Test Bank for The Bible A Historical and Literary Introduction 2nd Edition by Ehrman

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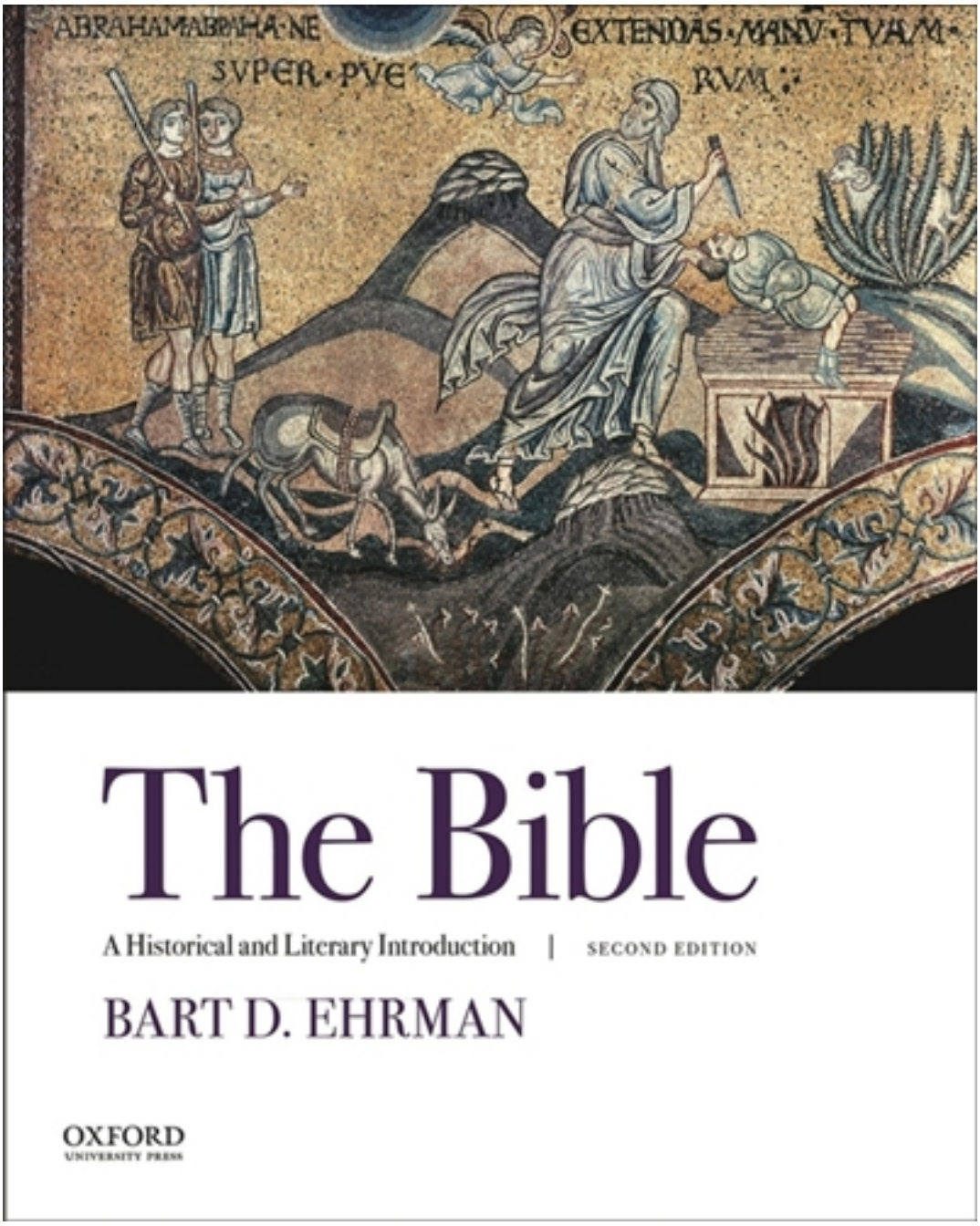

Test Bank

Instructor's Manual and Test Questions

To accompany

The Bible:
A Historical And Literary Introduction, Second Edition

by Bart D. Ehrman

Prepared by

Jason A. Staples

New York: Oxford University Press
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A Note to Instructors

This **Instructor's Manual** is designed to assist you in introducing the historical and literary worlds of the Bible to your students. Content summaries outline the major themes of each chapter, and key terms highlight new concepts. Pedagogical suggestions are provided for cultivating thoughtful class discussion, and guides for reading may help students think broadly and comparatively about new ideas they encounter. The second half of the Instructor's Manual contains an extensive selection of **test questions**, including multiple choice and essay questions for each chapter. Answer keys and brief sample responses to the essay questions are provided.

A **Companion Website** to accompany *The Bible* is online at **http://www.oup.com/us/ehrman.** The online chapter summaries, glossary terms, and guides for reading are organized to help students better comprehend the text. In addition, online self-quizzes consist of about twenty multiple choice and ten true/false questions selected from those provided at the end of this Instructor's Manual. Those that appear on the website are marked with asterisks in the answer key.

This Instructor's Manual was prepared by Jason A. Staples, Teaching Assistant Professor at North Carolina State University and Lecturer at Duke Divinity School.[1]

[1] Portions of this manual and test questions have borrowed from Nate DesRosiers and Michael D. Coogan, *Instructor's Manual and Test Questions to Accompany The Old Testament, Second Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), and Jason A. Staples, *Instructor's Manual and Test Questions to Accompany The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings, Fifth Edition* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2012).

Table of Contents

General Media Resources

Selected Websites:
New Testament: http://www.ntgateway.com/
Bible, Archaeology, and Commentary: http://www.bibleinterp.com/
Bible Odyssey: https://www.bibleodyssey.org
Biblical Archaeological Society: www.biblicalarchaeology.org
Biblical Archeology Blog (scholarly): http://www.asorblog.org/
Dead Sea Scrolls: http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/
Early Church: http://www.ccel.org/fathers/
Early Christian Writings: http://www.earlychristianwritings.com
Early Jewish Writings: http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com
Hebrew Bible Resources: https://otstory.wordpress.com/web-resources-for-ot-studies/
Postmodern Bible Dictionary: http://www.bible.gen.nz/dictionary.htm
Mark Goodacre's NT Pod: http://podacre.blogspot.com

Selected Film and TV Resources:
Abraham (1994)
Book of Esther (2013)
David and Bathsheba (1951)
From the Manger to the Cross
Godspell
Jacob (1994)
Jesus (John Krish and Peter Sykes, 1979)
Jesus (Roger Young, 2000)
Jesus Christ Superstar (1973, 2001)
Jésus devant Pilate
Jesus of Montreal
Jesus of Nazareth
The Gospel according to Matthew
Monty Python's Life of Brian
Noah (2014)
One Night with the King
PBS Frontline Series: Apocalypse!
PBS Frontline Series: From Jesus to Christ
Samson and Delilah
Son of Man

The Bible (2013 History Channel Series)
The Book of Life
The Day Christ Died
The Greatest Story Ever Told
The King of Kings
The Last Temptation of Christ
The Miracle Maker
The Nativity (BBC Series)
The Nativity Story
The Passion of the Christ
The Prince of Egypt
The Ten Commandments (1956)

The Bible: A Historical and Literary Introduction

This textbook is unique because it approaches the Bible from historical and literary perspectives rather than from a theological or confessional approach. In it, Bart Ehrman discusses each of the books of the Hebrew Bible/Tanakh, Apocrypha/deuterocanonical writings, and the New Testament, providing a solid historical and literary framework for understanding the Bible in its literary and historical context. He discusses the dates, authors, sources, and significance of the Bible and several roughly contemporaneous noncanonical Jewish and Christian writings important to understanding the biblical writings and the wider world of the Bible.

Along the way, the textbook addresses topics such as the history of ancient Israel; the relationship of the Hebrew Bible to the literature of the ancient Near East; historical Jesus; the life and missions of Paul; Christian relations to Judaism and paganism; the rise of Christian anti-Judaism; and the role of women in ancient Israel, early Judaism, and earliest Christianity, always placing these texts firmly in the social and political milieus from which they grew. The cultures and religious perspectives of the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean are therefore presented as essential, not peripheral, to understanding the Bible and the communities that produced it.

This introduction takes a comparative approach to biblical literature; rather than reading through the lens of a single metanarrative, Ehrman emphasizes the diverse perspectives and conversations throughout the Bible, illustrating the ways different authors and editors addressed new problems and circumstances in their communities.

Chapter 1
What Is the Bible?

Chapter Summary

What Is the Bible?

The Bible is a collection of sixty-six books divided into two "canons" (closed collections of authoritative works). The first thirty-nine books comprise the Hebrew Bible, also known as the Tanakh, Jewish scriptures, or Christian Old Testament. This collection is followed by the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, which completes the Christian Bible.

Although there are different ways of numbering or organizing the biblical books, this course follows the traditional English order, which divides the Jewish scriptures into three parts: seventeen historical books, five poetic books, and seventeen prophetic books. The first five are especially important, as they comprise the Torah or Pentateuch (Greek for "five scrolls"), the books that describe the formation of Israel from the creation of the world to the giving of the Law of Israel to Moses. These books are often called the "Law of Moses." The other twelve historical books tell the remaining history of Israel and Judah and are followed by five poetic masterpieces of ancient Hebrew literature. As with the historical books, the prophetic corpus is divided into five "Major Prophets" and twelve "Minor Prophets," a distinction made on the basis of the length of the books.

The traditional Hebrew order of these books is significantly different, dividing into the Torah, Nevi'im ("Prophets") and Kethuvim ("Writings"). Four of the historical books (counting Samuel and Kings as one book apiece) are counted as part of the Nevi'im along with four of the prophetic books: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and "the twelve" (the twelve minor prophets counted as one book). The Kethuvim contains the remaining eleven books. Some Christian traditions also include additional books in their Old Testament. These books are called "deuterocanonical" within those traditions, while Protestant Christians call them the "Apocrypha."

The New Testament is divided into four sections: the four Gospels, the book of Acts, the twenty-one Epistles, and Revelation. This order is the same across all languages.

Putting the Bible on the Map

Geographically, the Bible focuses upon the small strip of land on the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea roughly corresponding to today's Israel/Palestine. The wider context of the Bible includes the region and nations of the Ancient Near East along with Greece and Rome and their empires.

Before beginning a fuller study, it is especially important to have a basic understanding of the overarching narrative of the Tanakh and New Testament. Ehrman sketches a brief picture of this narrative, beginning with the four primeval events (Creation, Garden of Eden, Flood, and Babel) and four primary patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph) of Genesis. The narrative then picks up with Israel's enslavement and exodus, the giving of the law, wandering in the wilderness, conquest of the promised land, judges, the rise of Israelite monarchy, and ultimately concludes with Israel's exile and subsequent (partial) return to the land.

The New Testament centers on the messianic figure of Jesus, with the Gospels telling the story of his life, death, and resurrection. The rest of the New Testament tells the story of the spread of the Christian church, with special attention upon the incorporation of gentiles (non-

Jews) into the nascent church. The New Testament concludes with Revelation's visions of the end, when God will establish a utopian kingdom.

A number of archaeologists and historians have observed problems in the historical narratives of the Bible; some of these issues will be discussed throughout the course. This will not, however, be the entire focus, as the Bible contains beautiful and powerful literature regardless of its correspondence with what can be historically established.

To understand the Bible, we must also understand the political and religious contexts that had so much influence on its formation. The various books of the Bible were written over a long period of time that included the rise and fall of numerous empires far more powerful than the relatively weak state of Israel, including Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and the Hellenistic kingdoms, and Rome.

Cultural Context

To understand the books of the Bible, we must consider the political and religious worlds in which they were produced. Politically, Israel and Judah were dominated by the great empires of the ancient Near East, including Egypt, Assyria (which destroyed Samaria in 722 B.C.E), Babylonia (destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E.), Persia, Greece/later Hellenistic kingdoms, and Rome.

As for the religious context, the ancient world featured hundreds of religions with several key features in common. These religions were generally polytheistic, focused on the present life rather than an afterlife, and worshiped powerful deities through cultic acts usually performed in sacred places. Such practices were ways of accessing and applying the favor of these powerful divine entities. Ancient religions thus lacked the emphases upon doctrines, ethics, the afterlife, and sacred books that tend to characterize modern (Western) religious traditions. More important, there was no separation between church and state in antiquity; instead, national or civic gods were worshiped out of duty and respect. Finally, because ancient religions were polytheistic, they were non-exclusive—worshiping one god in no way meant giving up the worship of other divine being.

