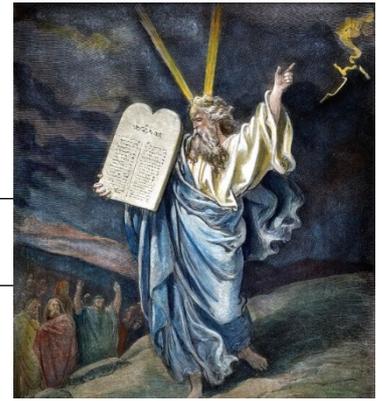


A history of the Jewish faith: Explanatory guide

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Lecture 1: Ancient Judaism (1): From the patriarchs to the restoration of the 2nd Temple (1800 BCE – 5th C. BCE)



A. THE BIBLICAL STORY

Creation of the world – according to the Book of Genesis. Said to have occurred in 3761 BCE.

Patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Abraham could be considered the 1st Jew. (~ 1800 BCE)

Moses – The greatest prophet. Led the Hebrews out of Egypt and received the Torah at Mt Sinai. ~ 1300 BCE

Exodus (from Egypt) **and the covenant** (at Sinai – the covenant is the contract between G-d and the Hebrews.) ~ 1300 BE

Torah – The first 5 books of the Bible; called the Five Books of Moses as they were written by him but dictated by G-d.

Conquest of the Land of Israel – by Joshua. Moses could see Israel but did not enter. ~ 1250 BCE

Monolatry - The worship of one god without denial of the existence of other gods (cf. monotheism)

Halacha (laws) – according to a higher obligation. Said traditionally to be given for all time at Sinai.

Yahweh – The name of the Hebrew G-d. There is almost no agreement on its meaning and origin.

Merneptah stele - An inscription by the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah which is the earliest textual reference to Israel. A stele is an upright stone slab or pillar bearing an inscription (13th C. BCE)

Judges – A succession of 12 military leaders (not court judges!), e.g. Deborah (1200 BCE)

United Monarchy – The Land of Israel is united under kings Saul, David and Solomon. Then it splits

Divided Monarchy – The northern kingdom is called (paradoxically) Israel and the southern is Judah.

Prophets – Inspired leaders who communicated directly with G-d and conveyed this to the people.

Destruction of the Northern Kingdom (of Israel) – Destroyed by the Assyrians (722 BCE)

Samaritans – Arose from people around Samaria in destroyed Israel. Accepted only the Torah.

Destruction of Judah and the 1st Temple – Destroyed by the Babylonians (586 BCE)

The Babylonian Exile - A watershed period in Jewish history. The elite of Jews from Judah were expelled to Babylonia. Some returned with the Persians destroyed the Babylonians. 586 - 539 BCE

The Restoration – Jews were allowed by King Cyrus of Persia to return to Judah 539 BCE.

The rebuilding of the 2nd Temple – Supervised by Zerubbabel, the governor 520 - 515 BCE.

Ezra the Scribe and Nehemiah (governor) – helped rebuild Jerusalem and reform Judaism 5th C. BCE.

B. **WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?** – A non-theological approach to investigating authorship of the Bible

The Documentary Hypothesis - one of the models historically used by biblical scholars to explain the origins and composition of the Torah (or Pentateuch, i.e. the first five books of the Bible)

Julius Wellhausen (1844 – 1918) – German biblical scholar who was one of the founders of the documentary hypothesis; best known for his analysis of the structure and dating of the Pentateuch.

The Josianic Revolution - The reform under King Josiah consisted of removing pagan altars and idols from the Temple, destroying rural sanctuaries and fertility cults, and centralizing worship at the Temple of Jerusalem. 640 – 609 BCE

The Hebrew Bible – Also called the Tanakh is the canonical collection of Hebrew scriptures, comprising the Torah (5 books of Moses), Prophets and Writings.

Dead Sea Scrolls - ancient, mostly Hebrew, manuscripts first found in 1947. They consist of two types: “biblical” manuscripts—books found in today’s Hebrew Bible, and “non-biblical” manuscripts—other religious writings circulating during the Second Temple era,

Masoretic text - is the authoritative Hebrew Aramaic text of the 24 books of the Tanakh in Rabbinic Judaism. It was primarily copied, edited and distributed by a group of Jews known as the Masoretes between the 7th and 10th centuries CE.

Septuagint - the earliest extant Greek translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew. The Septuagint was presumably made for the Jewish community in Egypt when Greek was the common language throughout the region.

Apocrypha The biblical apocrypha (from the Ancient Greek lit. 'hidden') denotes the collection of apocryphal ancient books thought to have been written some time between 200 BC and 400 AD. Some Christian churches include some or all of the same texts within the body of their version of the Old Testament.

Pseudepigrapha – these are falsely attributed works, texts whose claimed author is not the true author, or a work whose real author attributed it to a figure of the past. It refers to an assorted collection of Jewish religious works thought to be written c. 300 BCE to 300 CE.

Vulgate Bible - a late-4th-century Latin translation of the Bible; the Vulgate is still presently used in the Latin Church.

King James Bible - the English version of 1611, or simply the Authorized Version (AV), is an English translation of the Christian Bible for the Church of England.