The religion of Israel, which later developed into Judaism, shared many of these characteristics but was distinctive in that it required the exclusive worship of only one God, who had made a special "covenant" or political contract with Israel. Israel's side of the contract required adherence to the Law of Moses. Also unlike other religions, Judaism ultimately settled on a single sacred site for the cultic worship of this God: a specific temple in Jerusalem. After the destruction of the first Jerusalem temple and the scattering of many Jews across various nations, synagogues arose as places for prayer and teaching. No sacrifices were made in synagogues, however. These uniquely Jewish perspectives were foundational to early Christianity as well. Despite their uniqueness, Judaism and Christianity did paradoxically assimilate many religious ideas and practices from other religions.

KEY TERMS

Ancient Near East
Apocrypha
Babylonian exile
Canon
Cult
Epistle

Gentile
Gospels
Holy of Holies
Jew
Kethuvim
Major Prophets
Minor Prophets
Nevi'im
Pagan
Pentateuch
Prophet
Synagogue
Tanakh
Torah

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Have students take a precourse quiz on biblical people, places, and events to help students gauge how much they know (or don't know) about the Bible. These questions should illustrate interesting issues and facts that will be discussed during the semester.
2. Since belief in an afterlife is more or less pervasive in modern religious thought, have students discuss this subject in relation to ancient religion. Why might pagan religions be indifferent to such beliefs? Can students imagine religious affiliations without such beliefs? What made paganism attractive to people in the ancient world, if not the promise of an afterlife?
3. It is imperative that students understand the difference between ancient worldviews and a modern, Western way of thinking about religion as a separate category from other aspects of life. One way to help students understand this is to use a few scenes from *Avatar* (2009), in which the alien Na'vi (a word of course derived from the Hebrew for "prophet") cannot conceptualize any other way of viewing the world other than what appears to human visitors as religious. Because there is no other (exclusivistic) competition, the "religion" of the Na'vi is inseparable from every other part of life. This can be used to illustrate how ancient culture included elements that would today be identified as religious but without any real separation from other aspects of life.
4. Ignorance of the geography of the Near East makes reading the Bible much more difficult. Consider giving early map quizzes on basic geography of the ancient Near East and the land of Israel and its neighbors. A map quiz on the geography of the New Testament period can be given at this point or later in the semester as well.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Biblical Archaology: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/biblical-archeology.html
Biblical Places: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/places
New Testament Archaeology:
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/maps/arch/
"History Of The Empires" video depicting the expansion of empires at different points in history (the first half includes the relevant empires for the Bible): https://youtu.be/_lTduTwqtjY
Timeline of the biblical period: http://www.archpark.org.il/

Photographs and descriptions of biblical sites: http://www.bibleplaces.com/
Photographs and descriptions of sites in Israel: http://www.holylandphotos.org/
Interactive virtual tours of sites in Israel and Jordan: http://moses.creighton.edu/vr/
Archaeological sites from Egypt and Mesopotamia:
http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IS/SANDERS/PHOTOS/arch_site_photos.html
Archaeology of the Hebrew Bible (Nova): http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/archeology-hebrew-bible.html

Chapter 2
Why Is the Bible So Hard to Understand?

Chapter Summary

Challenges for Studying the Bible

The Bible is a long and complicated collection. Its books were written over a long period of time by different authors with different audiences, concerns, and perspectives. Even the exact books that comprise the biblical canon are not entirely uniform, as the deuterocanonical/Apocryphal books illustrate.

The Bible was also originally written in several different ancient languages. The Jewish scriptures were written almost entirely in Hebrew (with a few sections in the related language of Aramaic), while the New Testament was written in Greek. The Jewish Bible was also transmitted in a Greek translation called the Septuagint (LXX) in antiquity; this version was the primary Bible of many early Jews and was widely used by early Christians. This is further complicated by the wide span of time covered by even those texts written in the same language (consider that Shakespeare's English is dramatically different from modern American English). The complicated process of translation—especially from ancient tongues to a modern one—ensures that not even the words of the Bible are always exactly agreed upon, let alone the meaning of those words. Idioms, such as the phrase "son of God," also presume a level of shared language and culture, only adding to these difficulties.

The Bible also includes numerous literary genres, each of which has its own implicit rules of communication. One does not read a personal letter in the same manner one reads an epic novel, for example. The same holds true for the Bible: it is important not to read an apocalypse like Revelation in the same way one reads a letter of Paul or a poem in Psalms. Even within the same genre, the Bible contains many internal tensions, as each book has its own distinct outlook. Some books address similar concerns from very different—often seemingly contradictory—perspectives.

Understanding context is critically important to properly understanding the Bible. This is true both in a textual sense and a larger cultural sense. The various authors of the Bible had quite different cosmological perspectives from modern people—or even sometimes from each other. An eighth-century B.C.E. prophet was not writing about twenty-first century issues or first-century issues. Misunderstandings are inevitable when these differences are not accounted for.

Finally, the biblical texts were themselves passed down through many centuries as handwritten copies. This led to numerous changes, both intentional and accidental, leading to an additional layer of uncertainty when interpreting the Bible.

A Literary and Historical Approach

Throughout the course, we will treat the biblical writings as ancient literature, evaluating the structure of each book and reading carefully while taking into account the flow of the narrative, literary motifs, and the possibility that other sources may have been used by the biblical authors and editors. In the process, each book will be read on its own terms, which will sometimes reveal different perspectives among different books of the Bible (and sometimes even within the same book).

We will also take a historical approach, establishing the historical setting (as much as possible) for each book while also assessing how the book corresponds to what we can know from other sources, such as archaeology or accounts external to the Bible.

Some students may find a literary-historical approach at odds with their faith commitments and prior understanding of the Bible. Nevertheless, this textbook is designed to take the biblical literature seriously on its own terms, opening new interpretive possibilities. The textbook's historical focus should likewise be understood as distinct from a confessional perspective. This book investigates how best to understand the Bible from a literary and historical perspective but will not try to convince anyone either to believe or disbelieve the faith claims of the Bible.

KEY TERMS

Dead Sea Scrolls
Genre
Manuscript
Messiah
Septuagint

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Have students describe the difference between a confessional approach (i.e., one that requires the reader to accept any particular set of beliefs about God, Jesus, salvation, and so on) and a literary-historical approach to the study of the Bible. Are these approaches fundamentally at odds with each other? In what ways might this course present difficulties to students who have religious commitments to the material? What strategies might they employ to ease these difficulties?
2. Bring examples of a variety of different literary genres to class (poetry, news report, science fiction, fairy tale, etc.). Have them discuss the conventions of the genre that help the reader identify it and interpret it correctly. Alternately, play several different movie clips (action, drama, thriller, western, horror, fantasy, documentary, home movie, etc.) and do the same. Either example works to demonstrate the importance of genre to understanding and interpretation.
3. To help students understand and relate to the diverse voices found in the Bible, it is sometimes helpful to begin by emphasizing the significant diversity across religious traditions today—even within the same religion or denomination. It is then easier to explain that this diversity stretches all the way back to the individual authors and communities behind the texts of the Bible.
4. To emphasize the importance of understanding the context in which the Bible was written, any number of Internet memes can be marshaled to demonstrate how meaning is consistently context-dependent. Understanding satire, humor, clichés, or even idioms depend on shared understanding not only of the language but also of other symbolic capital.

MEDIA RESOURCES

"Aims of Biblical Archaeology" (video with Jonathan Reed):
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/a/aims-of-biblical-archaeology

American Bible Society: "Critical Perspectives: The 'Critical' Study of the Bible" http://bibleresources.americanbible.org/resource/critical-perspectives-the-critical-study-of-the-bible

"Do Archaeologists try to disprove or prove the Bible?" (video with Carol Meyers): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/a/archaeologist-prove-disprove-meyers

"How Do Biblical Scholars Study the New Testament?" (Bible Odyssey article by Mark Allen Powell): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/bible-basics/how-do-biblical-scholars-study-the-new-testament

"Does the Bible Relate to History 'as It Actually Happened'?" (Bible Odyssey article by Nicola Denzey Lewis) https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/bible-basics/does-the-bible-relate-to-history-as-it-actually-happened

NT Pod 21: A Historical Approach to the New Testament (audio podcast): http://podacre.blogspot.com/2010/01/nt-pod-21-historical-approach-to-new.html

"How do Biblical Scholars Read the Hebrew Bible?" (Sarah Shechtman): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/bible-basics/how-do-biblical-scholars-read-the-hebrew-bible

"What is Historiography?" (video with Steve Mason): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/w/what-is-historiography-mason

"What is the Bible?" (video with Timothy Beal): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/w/what-is-the-bible-beal

Chapter 3
The Book of Genesis

Chapter Summary

Genesis is the first book of the Torah and contains some of the best-known and most influential stories of the Bible. Some even read Genesis as a scientific textbook about the world's origins and the ancestors of the faith. Although the word "Torah" is often translated "Law," it is better rendered as "instruction." Genesis provides this instruction through narratives and the lessons its stories convey. The book's English title is highly appropriate, as the book is about origins: of the world, humanity, civilization, and the nation of Israel.

The Primeval History
Genesis can be divided into two parts. The first eleven chapters contain the Primeval History, which tells of the events at the beginning of time. Genesis 1 gives the famous account of God's creation of the world through a series of ten events over seven days. Genesis 2–3 features the story of Adam and Eve and the forbidden fruit. Other key stories include Cain's murder of his brother Abel (ch. 4), Noah's Flood (chs. 6–9), and the Tower of Babel (ch. 11).

The Primeval History as Meaningful Stories
The Genesis creation stories were not written from a modern scientific perspective, and the rest of the Primeval History presents similar challenges, such as extraordinarily long lives, seeming contradictions (e.g., Cain building a city), and unverifiable supernatural events. Rather than reading them as scientific and historical accounts, these stories should be read as *myths*, stories that try to make sense of the world and our place in it. As such, these stories convey very powerful lessons, regardless of their correspondence with history. These stories emphasize things like the supremacy of humanity, the importance of the Sabbath day, and the importance of obedience to God.

The Ancestral History
The remaining chapters (12–50) comprise the Ancestral History, which tells the stories of Israel's ancestors, focusing especially on the figures of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Many modern scholars have questioned the historicity of these stories on the basis of anachronisms, internal inconsistencies, and doublets. Ehrman suggests reading these stories not as empirical history but as legends: "Fictional narratives about real or alleged historical figures told in order to entertain, to teach a moral, and/or explain why things are as they are" (p. 38). These narratives explain the origins of Israel and set up the events of Exodus while also staking Israel's claim to the land as divinely promised and provided. On a more individual level, these stories also provide ethical guidance for how individual Israelites are to live, guidance especially illustrated in the Joseph novella, where both Joseph's integrity in a foreign land and God's oversight of his life, bringing good out of tragedy, receive special emphasis.

The Challenges Posed by Science and History to the Understanding of Genesis
Genesis is an ancient book that reflects an ancient worldview; many of the accounts of the Primeval History do not line up with modern scientific knowledge. For example, the first

creation story talks about evening and morning happening before the creation of sun, moon, or stars—and vegetation is created on earth before there was a sun. The geological record (and the quantity of available water) also contradicts the account of a flood that covered the entire earth. The Primeval History also includes numerous problems, such as the implausibly long lives of the early humans and internal inconsistencies in many of the stories. The Ancestral History also includes anachronisms, internal inconsistencies, and doublets—all of which are typical in collections of oral tradition.

Conclusion

The stories of Genesis reflect the ancient context in which they were produced. The stories of Genesis are best understood not as historical narratives but as a collection of ancient myths and legends put together to help the Israelites to understand their place in the world.

KEY TERMS

Anachronism
Ancestral History
Cosmology
Legend
Myth
Oral tradition
Primeval History
Sabbath

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Have students compare the two creation narratives from Genesis. Ask them to distinguish the different themes and possible purposes of both myths. Have them note and identify the differences of language, vocabulary, and tone for each narrative.
2. Introduce students to other modern methods of interpretation used by biblical scholars, such as socio-rhetorical, form, and redaction criticism. Demonstrate how such methods can be used together or separately to uncover different levels of meaning and development of a particular text.
3. Later in the course, after students are familiar with the exile, remind the students of the Joseph story and have them reevaluate its significance to Jews expecting Israel's restoration. How does this story serve on different levels? What, if anything, might this suggest about the story's historicity?
4. Have students assess the Adam and Eve story from the perspective of a symbolic myth. What does the story suggest about the human condition? What might the various characters represent? It may be useful to introduce the students to Philo of Alexandria's allegorical interpretation of this story in *On the Creation of the World* and *On the Cherubim*, in which Adam, Eve, and the serpent represent different parts of the human soul.

5. Do an exercise in form criticism using passages from Genesis. What forms, including etiologies, can be detected?

MEDIA RESOURCES

Joseph Story (video with Tremper Longman): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/j/joseph-story

Noah's Ark (video with Eric Cline): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/n/noahs-ark

Shechem: http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/article_shechem.html#map1

Ugarit Ritual Texts: http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/nn/win02_pardee.html

"Teaching about Sexual Violence in the Hebrew Bible," by Rhiannon Graybill: http://global.oup.com/obso/focus/focus_on_sexual_violence/

Who Wrote the Flood Story?: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bible/flood.html

"Who Was Eve Really and What Really Happened in the Garden?" (video with Carol Meyers): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/e/eve-who-meyers

"Why Was Eve Created after Adam?" (video with Carol Meyers): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/e/eve-created-after-meyers

Chapter 4
Who Wrote the Pentateuch?

Chapter Summary

Traditionally, Moses has been regarded as the author of the Pentateuch, having received direct revelation from God on Mount Sinai. This perspective has been questioned not only in the modern period but also in the Middle Ages and even earlier. Early readers noticed that the books of the Torah themselves make no claim about their author but are instead anonymous. Moses is the leading character, but he is referred to in the third person rather than the first—suggesting these books are *about* Moses, not *by* him. Similarly, it is difficult to explain how Moses might have written the account of his own death or refer to the rise of the Israelite monarchy (Gen 36:31).

The internal tensions or inconsistencies within the Pentateuch have become especially important for modern scholars. The two creation stories of Genesis, for example, contain several striking differences, such as discrepancies on whether humanity was created before or after animals or plants or whether male and female were created at the same time (Gen 1:26–27) or male first and female sometime later (Gen 2). The deity is also called by different names in the two creation narratives: *Elohim* (=God) in Gen 1 and *YHWH Elohim*, featuring the personal name of the God of Israel (YHWH), in the second story. Moreover, the deity is portrayed in more anthropomorphic terms in the second story, while the first story depicts God as more distant and remote. The stories also appear to have different interests, with the first stressing the Sabbath and the second looking more at explaining the origins of specific aspects of human life.

The flood story (Gen 6–9) provides another striking example: Did Noah take two animals of every kind into the Ark (Gen 6:19) or seven pairs of clean animals and two of every other kind of animal (Gen 7:2)? One particularly striking example is the statement in Exodus 6:3 that prior to the revelation to Moses, God had not revealed himself to the patriarchs by the personal name YHWH, while Genesis 4:26 says, “At that time people began to invoke the name of YHWH,” and Genesis 15:6–8 tells of God revealing himself to Abraham by the name YHWH.

The Documentary Hypothesis

Most modern scholars have concluded that these tensions reflect different sources spliced together by a later editor. The traditional scholarly model is called the Documentary Hypothesis, most closely associated with German scholar Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918). This model suggests that there were in fact four distinct Pentateuchal sources from different authors living at different times. These sources are usually referred to by their initials, which is why this model is often known as the JEDP hypothesis.

The J (Jahwist) source is named for its preferred use of the divine name YHWH (=Yahweh, Jahweh in German), while the E (Elohist) and P (Priestly) sources prefer the name Elohim (=God). The J source is known for especially anthropomorphic depictions of the deity and concern with the southern part of Israel (i.e., Judah). The E source is much more fragmentary, with many scholars arguing that J and E are not separate sources, and focuses on the northern part of Israel. The P source is notable for its concerns with priestly issues such as sacrifice, purity laws, genealogies, and so on. The D source is limited to the book of

Deuteronomy and is thought to date to the time of Josiah, the king of Judah, or perhaps slightly earlier.

Scholarly opinion about Pentateuchal sources is now quite varied and typically departs significantly from the traditional JEDP model, though scholars are agreed that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses but is instead the result of a variety of written sources from different times and with different concerns.

Oral Traditions and Cultural Parallels

These written sources were derived from much older oral traditions that had been told and retold for generations. Numerous parallels from Israel's surrounding cultures have also been discovered over the last few centuries, including creation stories like the *Enuma Elish* and flood stories like the *Gilgamesh Epic*. Parallels from these two stories in particular are too striking to be accidental: Genesis seems to have borrowed heavily from its neighbors.

KEY TERMS

Anthropomorphic
Documentary Hypothesis
Enuma Elish
Gilgamesh epic
JEDP
Tetragrammaton
Yahweh

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Have students compare the two creation narratives from Genesis. Ask them to distinguish the different themes and possible purposes of both myths. Also, have them note and identify the differences of language, vocabulary, and tone for each narrative.
2. Have students read other Near Eastern creation stories such as *Gilgamesh*, *Enuma Elish*, and *Atrahasis*. What other differences and affinities can they identify between these stories and the biblical accounts? How are polytheistic themes blunted or refuted by the Genesis narratives? Using other creation accounts from outside the Near East may also be valuable. Examples could include Greek accounts such as Aristophanes's speech in Plato's *Symposium*, Plato's *Timaeus*, and Hesiod's tale of the creation of humankind in his *Theogony*. Such examples help to demonstrate how ancient cultures understood their existence and their relationships to the divine.
3. Have students practice with the Documentary Hypothesis by identifying the J and P sources in the Flood narrative (Gen 6:5–9:17). What thematic and language differences are visible? Where do sources seem to overlap or blend?
4. Students should read other flood stories that demonstrate parallels with the biblical account. Readings should include the flood stories from *Gilgamesh* and *Atrahasis*. Interesting analogies to these narratives may be provided by flood stories outside the Middle Eastern sphere, such as the Greek flood story featuring the hero Deucalion (Apollodorus 1.46ff; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.318ff).
5. Have students search for different occurrences of "God" and "LORD" (YHWH) in their Bibles throughout the book of Genesis and identify common features of the stories where the different names are used.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Interactive Source Analysis of the Flood Story: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bible/floo-flash.html

Combined J/P Flood Story: http://barrybandstra.com/tables/ch01/ch1_tb12.htm

Documentary Hypothesis (video lecture): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zy5ue0QPUOo

Enuma Elish (translated by L.W. King): http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/enuma.htm

Noah and Gilgamesh (video by Dexter Callender): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/n/noah-and-gilgamesh-callender

The Gilgamesh Epic (Stan Rummel translation with discussion questions): http://www.kchanson.com/ANCDOCS/meso/gilgamesh.html

Who Wrote the Flood Story?: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bible/flood.html

Chapter 5
From Egypt to Mount Sinai: Exodus and Leviticus

Chapter Summary

The Book of Exodus

The book of Exodus tells the story of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian enslavement under the leadership of Moses and the reception of the laws given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Chief among these stories (most of which derive from J/E) are Moses' birth and early life, the revelation at the burning bush, the ten plagues in Egypt, the first Passover, and the miraculous parting of the Sea of Reeds (a literal translation of what is more traditionally rendered "Red Sea"). After these events, Moses receives the covenant on Mount Sinai while Israel commits idolatry in the golden calf incident. Upon discovering the latter, Moses smashes the original stone tablets of the covenant; the law is then given a second time, including instructions for the building of a "tabernacle," a tent designed as the central place for worship and sacrifice of the God of Israel.

From a historical perspective, Exodus is, like Genesis, problematic. Most modern scholars date the exodus event around 1250 B.C.E., as the cities of Pi-Ramses and Pithon mentioned in Exodus 1:11 were rebuilt in the mid-thirteenth century. There is, however, no extra-biblical historical or archaeological evidence for anything like the exodus having occurred, and many of the details of the story seem implausible. Moreover, Israel must have existed as a distinct entity at least by the end of the thirteenth century, since the Merneptah Stele references Pharaoh's conquest of Israel. As with the Ancestral History of Genesis, Ehrman advocates reading these stories as legends rather than as actual history, though with a possible kernel of truth in a small band of slaves having escaped Egypt, with the scale of the story growing larger over the generations.

From a literary perspective, these stories again provide key foundations for Israelite identity, emphasizing Israel's elect status, the God of Israel's sovereignty over everything, and establishing a historical basis for the Passover feast. Ehrman concludes this section by observing that the picture of God and ethics found in Exodus are rather different from modern sensibilities.

The Law of Moses (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers)

The Law revealed to Moses on Sinai is central to the Torah, comprising almost the entirety of Exodus 20 through Numbers 10 and nearly all of the book of Deuteronomy. Aside from Deuteronomy, most of this legal material comes from the P source, though that source itself drew on earlier legal codes and put them into a longer narrative.

It is especially important to correct misunderstandings about the nature of the Law of Moses. One common view (especially within some elements of the Christian tradition) is that the Law is hopelessly detailed and impossible to keep, although Jews must keep it to earn salvation. This is entirely different from the traditional view of the Law within Judaism. For ancient Israelite religion and later Judaism, the Law was never meant to be the means of salvation nor that an Israelite would need to earn God's favor by doing the Law. On the contrary, Israelites already have God's favor through their special elect status as God's people, while the Law is understood as a precious gift given by God to instruct his elect people how to live. The Law was to be kept out of gratitude for God's favor, not as a way of earning that favor.

The covenant between God and Israel in the Law is analogous to the sort of covenants or peace treaties known in the ancient Near East. The Suzerainty Treaty (known from the Hittites *c.* 1500–1200 B.C.E.) is especially significant, as it features a covenant between a superior overlord (the suzerain) and a vassal. The Torah given to Moses is framed in much the same way as these treaties, including (i) an identification of the two parties, (ii) a statement of the history of their relationship, (iii) covenant stipulations, and (iv) a statement of consequences for keeping or breaking these stipulations.

There are two major types of laws in the Torah: apodictic laws, which are straightforward commands, and casuistic (case) laws, which address if–then situations. Nearly all the laws serve one of three functions: instructions about religious practices, directions for ordering the community, and purity regulations designed to set Israel apart from outside nations.

The Torah also appears to include three separate earlier law codes: (i) the Covenant Code (Exod 20:22–23:33), which pertains especially to an agricultural situation, dealing with cases involving slaves, violence, property rights, and restitutions; (ii) the Priestly Code (Lev 1–16), which focuses on proper purity, priestly, and sacrificial concerns; and (iii) the Holiness Code (Lev 17–26), which establishes laws of both a religious and ethical nature to set Israel apart from everyone else ("holy" means "separate").

KEY TERMS

Apodictic laws
Ark of the Covenant
Atonement
Casuistic laws
Code of Hammurapi
Covenant Code
Day of Atonement
Decalogue
Holiness Code
Kosher food laws
Levites
Priests
Priestly Code
Sacrifice
Suzerainty Treaty
Tabernacle

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Discuss whether the Exodus was a historical event. What suggests that the Exodus may have been a real event? What are the problems associated with studying the Exodus? For more advanced classes, reading selections from something like Hoffmeier's *Israel in Egypt* may help enhance discussion.
2. Have the students read the Amarna Letters and discuss the political, religious, and cultural climate of the land of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age. What can these letters tell us about the nation of Israel and its theological development?

3. Watch excerpts from Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments*. Have the students analyze the difference between the film and the biblical text. (This can also be done as an out-of-class assignment with a short analytic response paper.)
4. Have the students read a few other examples of suzerainty treaties. A useful book is Gary Beckman's *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*. What parallels to the biblical text are visible?
5. Have the students read a few examples from other ancient Near Eastern law codes found in books such as Martha T. Roth's *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. What are some of the similarities in style and language between these texts and the Bible?
6. It is critical that students understand the difference between modern conceptions of "legalism" and the "covenantal nomism" reflected in early Judaism. Talk about the differences between "earning" God's approval and the obligation to keep the Law because God's approval had already been given. See if the students can think of specific examples that might highlight these differences.
7. Discuss the provisions made for individuals of lower status (women, the poor, slaves, resident aliens) in Leviticus. What are the differences in their status and treatment? How does each of these groups fit into the ritual practices of ancient Israel?

MEDIA RESOURCES

Ancient Egypt: http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/index.html
Amarna Letters from Egypt: http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/amarnaletters.htm
Code of Hammurapi (video): https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history/art-history-400-c-e--ancient-cultures-1/ancient-near-east/v/law-code-stele-of-king-hammurabi--792-1750-b-c-e
Code of Hammurapi (translation): http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/hammurabi.htm
Egypt in the Bible (video by Michael Chan): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/e/egypt-in-the-bible-chan
Egyptian and Hittite Empires (video by Billie Jean Collins): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/e/egyptian-and-hittite-empires
Homosexuality and the Bible—Lev 18:22 in the context of the Holiness Code (video by Kristin Swenson): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/h/homosexuality-and-the-bible
Merneptah Stele: http://www.bible-history.com/archaeology/egypt/2-israel-stela-bb.html
Moses and the Exodus: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/moses-exodus.html
Santorini and the Exodus (video by Eric Cline): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/s/santorini-and-the-exodus
Traditional Mt. Sinai: www.sacredsites.com/africa/egypt/mount_sinai.html
Treaties and Contracts from the Ancient Near East: http://jewishchristianlit.com/Topics/Contracts/

Chapter 6
From Mount Sinai to the Promised Land: Numbers and Deuteronomy

Chapter Summary

The Book of Numbers
Numbers receives its name from the two censuses taken in the book, one at the beginning and one at the end. After Israel fearfully hesitates to invade the Promised Land, YHWH punishes the people for their lack of faithfulness—they must wait until the generation of Israelites who experienced the Exodus has died off (forty years). The second census comes after that generation has died off and the next generation of Israelites is preparing to enter the Promised Land. Thus, in addition to some additional laws given to Moses, Numbers emphasizes the fraught relationship between God and chronically unfaithful Israel. The book also includes narratives displaying the authority of Moses over potential rivals, Israel's persistent unfaithfulness, and Moses' own disobedience, which costs him the opportunity to enter the Promised Land himself, though he does lead several military victories as Israel takes territory in the region of the Transjordan.

As with the other books of the Torah, Numbers features numerous internal inconsistencies and implausibilities that suggest these are legendary rather than historical accounts. There is also no archaeological evidence for such massive encampments and enormous battles in this region around this period. The point of Numbers is rather straightforward: God is faithful and able to provide for and protect God's people, but disobedience to the covenant brings catastrophic consequences.

The Book of Deuteronomy
Deuteronomy means "second law," and this book involves Moses regiving the Law to the new generation of Israel left over after the wilderness wanderings before its entrance into the land. All of Deuteronomy comes from the unique D source except the last chapter (which is from P). In addition to a repetition of laws found earlier in the Torah, Deuteronomy includes distinctive laws pertaining to kings, prophets, and Levites. These laws presume a much later context than in Moses' own day. Deuteronomy includes lengthy sections detailing the blessings associated with obedience to the covenant and even longer sections (about four times as long) about the horrible consequences of disobedience, including a final exile from the land. The book concludes with Moses' death and an encomium on Moses' life.

Most scholars date the D source to the mid-seventh century B.C.E., long after the days of Moses, connecting it to the "book of the Law" that spurred Josiah's reforms in Judah in the late seventh century. There are indications that many of the D traditions trace to the northern part of Israel and were later edited and expanded by a southern editor. Deuteronomy also contains similarities to treaties from around the seventh century B.C.E. associated with the Assyrian king Esarhaddon.

KEY TERMS
Asherah
Baal

Deuteronomic Code
Shema
Sheol

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Read the different versions of the Decalogue in Exodus and Deuteronomy and discuss in detail. What conclusions can we draw about the social and religious makeup of the community that produced these texts? How should we account for the differences between the versions?
2. Compare the laws in the Deuteronomic Code with those in other biblical law codes, such as the Covenant Code in Exodus 20:22–23:33. Discuss the differences in style and language. In particular, how are individuals of lower status treated in these different law codes?
3. Compare the accounts of the journey through the wilderness in Numbers with those given in Psalms 78 and 106, Jeremiah, and Hosea. How do they differ, and what are some of the possible reasons for these differences?
4. Have the students read the passages dealing with Balaam the seer and the Deir Alla texts that mention this figure. Discuss why this episode is unique and important for biblical studies. (Further discussion and full translations of these texts can be found in Jo Ann Hackett's *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla.*)
5. Have the students analyze and discuss the character of Moses. How does his personality evolve over the course of the Pentateuch? Is he a flat or round character?

MEDIA RESOURCES

Balaam the seer:
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0003_0_01914.html

Deir Alla Inscription about Balaam the seer: http://www.livius.org/de-dh/deir_alla/deir_alla_inscr.html

How Biblical Law Changed over Time: "Law and the Bible" (video with Cheryl B. Anderson):
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/l/law-and-the-bible-anderson

Ten Commandments—different versions (video by Brent Strawn):
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/t/ten-commandments-strawn

Vassal Treaties in the Ancient Near East: http://bibleandteaching.com/background-of-deuteronomy/topic-5-ancient-near-eastern-vassal-treaties/

Chapter 7
The Deuteronomistic History: Joshua and Judges

Chapter Summary

The Deuteronomistic History

The historical writings including Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings are traditionally called the "Former Prophets" and cover a large span of time that can be divided into four discrete periods: conquest, judges, united monarchy, and divided monarchy. Since the mid-twentieth century, these books have typically been understood as a unit written by an author or group of authors (or editors) dependent on Deuteronomy or the D source itself, which is why modern scholars typically call these books the Deuteronomistic History.

These books emphasize the supremacy of the God of Israel over history and all nations, Israel's responsibility to serve the LORD alone, and the restriction of the sacrificial cult to the Jerusalem Temple. Deuteronomy's scheme of blessing and punishment is especially prominent throughout the Deuteronomistic History, as Israel's success is depicted as dependent upon their obedience or disobedience to their God. Similarly, kings are rated not according to their military or political success but rather on the basis of whether they follow the dictates of the Torah (Deuteronomy, in particular). These written narratives were compiled from prior traditions by an author (or group of authors) based in the southern kingdom of Judah, with the final edition of this collection published sometime after the Babylonian exile.

The Book of Joshua

The book of Joshua focuses on the conquest of the Promised Land under Moses' successor Joshua. Although the book does tell of assaults and battles, the author is far more interested in the religious aspects of the conquest than the details of the battles. The conquest is portrayed in triumphalist terms, with Israel guaranteed to receive the land as long as they are faithful, while Israel's enemies are depicted as evil, polluting elements within the land. Joshua includes the famous story of the battle of Jericho, in which the walls of the city miraculously fall flat before Israel destroys the city and its inhabitants.

A key issue brought up in Joshua is the policy of total destruction of all living things (man, woman, child, even sometimes animals) called *ḥerem* (Hebrew for "devoted") reflected in many of the battles within Joshua. The battle of Ai is especially significant in that it displays the consequences for disobeying this policy when it is in force, as the people is initially defeated by this small town thanks to one person disobeying the command of *ḥerem* in the conquest of Jericho.

The textbook emphasizes the multiple-century distance between these narratives and the events themselves, again pointing to internal discrepancies, tensions with other accounts (e.g., the destruction of Hazor, which is in Canaanite hands in Judges 4), implausibilities, and lack of external or archaeological verification. Moreover, these stories are clearly molded according to a specific theological perspective rather than reflecting an attempt to tell of events exactly as they happened. Nevertheless, the historical problem of Israel's origins in the land of Canaan remains.

Ehrman lists the four most popular scholarly solutions for Israel's emergence: conquest, immigration, peasant revolt (Marxian), and gradual emergence theories. The gradual emergence

theory suggests that a cult of YHWH emerged within the indigenous Canaanite population (perhaps with some influx from outside), and ultimately led to the formation of a people who later told stories about how they came to be separate from their neighbors. If this theory is indeed correct, Ehrman observes, the book of Joshua could obviously be nothing more than a dramatically outsized legendary account rather than a historical narrative.

The Book of Judges

Judges provides an episodic narrative of the time between the conquest and the monarchy, a time lamented by the author as when "there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes" (21:25). During this period, Judges portrays the land, which was not fully subdued as suggested by Joshua, as governed by military deliverers ("judges" is a bit of a misnomer) who rose up in times of need. The stories of Judges mostly operate according to a fixed cycle of apostasy and repentance: Apostasy → Oppression → Cry for Help → Rise of a Deliverer → Period of Tranquility → Return to Apostasy (p. 93).

Judges features entertaining stories about diverse figures, including the left-handed hero Ehud, female leader and prophetess Deborah, Gideon, and strongman Samson. The accounts of the various judges suggest a downward spiral in Israel culminating in the horrific story of the all-night gang-rape of an unnamed woman in the territory of Benjamin (ch. 19), a story evocative of the scene in Sodom in Genesis 19. As with prior biblical books, Judges is best read as a collection of legends, "imaginative tales of the great heroes of the Israelite past" (p. 98). Judges is especially important for the gradual emergence hypothesis of Israelite origins, as it witnesses a period of loose connection between separate Israelite groups who would only later become a unified nation.

KEY TERMS

Conquest theory
Deuteronomistic History
Gradual emergence theory
Ḥerem
Immigration theory
Nazirite
Peasant revolt theory

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The book of Joshua provides an excellent opportunity for introducing students to several important biblical archaeological sites. These could include Jericho, Hazor, Lachish, and Shechem. Maps and photographs of many of these sites are available from such online sources as http://moses.creighton.edu/vr/. Basic introductory readings on biblical archaeology, such as P. R. S. Moorey's *A Century of Biblical Archaeology*, are also valuable. Discuss the basic concepts of biblical archaeology and talk about how the history of these sites can influence our understanding of Joshua's chronologies.

2. The book of Joshua contains more etiologies than any other book in the Bible. Choose a specific passage or block of text such as Joshua 4:1–8:35 and identify the etiologies that are present. Discuss their specific purpose and function for a later audience.
3. Compare the presentation of Israel in Joshua and Judges. Discuss how these two differing portrayals can be understood. Discuss the historical makeup and character of Israel in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries B.C.E.
4. Discuss the historical events of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries B.C.E. that resulted in major upheaval in the eastern Mediterranean. Introduce and discuss the possible economic, military, and environmental events that led to these remarkable changes. How did these events play a role in the emergence of Israel as a nation?
5. Discuss the role of prophecy in the ancient world. Note the parallels between biblical and other ancient Near Eastern prophecy. Nissinen's *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East* may be helpful in this exercise. Also discuss the importance of prophets, seers, and diviners to kings and commoners. Also consider looking at later parallels from the Greek world. The Greek historian Herodotus gives vivid descriptions of prophecy and divination among Greeks, Egyptians, and Babylonians. For example, see *Histories* 1.34–92, 4.163–64, and 7.138–144.

MEDIA RESOURCES

"Archaeology and Conquest" (video with Ann E. Killebrew):
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/a/archaeology-and-conquest-killebrew
Canaanite Gods Mentioned in the Bible:
http://www.biblicalheritage.org/Bible%20Studies/canaan-gods.htm
Gender Issues in the Book of Judges (video with Jacob L. Wright):
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/g/gender-issues-judges-wright
Hazor: http://www.bibarch.com/ArchaeologicalSites/Hazor.htm
"Teaching about Sexual Violence in the Hebrew Bible," by Rhiannon Graybill:
http://global.oup.com/obso/focus/focus_on_sexual_violence/
The Many Gods of Ancient Israel (audio and transcript):
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/dever-israel-au.html
Philistines: http://www.crystalinks.com/philistia.html
Rape in the Bible (video with Frank Yamada): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/r/rape-in-the-hb

Chapter 8
The Books of Samuel and Kings

Chapter Summary

1 and 2 Samuel

The two books of Samuel (regarded as a single book in the Tanakh) focus on the figures of Samuel, Saul, and David in a chronological narrative in which Israel moves from a loose confederacy to a united monarchy. These books derive from multiple written sources and oral traditions sometimes at odds with one another. One especially notable tension involves the question of whether the establishment of the monarchy was a good thing, with at least one source regarding it as a positive and another (presumably later) source seeing it as a negative, resulting in an overall ambivalence about the monarchy in the final version of 1 and 2 Samuel.

1 Samuel focuses on the transition from the period of the Judges, from Samuel the transitional judge and kingmaker through the reign of Saul, which features a turbulent relationship with the man who would ultimately succeed him, David. As the final judge before the establishment of the monarchy, Samuel warns that a king will ultimately enslave his people with tyrannical power but ultimately anoints Saul as the chosen ruler over Israel. Saul is a troubled figure who manages several military victories before making several serious mistakes, most notably (i) his decision to offer a burnt offering himself without Samuel present (1 Sam 13), (ii) his failure to perform YHWH's command of *ḥerem* upon the Amalekites (1 Sam 15), and (iii) his consultation of a medium to call upon the spirit of the deceased Samuel (1 Sam 28). In response to the first two violations, Samuel secretly anoints David as Saul's successor (1 Sam 16). David increasingly grows in favor, only to be pursued by Saul, who attempts to kill him.

The second book focuses on David's reign, which united the Israelite tribes into a great nation. David becomes king of the southern region of Judah only after Saul's death and does not become king over all Israel until the assassination of Saul's son Ishbaal seven and a half years later. David's reign is far from perfect, featuring missteps such as the Bathsheba/Uriah affair and his son Absalom's military coup, but the Deuteronomistic Historian judges him positively due to his commitment to YHWH and records a promise from YHWH that David's descendant would always sit on the throne of Israel.

These narratives feature numerous doublets and internal tensions, reflecting their late composition from much older sources and traditions. Ehrman notes that Saul and David were almost certainly historical figures, but these stories were written some four hundred years after their lives and with specific religious and political agendas. Thus again we find ourselves in the territory of legends, with numerous kernels of actual history creatively shaped by storytellers living long after the events.

1 and 2 Kings

1 and 2 Kings cover the four hundred years between the reign of David and the early years of the Babylonian exile. The first eleven chapters cover the reign of Solomon, who was famous for his wisdom, wealth, and massive building projects, including the temple of YHWH in Jerusalem, which became one of the great monuments of the ancient Near East. The Deuteronomistic Historian suggests that Solomon's passion for foreign women, who "turned away his heart after other gods"—along with his steep taxes and heavy-handed policies of forced labor—led to Israel

dividing into two separate kingdoms after Solomon's death: the kingdom of Israel in the north (initially led by Jeroboam) and Judah in the south (led by Solomon's son Rehoboam from Jerusalem). (It is important to note the parallels between the practices of Solomon condemned in 1 Kings and the laws for the king in Deut 17:14–20.)

The rest of Kings traces the history of the two kingdoms, following a fairly standardized formula for reporting and assessing each individual king along the way (see p. 116). The northern kingdom is more powerful but less stable, as numerous kings are assassinated or overthrown in military coups. The northern kingdom is ultimately annihilated by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.E., with many taken captive to other places, an event Kings regards as directly related to the northern kings' continued sponsorship of worship outside of Jerusalem, which the Deuteronomistic Historian regards as idolatrous.

The southern kingdom lasts another century and a half, but most of Judah's kings are also judged negatively—often for similar cultic violations. Eventually, the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem and took many captives—including king Jehoiachin—back to Babylon, installing their own puppet king from among the royal house. When this king (Zedekiah) rebelled, Nebuchadnezzar returned and destroyed Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple, taking many more captives back to Babylon. 2 Kings ends its history of Judah on the faintly hopeful note of Jehoiachin being released from prison and being given a daily allowance by the king of Babylon.

KEY TERMS

Astarte

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. 1 Samuel 11 presents an interesting account where Nahash invades Jabesh-Gilead. However, the RSV and JPS do not explain who Nahash is or why he is invading this part of the Israelite territory. The NRSV includes an introduction to this account explaining the circumstances that resulted in these events. In essence, this is a lesson on how the Old Testament was formed and how Greek and Hebrew versions of the text differ. Discuss the differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint. Include other references to this account, including 4QSam^{a} from the Dead Sea Scrolls and Josephus's version from *The Jewish Antiquities* 6.5.1. For a full description of this exercise, see Megan Bishop Moore's "Who Decides What's in the Bible," pp. 147–149 in *Teaching the Bible* (eds. Mark Roncace and Patrick Gray; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005).
2. Discuss David's rise to power. What are the motivations for giving an exclusively positive portrayal of his character? Are there any hints in the text that David's rise to power might not have been so innocent? Some have argued that David's depiction in 1 Samuel is an apology for his usurpation of the throne of Israel. Introduce students to apologetic literature and show how David's story is not unique. For further suggestions related to this exercise, see Ronald Simkins, "Apology of David," pp. 149–150 in *Teaching the Bible* (eds. Mark Roncace and Patrick Gray; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005).
3. Discuss the figure of David as he is portrayed in 1 and 2 Samuel. Why is he such an important figure to the Bible and to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam? Does he truly deserve his heroic label? Supplementary readings such as sections from Baruch Halpern's *David's Secret Demons* may be especially useful.
4. Discuss the royal ideology and its many themes. In particular, discuss Israel's monarchy in its Near Eastern context. A good starting point for the introduction of the Near Eastern

parallels is Baruch Halpern's "Kingship and the Monarchy." Where do these themes appear in the Bible, and how do historians and prophets address these issues?

5. Introduce the archaeological remains of tenth-century Israel. How do these remains correspond to the biblical narratives? Also discuss the description of Solomon's Temple in 1 Kings and Ezekiel. Explain how archaeological data from other Near Eastern temples gives us insight into the architecture and function of the Temple in Jerusalem. A useful work is Elizabeth Bloch-Smith's "'Who is the King of Glory?' Solomon's Temple and Its Symbolism."
6. Discuss the ideological bias present in the Deuteronomistic Historian's account of the northern kings. For example, compare the biblical account of Ahab, who is a reviled figure in 1 Kings 16:29–22:40, to the Assyrian account of the battle at Qarqar, where Ahab's forces seem to have made the difference in the battle. What conclusions can be made about the historical Ahab? What does this tell us about the biblical editors' ideological bias?
7. Compare the biblical and Assyrian accounts of the campaign of 701 B.C.E. After viewing the Assyrian documents, how reliable is the Deuteronomistic Historian as a conveyor of accurate history? Also discuss the reliability of the Assyrian documents. How might we assess what actually happened? Demonstrate how archaeological data can help to verify the historicity of these documents.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Assyrian Art (video): https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history/art-history-400-c-e--ancient-cultures-1/ancient-near-east/v/human-headed-winged-lion-and-bull--lamassu---883--859-b-c-e

Assyrian Empire: http://www.worldology.com/Iraq/assyrian_empire.htm

Assyria's Three Stages of Incorporation of Subject States: http://www.maryvillecollege.edu/faculty/pcowan/site/immanuel/Empire.htm

Babylonian Empire (video): http://www.worldology.com/Iraq/babylonian_empire.htm

Battle of Qarqar: http://www.livius.org/q/qarqar/qarqar_battle.html

Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (mentions Jehu): http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/t/black_obelisk_of_shalmaneser.aspx

Campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III (map): http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/23/Syro-Ephraimite_War.jpg

"David, Saul, and Sin" (video with Zev Farber): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/d/david-saul-and-sin

Neo-Babylonian Art (video): https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history/art-history-400-c-e--ancient-cultures-1/ancient-near-east/v/ishtar-gate-and-processional-way--reconstruction---babylon--c--575-b-c-e

Megiddo: http://www.ancientroute.com/cities/Megiddo.htm

Mesha Stele (mentions Omri, Ahab, and YHWH): http://www.kchanson.com/ancdocs/westsem/mesha.html

Samaria: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/places/main-articles/samaria

The Tel Dan Inscription (Bible Odyssey video with Philip R. Davies): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/t/tel-dan-davies

The Temple Mount: http://www.templemount.org/

Chapter 9
The Early Israelite Prophets: Amos and Isaiah

Chapter Summary

The Rise of the Prophets

Prophets are "spokespersons" who speak forth messages from God. Prophets become especially prominent in the story of Israel around the time of the monarchy, largely because they served as divine critics of political affairs. The prophets see political activities as inseparable from religious and cultic commitments and proclaim messages of divine justice against those who do what is wrong, both ethically and religiously. It is especially important to note that while Israelite prophets do make predictions about the future, their primary function was to speak God's perspective on the present circumstances. Even their predictions are closely tied to their contexts, which makes understanding those contexts critically important for understanding their messages.

Several prophets appear in the stories of the Deuteronomistic History, empowered to deliver messages from God, with proof of their power shown by miracles they perform. Elijah and his successor Elisha (1 Kgs 17–2 Kgs 13) are the best known of these "narrative prophets." Elijah confronted the northern king Ahab over his sponsorship and worship of the Canaanite deity Baal, calling down a drought on the land that culminates in a theatrical prophetic duel on Mount Carmel between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 17–18). Elijah calls down fire from heaven and has the losing prophets of Baal slaughtered. Numerous stories after this event recount Elijah and Elisha doing terrific miracles, including multiplication of food, healing of the sick, and even raising the dead. All these deeds are in the context of political critique centering on the sole worship of YHWH and the blessings and curses associated with faithfulness or unfaithfulness towards the God of Israel.

The classical prophets are those whose writings (or writings written down by their followers and attributed to them) became part of scripture. These prophets first appear in the mid eighth century B.C.E. (Amos, Isaiah), while the final writing prophets lived in the mid-fifth century (e.g. Malachi). Thus, these writing prophets come on the scene predicting destruction right before the Assyrians destroy Israel; others predict the destruction of Judah by the Babylonians, and others write in the wake of these tragedies, providing direction for the people. Again, a key point of emphasis is that these prophets were thoroughly focused upon their own day and circumstances and were not making predictions about the twenty-first century. This chapter focuses on the prophets from before the exile(s).

Amos of Tekoa

Amos is probably the earliest of the prophetic books, with Amos's prophetic activity dating to the middle of the eighth century. Amos was from Judah but prophesies in the northern kingdom of Israel—interference obviously unappreciated by those in power. Amos begins with stylized oracles against the various nations surrounding Israel and Judah, a move sure to have the approval of his listeners—until he turns the accusing finger upon them, declaring that Israel is even *worse* off than the others because of their rebellion against God. Amos declares that God will punish Israel for its ethical violations involving issues of social injustice, raising up a military attack to destroy Israel. Amos stresses that God cares more about social justice and

ethical behavior—such as caring for the poor and hungry—than sacrifices or cultic worship, assuring Israel that no amount of sacrifice or religious service can compensate for injustice in the eyes of God.

Many scholars believe that a later southern redactor added the positive ending (and other positive references to Judah in the book), so the book ends not on a negative note but on the positive promise that the Davidic kingdom will be restored in utopian terms. Several features of Amos are typical of all the prophets who follow him, most notably in his demands for justice, contextually oriented predictions, the claim that the fate of the nation rests in YHWH's hands, and his notion that the God of Israel is in fact the God over everything and everyone, dealing justly with all.

Isaiah of Jerusalem

Isaiah of Jerusalem's career overlaps with that of Amos, covering most of the second half of the eighth century. These were years of turmoil in Judah, featuring an antagonistic relationship with Israel and the rising power of Assyria, including a lengthy siege of Jerusalem under Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. Like Amos, Isaiah's prophecies focus on the turbulent situation in which he lived.

Most scholars have concluded that the book of Isaiah is a composite work. Although nearly all of the first thirty-nine chapters clearly dates to the ministry of Isaiah of Jerusalem, chapter 40 marks a transition to material that seems better situated over a century and a half later, during and after the Babylonian exile. Many modern scholars thus identify three separate "Isaiahs" combined into a single work by a later redactor, giving the impression that all are from Isaiah of Jerusalem. First Isaiah (Isaiah of Jerusalem) addresses the Assyrian crisis and predicts coming judgment on the nation of Judah in chapters 1–39. Second Isaiah (chs. 40–55) preaches consolation in the wake of judgment in the mid-sixth century. Chapters 56–66 are often identified as from Third Isaiah, a still later prophet writing after the return from Babylon. (The latter two Isaiahs are addressed in the next chapter.)

Like Amos, Isaiah preaches a message of judgment upon Israel and Judah for social and political injustice. Isaiah also contains a strong sense of hope after judgment, looking forward to a utopic restoration of Israel and Judah sometime in the future. Also like Amos, Isaiah includes oracles against other nations and empires, emphasizing that the God of Israel is in fact the God over the entire earth, which God judges justly.

KEY TERMS

Pre-exilic prophet
Redactor
Seer

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. This chapter introduces the first of the "classical" prophets, Amos and Hosea. It is important to demonstrate who these classical prophets were and how they functioned. In particular, it should be clarified that these prophets are not just fortune tellers. Furthermore, it is critical to stress that prophets are not all fringe figures and that many of them were closely connected to the monarchy and to schools of prophecy. Discuss how the prophets Amos and Hosea would have understood themselves and their mission. What was their view of the accepted institutions in their respective countries? Also, how did they use and/or interpret scripture? This exercise may be repeated when discussing later prophets as well.

2. Discuss the role of prophecy in the ancient world. Note the parallels between biblical and other ancient Near Eastern prophecy. Nissinen's *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East* may be helpful in this exercise. Also discuss the importance of prophets, seers, and diviners to kings and commoners. Also consider looking at later parallels from the Greek world. The Greek historian Herodotus gives vivid descriptions of prophecy and divination among Greeks, Egyptians, and Babylonians. For example, see *Histories* 1.34–92, 4.163–64, and 7.138–144.
3. Read passages like Amos 1–2 or Amos 5 aloud for the students. A strong oral reading can help students better appreciate the power of these critiques of social injustice.
4. Have the students discuss Isaiah 7:14 and its reference to the figure of Immanuel. This passage is hotly debated by scholars and interpreters. Why is this passage important to Christianity in particular? What can this verse tell us about the interpretation of prophetic material?
5. Have the students evaluate Isaiah's account of the Syro-Ephraimite War and Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem. Are there any details that differ from the Deuteronomistic Historian? Did one of the biblical authors use the other as a source? Why or why not? What do the different versions of the story have to say about the perspectives and biases of their respective authors?

MEDIA RESOURCES

Campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III (map): http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/23/Syro-Ephraimite_War.jpg

Hezekiah's Tunnel Reexamined: http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/jerusalem/hezekiah's-tunnel-reexamined/

Isaiah Scroll from Qumran: http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah

"Let Justice Role Down Like Waters (Amos 5–6)," by Samuel Thomas: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/let-justice-roll-down-like-waters-amos-5--6

NT Pod 64: Is the Virgin Birth Based on a Mistranslation? (audio podcast): http://podacre.blogspot.com/2012/12/nt-pod-64-is-virgin-birth-based-on.html

"Prophets and Wealth" (video with Roger Nam): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/p/prophets-and-wealth

Samaria: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/places/main-articles/samaria

Siloam Inscription and Hezekiah's Tunnel: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/places/related-articles/siloam-inscription-and-hezekiahs-tunnel

Taylor Prism: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6c/Taylor_Prism-3.jpg and http://www.bible-history.com/empires/prism.html

"Wealth in Samaria" (video with Roger Nam): https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/video-gallery/w/wealth-in-samaria---nam

Chapter 10
Other Pre-Exilic Prophets: Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Habakkuk

Chapter Summary

Hosea
Hosea prophesied in the north around the same time as Amos and proclaims God's judgment against Israel for worshiping other gods. The book focuses on Hosea's prophetic act of marrying a promiscuous woman (Gomer), whose adulterous affairs he then compares with Israel's worship of other gods. Gomer bears three children (whether these children are actually his is unclear), and he gives symbolic names to each of the children to represent the rejection of Israel's children by God (the third child is named "Lo-ammi," meaning "not my people," or more colloquially, "not mine"). Hosea takes up the form of a legal indictment, declaring that Israel would receive the penalties for breaking covenant. Israel has broken the covenant and is no longer God's special people, and God's judgment is coming swiftly. As with the other prophets, Hosea does include a few glimmers of hope, including proclamations that Israel—now no longer God's people—will one day be restored, chosen again to be God's people.

Micah
Micah is the fourth eighth-century prophet, contemporary with Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah and prophesying in the southern kingdom of Judah. Micah prophesies against both Samaria and Jerusalem, proclaiming judgment for idolatry and injustice. A few sections of the book show awareness of the Babylonian captivity and are thus likely from much later, but the majority of the book seems to have come from Micah himself. Micah 6:1–8 is especially notable as an example of a "covenantal lawsuit" in which YHWH issues a legal indictment against his people for breach of covenantal obligations. This passage is especially notable for its rejection of the idea that religious rituals could ward off God's anger, with Micah concluding with one of the great verses of the classical poets: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good: and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (6:8).

Nahum
Unlike the other prophets so far, the three chapter book of Nahum does not address Israel and Judah but is rather an expression of glee over the fall of the Assyrian capital Nineveh, which likely places the book around the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C.E. Nahum declares that Nineveh is being repaid for the evil it had done and reflects the belief that YHWH is not only the God of Israel but reigns over everything.

Zephaniah
Zephaniah prophesied during reign of Josiah (640–609 B.C.E.) and largely encapsulates many of the themes covered so far. Judah has sinned and will be punished, and the God of Israel is in fact the judge of the whole earth, not just Israel and Judah. Zephaniah proclaims the coming "day of

YHWH," which will be a time of devastation and judgment upon Jerusalem but also upon all nations. Nevertheless, Zephaniah concludes on a strong note of hope, promising restoration after punishment.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah prophesied in the last few decades before (and sometime beyond) the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. Jeremiah declared that God was judging Judah for their unfaithfulness and that the only viable choice was to surrender to the Babylonians, who would otherwise entirely destroy Jerusalem and kill its inhabitants. This was obviously an unpopular message, and Jeremiah was persecuted as a seditious traitor.

The Hebrew (Masoretic) version of Jeremiah upon which the traditional English versions are written is about 16 percent longer than the Septuagint version, including a quite few doublets, and is the longest book in the Bible in terms of the number of words. The book is clearly divided into discrete sections:

- Poetic oracles against Judah and Jerusalem (chs. 1–26)
- Prose narratives about Jeremiah himself (chs. 26–29, 32, 34–45) with a few oracles of comfort sprinkled in
- Oracles against other nations (46–51)
- A final chapter taken from the Deuteronomistic History (52)

Jeremiah proclaims that Judah has been even more unfaithful than Israel, reflected by social injustice and idolatry, and that God is sending the Babylonians to execute judgment. He proclaims that there is no hope except to surrender to the Babylonians—resistance will only result in destruction and death. Even the Jerusalem Temple will offer no protection against God's judgment and will be destroyed if Judah does not submit to the Babylonians. But the news is not all bad: Jeremiah proclaims that God will ultimately restore his people, even making a "new covenant" with them that will so ingrain God's laws in their hearts that they will naturally follow God's requirements. Some scholars question whether these messages of hope are original to Jeremiah or were added by a later redactor, much like with the hopeful passages added to Amos.

Jeremiah also uses various symbolic gestures as object lessons to highlight his message, such as publicly smashing a jar or wearing a yoke on his neck. The book of Jeremiah focuses more on the person of Jeremiah than other prophetic books, highlighting his personal anguish in proclaiming such a dark and depressing message. Jeremiah complains not against his human persecutors but against God, at one point wishing that he had never been born.

Habakkuk

Habakkuk is set up as a dialogue between God and the prophet. The prophet complains about the injustice of Jerusalem, and when God replies that the Babylonians are coming to bring justice, the prophet responds that the solution is worse than the problem, that justice is not served by punishing the wicked by those even more wicked. God's response is that the Babylonians themselves will ultimately face judgment for their own evil, which appears to satisfy the prophet, as the book concludes in praise of God.

KEY TERMS

Covenantal lawsuit

Theodicy

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Read passages like Micah 6 or selections from Hosea or Jeremiah aloud for the students. A strong oral reading can help students better appreciate the power of these critiques of social injustice.
2. The prophet Jeremiah features a highly developed rhetorical style that predates Greek and Roman rhetorical works by centuries. Discuss Jeremiah's use of rhetoric in the delivery of his prophetic message. How does his style differ from that of Amos, Hosea, and First Isaiah? For a discussion of rhetoric in Jeremiah, see Jack R. Lundbom, "Jeremiah," pp. 690–697 in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 3 (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992). Also, consider a comparison between Jeremiah's rhetorical style and that of the classical rhetoricians. Valuable texts include Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* and the Roman Quintillian's *Institutes.*
3. Have students discuss Jeremiah's lament in chapter 20 in light of the question of theodicy. In Jeremiah's view, are the righteous truly rewarded for their righteousness? How should we account for his own experience in light of his message of repentance?
4. Josiah is highly praised in the Deuteronomistic History but receives little mention either positive or negative from Jeremiah. Why might this be? Does Jeremiah think less of Josiah or is there some other reason for this silence?
5. The Book of Consolation in Jeremiah makes some astonishingly bold proclamations of hope for the future, including the restoration of the northern kingdom of Israel and reunification of the two kingdoms. Have students read selections from the Book of Consolation (especially the new covenant prophecy in Jeremiah 31) and consider what this could have meant in Jeremiah's day, when the northern kingdom had already been destroyed and scattered by the Assyrians for nearly 150 years.

MEDIA RESOURCES

"A Forerunner of Biblical Prophecy: The Mari Documents," by Abraham Malamat: http://prophetess.lstc.edu/~rklein/Documents/malamat.htm

Nineveh: http://i-cias.com/e.o/nineveh.htm

Literary Prophecy: Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk (Open Yale course lecture by Christine Hayes): http://oyc.yale.edu/religious-studies/rlst-145/lecture-18

"A New Covenant (Jer 31:31–34)," by Walter Brueggemann: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/new-covenant-jer-31

Seal of Baruch: http://ancientroadpublications.com/Studies/BiblicalStudies/SealofBaruch.html

Yuval Goren and Eran Arie, "The Authenticity of the Bullae of Berekhyahu Son of Neriyahu the Scribe" *BASOR* 372: 147–158. (Demonstrates that the celebrated Seal of Baruch is likely a forgery.)

Chapter 11
The Historians of Exile and Return: Ezra, Nehemiah, and Beyond

Chapter Summary

After the Assyrians destroyed Samaria in 722 B.C.E. (after several earlier campaigns), they transported a large number of Israelites to other parts of their empire and imported others into the northern territory. As these groups intermarried, the ten northern tribes essentially ceased to exist as a separate ethnic group. Although there were two significant deportations of the upper classes of Judah to Babylon about 150 years later, these exiled people of Judah stayed together in Babylon, marrying one another and sustaining their bloodlines. After the Persians conquered Babylon in 539 B.C.E., the Persian king Cyrus allowed those exiled by Babylon to return to their own lands, which the Persians treated as client nations. Many of these Jews (or "Judeans," that is, the people of Judah), were among those allowed to return to their lands. These returnees rebuilt and reestablished Jerusalem, a new Temple, and Judea, a province of the Persian empire.

Ezra and Nehemiah

Counted as one book in the Kethuvim (Writings), Ezra and Nehemiah tell of this return, focusing on the return itself (Ezra 1–2), the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 3–6), the people's recommitment to the Torah of Moses (Ezra 7–10; Neh 8–9), and the reconstruction the walls of Jerusalem (Neh 1–7; 10–13). Most scholars consider Ezra–Nehemiah to have been written by a single author using a variety of sources—notably including personal memoirs from Ezra and Nehemiah themselves.

Ezra begins by citing a decree of Cyrus—which many scholars believe to be authentic—permitting the Jews to return to their land. The first six chapters tell of the first stages of the return and the long (twenty-two-year) process of rebuilding the Temple, which was small and unimpressive in comparison with Solomon's Temple (cf. Ezra 3:12). The seventh chapter picks up in 458 B.C.E. introduces Ezra, a scribe of the priestly line, who came to the land with an imperial decree to enforce to enforce the traditional Jewish laws on behalf of Persia (7:21–26). This leads to confrontations over intermarriage—a serious threat to maintenance of separate Jewish ethnicity, as illustrated by the disappearance of the northern tribes—and the public reading of the Torah in a covenant renewal ceremony. This public reading also included interpretation for the people who did not understand the Law, often thought to be on-the-fly translation from Hebrew to Aramaic, which was the new lingua franca of the area. This is often thought to mark the beginning of the targums, Aramaic translations of the Hebrew scriptures.

The book of Nehemiah is largely built from a first-person memoir of Nehemiah himself and tell of the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem amid opposition especially from Judea's neighbors, who see the rebuilding of the walls as likely to lead to another rebellion. Nehemiah concludes with yet another confrontation over intermarriage, emphasizing the continued struggles of the people to live according to the Torah.

The Later History of Judea

The Persian empire lasted for about two hundred years, falling to Alexander the Great in the mid- to late fourth century. Alexander, who had been a student of Aristotle, aimed not only to establish an empire but to spread Greek culture across that empire, a cultural shift known as Hellenization. After Alexander's premature death at thirty-three (323 B.C.E.) and after a period of struggle for power, his empire was divided among his generals. Judea first came under control of the Ptolemies, who ruled Egypt, but there was a constant struggle with the Syrians, ruled by a Greek family known as the Seleucids, who managed to wrest control of Judea from Ptolemaic control in 198 B.C.E.

The Seleucids sought to bring cultural unity to their empire, which began to challenge the relative cultural independence the Jews had enjoyed since the Persian period. After Antiochus IV Ephiphanes took the throne in 175, he eventually forbade traditional Jewish practices such as circumcision and required Jews to sacrifice to pagan gods. This led to the Maccabean Revolt under the leadership of and old man named Mattathias and his son Judas Maccabeus ("the hammer"). Three years after its inception, the Maccabeans took control of Jerusalem and rededicated the Temple in 164 B.C.E. (an event commemorated in the Hanukkah celebration). The Hasmoneans (another name for the Maccabean family) eventually drove the Syrians out, establishing a (relatively) independent state for the first time in centuries. They did not, however, appoint a Zadokite to be high priest, instead choosing one of their own family, a move that led to much resentment and inner turmoil in Jewish circles thereafter. The Hasmoneans ruled for around eighty years, until the Romans conquered Judea under Pompey in 63 B.C.E.

KEY TERMS

Alexander the Great
Antiochus Epiphanes
Hasmoneans
Hellenization
Judas Maccabeus
Maccabean Revolt
Ptolemies
Seleucids
Targum

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Discuss the conservative movements of Ezra and Nehemiah. In particular, how can you explain their treatment of foreign women? What is the purpose of these movements? How are Ezra and Nehemiah supported by earlier texts such as Deuteronomy 7 and 23? How do other biblical texts support or denounce marriage with foreign women? Is there any consensus?
2. Discuss the impact of the cultural shifts brought about by Hellenization would have on a traditional society like that of Judea and why some would so strongly resist change. Have students discuss how the concept of the covenant with YHWH impact the Seleucids' efforts to inculcate cosmopolitanism across their empire?
3. Have students discuss why Antiochus IV would ban circumcision and other practices of the Jewish law. What motivations might a ruler have had for such a decision that obviously badly backfired? (Steer the discussion toward the divisions between Hellenizing Jews and

traditionalist Jews who opposed the efforts to make Jerusalem into a citizen-city of the Seleucid empire.)

MEDIA RESOURCES

Ancient Persia: http://www.livius.org/persia.html
Bust of Antiochus IV Epiphanes:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e3/Antiokhos_IV.jpg
"Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights," by Adele Reinhartz:
http://global.oup.com/obso/focus/focus_on_hanukkah/
Seleucid Empire: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/sleu/hd_sleu.htm
Seleucid Empire in 200 B.C.E. (map):
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2c/Seleucid-Empire_200bc.jpg
Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires (map):
http://www.swartzentrover.com/cotor/bible/Bible/IT/Seleucid%20and%20Ptolemaic%20Empires.htm
The Rise of Judaism: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/rise-judaism.html

Chapter 12
The Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophets

Chapter Summary

Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophets
During and after the return from Babylon, many Hebrew prophets produced their work, including Ezekiel, Second Isaiah, and a number of the minor prophets.

Ezekiel
Ezekiel was a younger contemporary of Jeremiah and was among the first group from Judah taken into Babylonian captivity in 597 B.C.E. Ezekiel wrote from Babylon and was active from 593 B.C.E. until 571 B.C.E., making him a transitional figure who prophesied dire warnings before Jerusalem's fall and messages of hope afterwards. Ezekiel is also unique in that his prophecies are delivered almost entirely in prose. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel is broken into fairly unified sections, starting with a vision sequence in the first chapter that nearly defies description. After the first chapter, the sections break down as follows:

- The Coming Destruction of Judah and Jerusalem (chs. 2–24)
- Prophecies Against the Nations (chs. 25–32)
- The Coming Restoration (chs. 33–39)
- The New Temple and New Jerusalem (chs. 40–48)

Like the other prophets, Ezekiel prophesies doom and destruction resulting from the sins of idolatry and injustice. Ezekiel, however, is unique in emphasizing individual responsibility for sin (and consequent judgment) rather than taking a communal or generational approach (see especially ch. 18). Ezek 10 is also especially significant in that the prophet depicts the presence of God leaving the Temple in Jerusalem to join those already in exile—an indication that Israel's God is not isolated to one sacred location but is in fact the God over all who can be worshiped anywhere his faithful people live.

Ezekiel is also especially noteworthy for some of his prophetic demonstrations. He "acts out" his proclamation on a number of occasions, including besieging a brick painted to look like Jerusalem, lying on his left side for 390 days and his right side for 40 days—all to show that Jerusalem is soon to be destroyed. The number of days represent the number of years for the punishment of northern Israel (390) and Judah (40), though neither figure corresponds to what actually happened historically. On other occasions, he shaves his head and divides the parts into different fates (to be burned, struck with the sword, and scattered to the wind) and digs through the wall of his house and sneaks out by night.

After Jerusalem's destruction, Ezekiel's prophecies turn to hope for the future, promising a time when Judah will be reunited with Israel, whose restoration is depicted as akin to a resurrection of sorts, bringing life from a valley full of dead bones (Ezek 37). A new king like David will arise, and the people will be given new hearts and new spirits to follow God's laws by nature (11:17–20; 36:22–28).

Second Isaiah
Second Isaiah accounts for Isaiah 40–55. The author and time of these prophecies are unknown, though Second Isaiah references Cyrus of Persia by name, even calling him a "messiah" or "anointed one" (cf. 44:24–45:1), suggesting that he wrote around the time of Persia's rise and conquest of Babylon. Second Isaiah looks forward to a glorious restoration from exile even greater than the exodus from Egypt, akin even to a new creation. He is notable for his true monotheism as distinct from the henotheism more typical of earlier Israelite literature. For Second Isaiah, the God of Israel is the only true God; the gods of other peoples don't really exist but are merely worthless idols.

Second Isaiah is most notable for four passages (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12) often called the "songs of the suffering servant," in which the Servant of YHWH is said to have suffered horribly for the sake of others but will be vindicated by God. The final song is especially important as Christian readers since the New Testament have identified it with the suffering of Jesus. The textbook reminds the students, however, that Second Isaiah was speaking to his own context, not a time hundreds of years later, that the passage never uses the term "messiah," and refers to this suffering in the past tense. Most important, 44:1 identifies the servant as Israel. This recognition does not invalidate later Christian applications of this verse but recognizes that such a reading gives the passage new meaning rather than reconstructing its original sense.

Joel
The date of Joel is unknown but usually put somewhere in the fifth or fourth century B.C.E. The book was written in the wake of a terrible devastation by a swarm of locusts, which Joel sees as a harbinger of greater judgment unless the people return to God. The second half of the book proclaims God's mercy as his people are restored, with their enemies removed from them.

Obadiah
The shortest book in the Bible, Obadiah inveighs against Judah's neighbor Edom for not helping Judah but instead reveling in Judah's destruction. Obadiah proclaims that Edom will be destroyed while Israel will one day be restored. Due to its subject matter, the book is dated shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in the mid-sixth century B.C.E.

Haggai
Haggai is written entirely in prose and is dated very precisely, with the first prophecy dated to mid-August, 520 B.C.E., during the reign of Darius, king of Persia. The book rebukes the people for living in their own houses while YHWH's house remains a ruin, declaring that the blessing of YHWH is withheld for this reason. The book ends with a declaration that Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah and descendant of David, would carry God's authority.

Zechariah
Many scholars consider Zechariah to be a composite, with chapters 1–8 by one author and chapters 9–14 by a second author living later. First Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai, beginning in October or November of 520 B.C.E., and prophesying in the context of the events of Ezra and Nehemiah. The book consists of eight visions to the effect that Jerusalem and its Temple will be rebuilt and will be glorious. Two of these passages (3:6–10; 6:11–13) contain allusions to a Davidic messiah, though they appear to conflict somewhat.

Second Zechariah seems to have been written later, possibly the fifth century B.C.E. and is rather obscure and difficult to interpret. These chapters provide an example of early (proto-) apocalyptic literature (covered more in detail when we get to Daniel), complete with highly symbolic visions, heavenly messengers, and proclamations of Israel's restoration and judgment upon Israel's enemies.

Third Isaiah

Third Isaiah wrote after the Temple had begun to be rebuilt, perhaps roughly contemporary with Haggai and Zechariah. Unfortunately, the disappointing present circumstances did not match the glorious restoration envisioned by Second Isaiah. The people were unfaithful, the leaders were corrupt, and life was harsh. Nevertheless, the prophet envisions hope for the future: More returnees will be added to the paltry return so far, the people will return to YHWH in faithfulness, and the entire world will be renewed, transformed into a utopian kingdom under Israel's God.

Malachi

This book, dated to around the mid-fifth century B.C.E., concludes the "book of the twelve" in the Tanakh. Malachi castigates the leaders of the now-functioning Temple cult as corrupt; the people are sacrificing unacceptable offerings and cheating God. But the author's principal concern is the lack of justice outside the sanctuary: adultery, dishonesty, oppression of the poor, and so on. Malachi declares that God will send a special messenger—Elijah—to resolve these problems, purifying the priesthood and destroying the wicked.

KEY TERMS

fertility god
henotheism
monotheism

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. The visions of Ezekiel are some of the most vivid and bizarre in the entire Bible. Discuss these visions in detail. Many have suggested that Ezekiel was suffering from a mental disorder or that his visions were drug-induced. What do the students make of Ezekiel's visions? Have them discuss how Ezekiel's visions and his overall work compare to other biblical prophets and nonbiblical prophets.
2. In Ezekiel, Lamentations, and Hosea, God is described as a violent spouse. How can this message be interpreted and reconciled with the dominant biblical image of the deity as a loving God? For further suggestions related to this exercise, see L. Juliana M. Claassens, "The Abusive God," pp. 180–181 in *Teaching the Bible* (eds. Mark Roncace and Patrick Gray; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005).
3. The destruction of Jerusalem and the subsequent exile in Babylon dramatically and permanently changed Judaism. Although we have few records that can shed light on this period, we can detect significant changes in the character of Jewish religious belief and ritual. Discuss these changes. In particular, discuss the movement toward monotheism as it is discussed in Second Isaiah.

4. Many of the postexilic prophets have glorious visions of the future despite the disappointing circumstances of the present. How is this similar to or different from the pre-exilic prophets? How might Jeremiah, for example, have responded to Third Isaiah's grand promises?

MEDIA RESOURCES

Ishtar Gate from Babylon: http://www.kchanson.com/PHOTOS/ishtargate.html
Passover Letter from Elephantine:
http://wwammuraw.kchanson.com/ANCDOCS/westsem/passover.html
Petition to Authorize Elephantine Temple Reconstruction:
http://www.kchanson.com/ANCDOCS/westsem/templeauth.html
Second Isaiah in 5 Minutes (video performance): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_T-zei9hkfM&ab_channel=TimothyCoombs
The Rise of Judaism: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/rise-judaism.html

Chapter 13
The Poets of Ancient Israel

Chapter Summary

The Nature of Hebrew Poetry
Hebrew poetry is dense and loaded with metaphor and simile, but works according to very different rules than English poetry. Hebrew poetry is not based on rhyme or rhythm but rather on parallelism; the "rhymes" in Hebrew poetry are not the sounds but the concepts. There are four basic types of Hebrew parallelism (cf. examples on pp. 167–68):

- *Synonymous parallelism*: the second line restates the first line in different words
- *Antithetical parallelism*: the second line states the opposite of the first, showing the flip side of the same proverbial coin
- *Constructive parallelism*: the second line further develops the first to present a complete thought
- *Climactic parallelism*: construction of a complete thought happens through the repetition of the key word(s) of the first line; sometimes Hebrew poetry uses acrostics (based on the first letter of the first word of each line) for similar effect

The Book of Psalms
The Psalms (Hebrew title: *Tehillim* or "praises") of the Hebrew Bible do not include musical notation but were probably meant to be sung. Most of the Psalms are very difficult to date; many have "ascriptions" in which an editor has provided information about the author and circumstances of the psalm, but these are later additions and cannot be trusted, as some of the ascriptions contradict the details of the psalm itself (cf. examples on pp. 183). The general (but tenuous) consensus is that the present collection of Psalms dates to around the fourth century B.C.E.

The various psalms were written by different authors (*not* solely by David) in different situations expressing a wide range of emotion, even bitter grief and wishes for violent vindication against the author's enemies. There are numerous types of psalms, including hymns, psalms of thanksgiving, enthronement songs, laments, royal psalms, wisdom psalms, and Torah psalms (see pp. 184–86 for examples of each type). The collection has been arranged into five books, each of which ends with a doxology, or "word of praise" blessing the God of Israel. The books are as follows:

- Book 1: Psalms 1–41; doxology 41:13
- Book 2: Psalms 42–72; doxology 72:18–19
- Book 3: Psalms 73–89; doxology 89:51
- Book 4: Psalms 90–106; doxology 106:48
- Book 5: Psalms 107–150; doxology is Psalm 150, which also serves as the doxology to the whole collection.

The Book of Lamentations

Lamentations has traditionally been ascribed to Jeremiah (whose own book contains six "laments") but is anonymous. The book expresses deep agony over the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The book has five chapters. The first four are acrostics based on the Hebrew alphabet (which has twenty-two letters), poetically declaring the utter totality of Jerusalem's destruction, a disaster (as might be said in English) from A to Z. The author declares that the people have deserved their punishment but nevertheless begs for vindication, restoration, and retribution against the enemies who have so destroyed Jerusalem.

The Song of Songs

Song of songs (the Hebrew title) means something like "the greatest of songs" and has traditionally been ascribed to Solomon due to its opening line. But the book was written long after Solomon's death, and when he is mentioned in the poem, he is clearly someone other than the author (e.g., 8:11–12).

This book is a collection of love poems celebrating erotic love between a man and a woman. Many of these passages are quite explicit but tend to be toned down by English translators less comfortable with such graphic language. Many Jewish and Christian interpreters through history have interpreted these explicit celebrations of the erotic allegorically, as describing the relationship between God/Christ and Israel/the church. Such interpretations can explain why such poetry wound up part of the sacred scriptures, but this collection of erotic love poems gives little indication of allegorical intent.

KEY TERMS

Doxology
Psalm

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Analyze the different forms found in the book of Psalms. How do these forms overlap? What are the dominant themes? Discuss what the original use and context may have been for the psalms.
2. Analyze the different forms found in the book of Psalms. How do these forms overlap? What are the dominant themes? Discuss what the original use and context may have been for the psalms.
3. The textbook suggests that the Song of Songs is comprised of secular erotic poetry but was later allegorized due to Jewish and Christian discomfort with the erotic. Have the students discuss whether sex and the erotic are secular or sacred—and how ancient people might have answered that question. Do they agree with Ehrman's assessment? Why or why not?
4. Song of Songs provides numerous examples of metaphorical language that reveal the folly of reading every biblical image literally. The beloved's breasts are not towers, nor are her teeth actual sheep, for example. There are several examples of comical illustrations (e.g., http://www.jasonstaples.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/The-Song-of-Songs-Illustrated.pdf) that may be useful in making this point. Emphasize how understanding genre can help prevent misinterpretation.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Hebrew Parallelism: http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/23_parallel.html

Types of Hebrew parallelism:
http://people.bethel.edu/~dhoward/classes/OT232/IntroHebrewPoetryPartII.pdf
“Hebrew Poetry Forms,” by Sean Burt: https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/hebrew-poetry-forms
"Love as Strong as Death (Song 8:6–7),” by Fiona C Black:
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/love-as-strong-as-death
“Love in the Song of Songs,” by André LaCocque:
https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/love-in-the-song-of-songs

Chapter 14
Storytellers in Ancient Israel

Chapter Summary

Storytellers in Ancient Israel
The Hebrew Bible also includes a few short stories, similar to the sorts of stories already encountered but different in that they are free-standing compositions without the context of a larger narrative. 1 and 2 Chronicles is a much longer narrative but serves as an example of creative retelling of prior stories.

Ruth
One of the "Five Scrolls" (*Megillot*) of the Kethuvim read during the major festival seasons, Ruth is a short story written sometime after the Deuteronomistic History, possibly the fifth or fourth century B.C.E. The story is distinctive in that its main character is both a woman and a non-Israelite. Despite her Moabite heritage, Ruth is greatly rewarded for her courage and faithfulness (reflected by a rather bold sexual advance upon the much older Boaz), even becoming the great-grandmother of King David.

The story emphasizes the importance of faithful commitment to justice and the power of interpersonal bonds. The story also runs counter to the notion that only those who are blood descendants of Jacob (Israel) can be members of the covenant. Here, an example of intermarriage works strikingly well, as the Moabite woman proves the most righteous of all. Ruth thus provides a powerful voice in the conversation surrounding intermarriage and ethnic purity.

Esther
Another of the *Megillot*, the book of Esther is likewise difficult to date, perhaps from around the fourth century B.C.E. The book tells another story of an intermarriage with positive results, as the Jewish queen Esther manages to save the Jewish people from genocide. Almost nothing from Esther suggests that this story is anything but a fiction. The book serves as an etiology for the annual Jewish festival of Purim. Esther is striking in that it is the only biblical book that never mentions God (though the Greek additions do include references to God), though the narrative can be read as providentially driven.

Jonah
Jonah is found in the book of the twelve (minor prophets) but is a short story, not a book of prophecy. God commands the prophet Jonah to proclaim judgment to the people of Nineveh (the capital of Assyria). Jonah is understandably averse to giving the Assyrians—who would eventually destroy the northern kingdom of Israel from which Jonah hails—an opportunity to repent, so he flees (with little success, thanks to an incident with an angry sea and a large fish). Upon preaching in Nineveh, Jonah's fears are confirmed as the people of Nineveh repent and are spared. The story portrays the God of Israel as supreme over all nations and, more importantly, indicates that he is merciful even to the worst enemies of his people if they repent.

Daniel 1–6

Daniel is counted among the Major Prophets in the English Bible but is grouped with the Kethuvim (writings) in the Jewish canon. Daniel was almost certainly the last book of the Bible to be written. These first six chapters are a collection of short stories about a wise young man named Daniel, taken to Babylon after the destruction of Jerusalem, and likely date sometime around the fourth or third century B.C.E. Daniel is unusual in that the language shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic in Daniel 2:4b–7:28.

These stories are clearly fictional, with many details that do not accord with known history: The historical Nebuchadnezzar was never removed from his throne for seven years, the Babylonians were not conquered by Darius but by Cyrus, and so on. Nevertheless, these stories are highly entertaining and convey the lesson that Jews could still remain faithful to the God of their homeland even in a new location—a distinctive concept in the ancient world. The God of Israel is powerful even in other lands.

1 and 2 Chronicles

These books (one book in the Jewish canon) provide an alternative account to much of the history found in the Deuteronomistic History (particularly 2 Sam and 1 and 2 Kgs), which the Chronicler uses as a source. Although it was long thought that the Chronicler also wrote Ezra and Nehemiah, most scholars today believe that the Chronicler was in fact a different author. Chronicles is extremely difficult to date, with different scholars providing a wide range of suggestions, but it seems most likely that the Chronicler wrote toward the end of the fifth or beginning of the fourth century. Chronicles is placed with the historical books in the Septuagint and English Bibles, but the Hebrew tradition situates the book in the Kethuvim—in fact as the final books of the Hebrew Bible, further emphasizing their late date.

Chronicles systematically omits nearly all of the negative stories about David and Solomon, such as David's adultery with Bathsheba or Solomon's foreign wives and corresponding apostasy. Chronicles also focuses nearly exclusively on the southern kingdom of Judah without a parallel account of the northern kingdom. Chronicles also adds nine chapters of genealogies and significant chunks of material surrounding the Temple cult. The theme of repentance and restoration is especially prominent in Chronicles, as the narrative lacks sense of collective (generational) guilt of the Deuteronomistic History, with each generation and individual—an emphasis similar to that of Ezekiel—judged swiftly on the basis of its/his/her own actions and repentance.

KEY TERMS

Megillot

PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Many of the texts described in this chapter can best be described as novellas. Read other examples of the ancient novel. A good source for Jewish novels is Lawrence E. Wills's *Ancient Jewish Novels: An Anthology*. For Greek parallels in the novel genre, see B. P. Reardon, *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). What common themes do you detect? What was the purpose of these works?
2. Have students go through the book of Jonah, looking for examples of irony, satire, and humor. Afterwards, have a discussion about the purpose of such features and what it tells us about the book of Jonah and its purposes.

3. Both Ruth and Esther depict women in atypical sexual situations, but each is depicted as praiseworthy. Have students assess what these books say about the fraught nature of sexual norms and how these norms are navigated and challenged in these novellas.
4. Ask students to discuss the purpose of the court tales in Daniel. What messages do these stories deliver to an audience under foreign rule and likely in a Diaspora context?
5. Have students compare parallel accounts in Chronicles and Kings, noting the differences between each and assessing why the Chronicler made the changes that appear.

MEDIA RESOURCES

1 and 2 Chronicles: http://thecenterforbiblicalstudies.org/resources/introductions-to-the-books-of-the-bible/1-and-2-chronicles/

"Humor in the Old Testament," by Leonard Greenspoon (see sections on Esther and Jonah): https://global.oup.com/obso/focus/focus_on_humor_ot/

"Jonah and Genre," by Brent A. Strawn: http://global.oup.com/obso/focus/focus_on_jonah/

Nineveh: http://i-cias.com/e.o/nineveh.htm

Chapter 15
The Wisdom Literature

Chapter Summary

This chapter emphasizes the diversity of the Hebrew Bible by showing the different perspectives offered in wisdom and apocalyptic literature. In so doing, these books can be seen as biblical alternatives to the dominant paradigm found throughout the Torah and the prophets.

Introduction to the Wisdom Literature
The textbook defines wisdom books as those that focus on understanding the world and how best to live in it based on an intelligent assessment of life rather than on divine revelation to Israel. While the historical and prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible focus on the historical activities of God, especially with relation to his covenant(s) with Israel, and the concerns of Israel, wisdom literature lacks this subject matter. In contrast, wisdom literature focuses on universal (rather than national) needs, desires, and lives; observation rather than revelation; individual rather than communal focus; and are not uniquely Israelite.

Proverbs
A proverb is by definition a pithy, profound saying encapsulating a distinctive understanding of the world and/or how best to live in it. Aptly named, the book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings to guide life and is thus an example of "positive wisdom," which attempts to explain the order of the world and how people should live. The implication throughout is that some ways of living are better than others—and those who live the right way will prosper for it. Proverbs tends to assume a rather straightforward cause-and-effect mechanism for the world by which people get what they deserve.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first nine chapters contain several wisdom poems and introduce two opposing figures: "Woman Wisdom" and "Strange Woman." The next twenty chapters are simply collections of one pithy saying after another. Chapter 31 ends the book with advice giving by the mother of the otherwise unknown King Lemuel and with an acrostic poem celebrating the ideal wife. The book contains numerous types of proverbs, including observations, observations by analogy, observations based on cause and effect, religious observations, and normative observations (see examples on pp. 209–10).

Job
Job is an example of "skeptical wisdom," which observes that the world does not always work out so neatly as positive wisdom might suggest. Sometimes a wise and righteous life is not rewarded; in fact, sometimes the righteous suffer rather badly indeed. Such is the subject matter of Job, which tells the story of a righteous man who suffers horribly.

Many scholars have concluded that Job is a composite work, with the beginning and end of the book (Job 1–2; 42:7–17) by a different author than the extensive middle portion. The beginning and end are prose narratives, while the middle is poetic dialogue; the sections prefer different names for the deity; and most important, the portrayal of Job and view of suffering is different in each section. The short story is unambiguous about the purpose of Job's suffering: