

THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES/ OLD TESTAMENT AND WOMEN



The Bible

- Testament → Covenant
- New Covenant → New Testament (NT)
- Old Covenant → Old Testament (OT)
- Christians understand God's activity recorded in the NT to be the fulfillment of God's covenant activity recorded in the OT
- It also puts in place a New Covenant

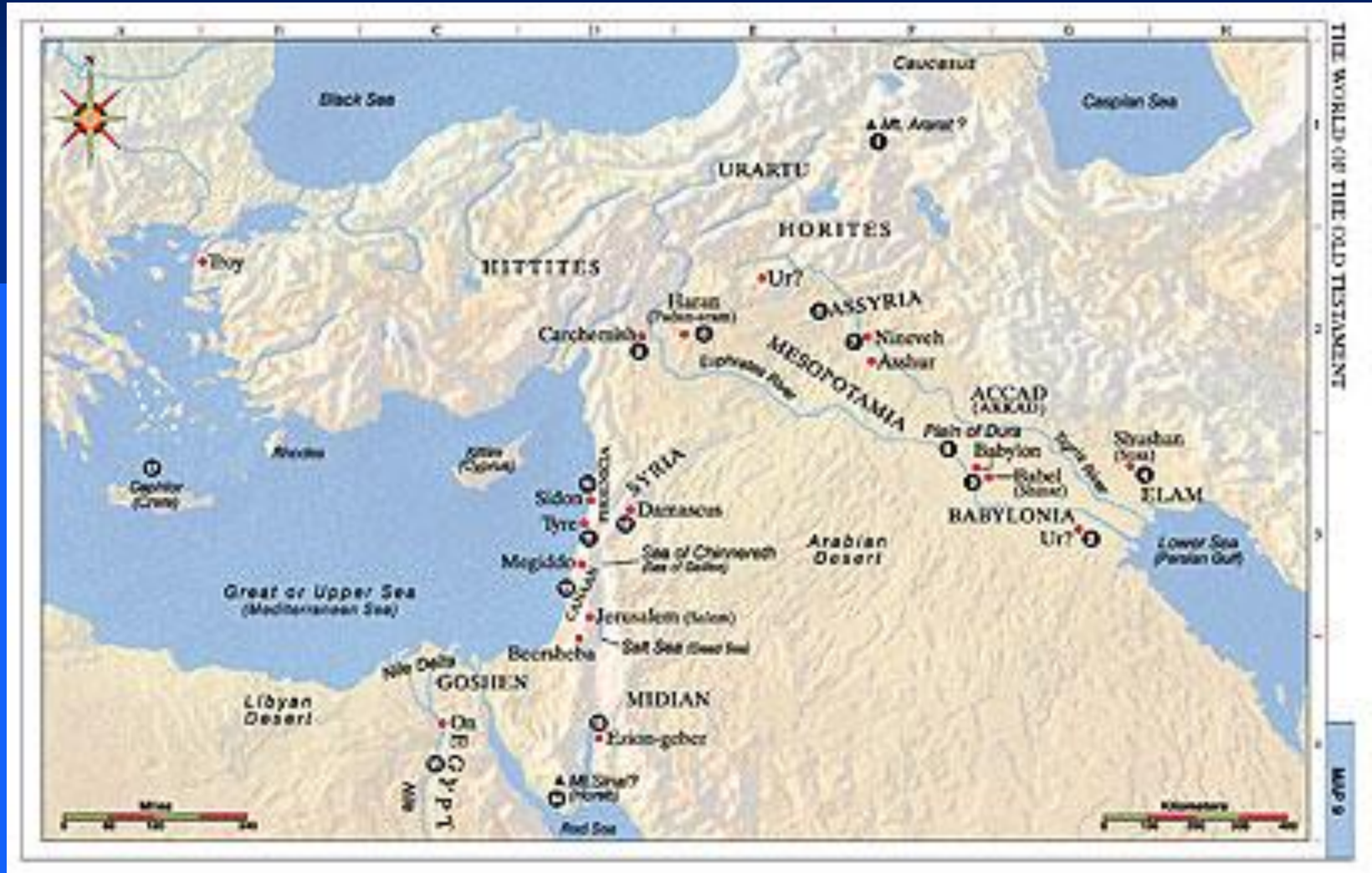


Map of the World



...more than 750 maps worldwide

Map of the Biblical World



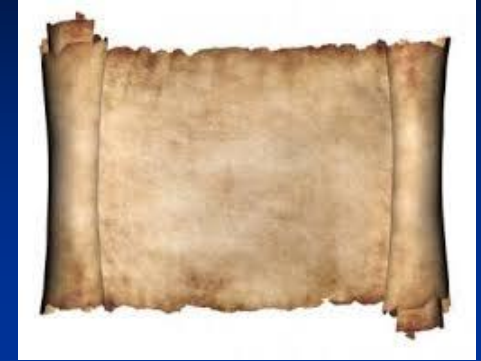
Women, the Bible and Feminism

📖 Let's begin with a bang

📖 White privilege

📖 Male privilege

📖 Power

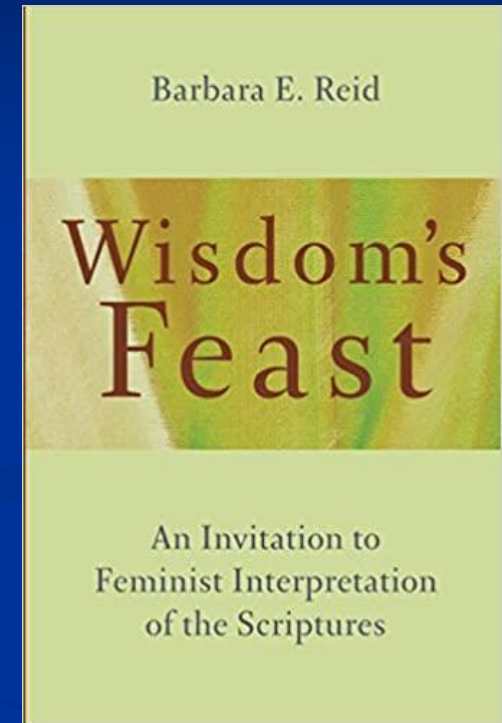


📖 The power of a woman to make and enforce laws that affect her and her children; self-determination with respect to her body and who has access to it and what kind of access; the same standards for morality that apply to men rather than a double standard; the same consequences (or lack of) for particular actions, and so on.

📖 To speak of women is to speak of gender and sexuality and personhood. It is to speak of procreation and family structures and social structure and embodiment and incarnation and choices and power and economics and race and ethnicity and anything else that pertains to the human condition.

Feminist Criticism of the Bible

- Barbara E. Reid, dean of the Catholic Theological Union, offers a concise invitation to studying the Bible from a feminist perspective.
 1. Begin with women's experience.
 2. Identify the interpreter's social location.
 3. Ask: "who says?"
 4. Evaluate: What does the text do?
 5. Unleash creative imagination.
 6. Re-member and reconstruct.
 7. Take action for transformative change.
- These basics on the art of biblical interpretation through a particularly feminist liberationist hermeneutic guide and augment our study's narrative approach to the roles of women in the Bible.



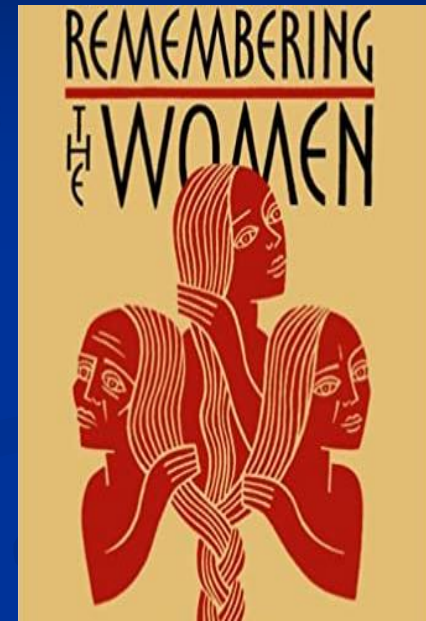
Women in / and the Bible

■ On the one hand, women occur & act across the Bible, on the other, they are absent, or have been absented. We must reckon with both.

■ Example: the challenge of/for Deborah (Judges 4–5)

■ Problems for biblical women in the Lectionary

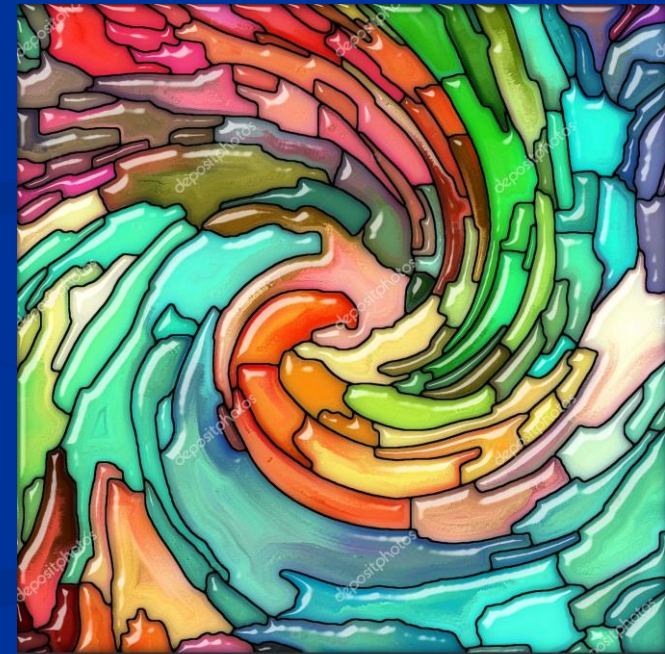
1. Including only a limited selection of the so-called “women’s books,” especially in Sunday readings
2. Omitting many biblical stories that feature women
3. Omitting verses featuring women from passages that are used as lectionary readings
4. Listing some passages that feature women only as “optional” or “alternative” readings



By J. Frank
Henderson

Women in / and the Bible

- Analogical imagination
 - Women have been using it for centuries: they take material addressed for men and transpose it to apply to themselves, often automatically/subconsciously.
- Challenge: men using their own analogical imaginations.
- Test: Matthew 15:
 - Jesus and the Canaanite woman
 - From the perspective of the men
 - From the perspective of the woman (Justa)



The Biblical Narrative: The Torah

■ The Beginnings of God's work in Creation: The Primordial Story (Genesis 1-11)

■ Cosmology

■ Communication and Relationship

■ Adam and Eve & the first covenant (Genesis 1-3)

■ God's covenant with humankind through Adam

■ Covenant relationship → promises & obligations

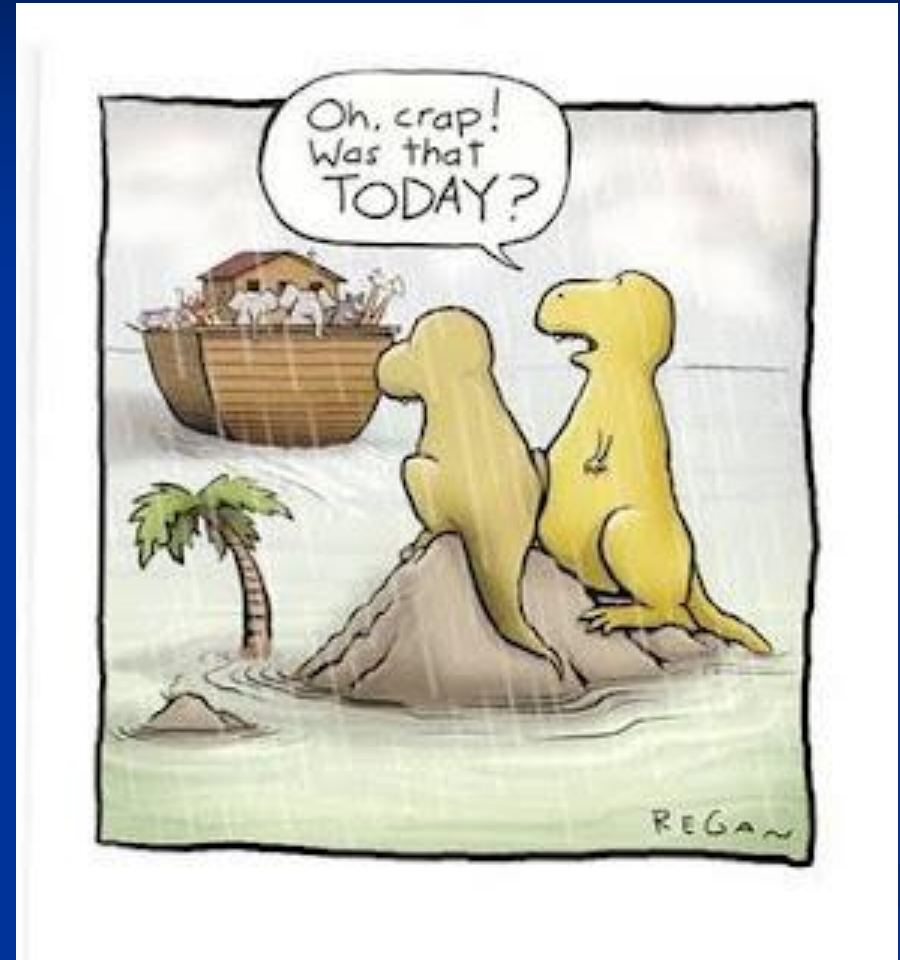
→ Obedience = Perfect Order

→ Disobedience = Disorder (Sin)

■ Etiology / Etiologies / Etiological Stories

The Biblical Narrative: The Torah

- Perfect relationship fractures and sin grows in humankind (Genesis 4)
- The flood and God's covenant with humankind through Noah (Genesis 6-9)
- The Tower of Babel and broken relationship (Genesis 11)



What really happened to the Dinosaurs

The Biblical Narrative: The Torah

■ The Time of Abraham & the Ancestors (ca. 1800 BCE; Genesis 12-50)

■ The Abraham Cycle & Restricted Covenant (Gen 12–23)

- Blessing, Descendants, & the Promised Land

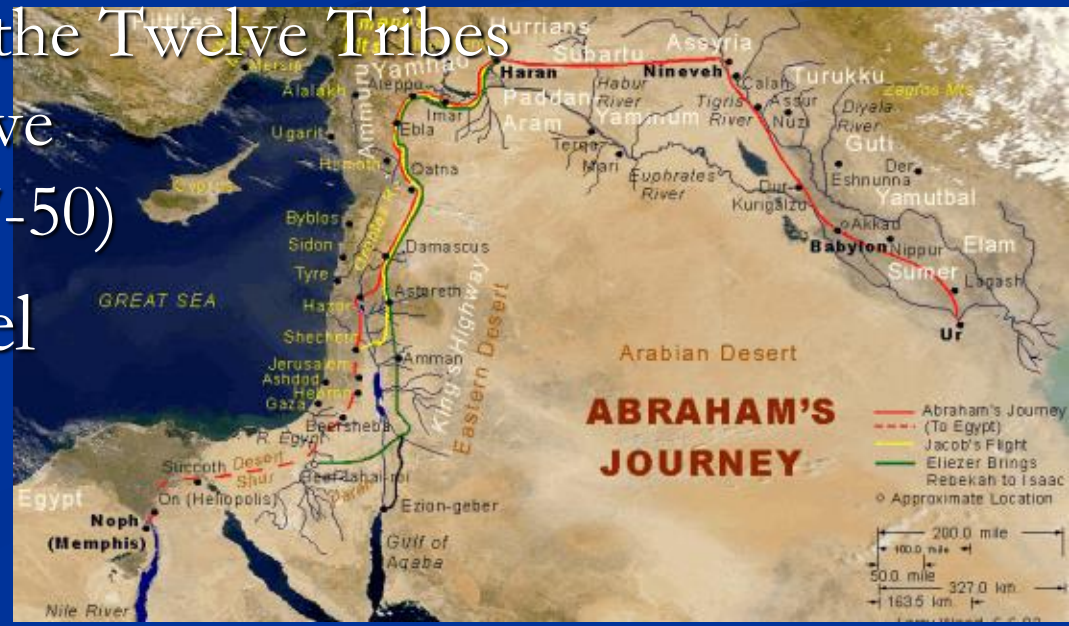
■ The Isaac Cycle (Genesis 24-26)

■ The Jacob Cycle (Genesis 27-36)

■ The Development of the Twelve Tribes of Israel and their move into Egypt (Genesis 37-50)

- Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel

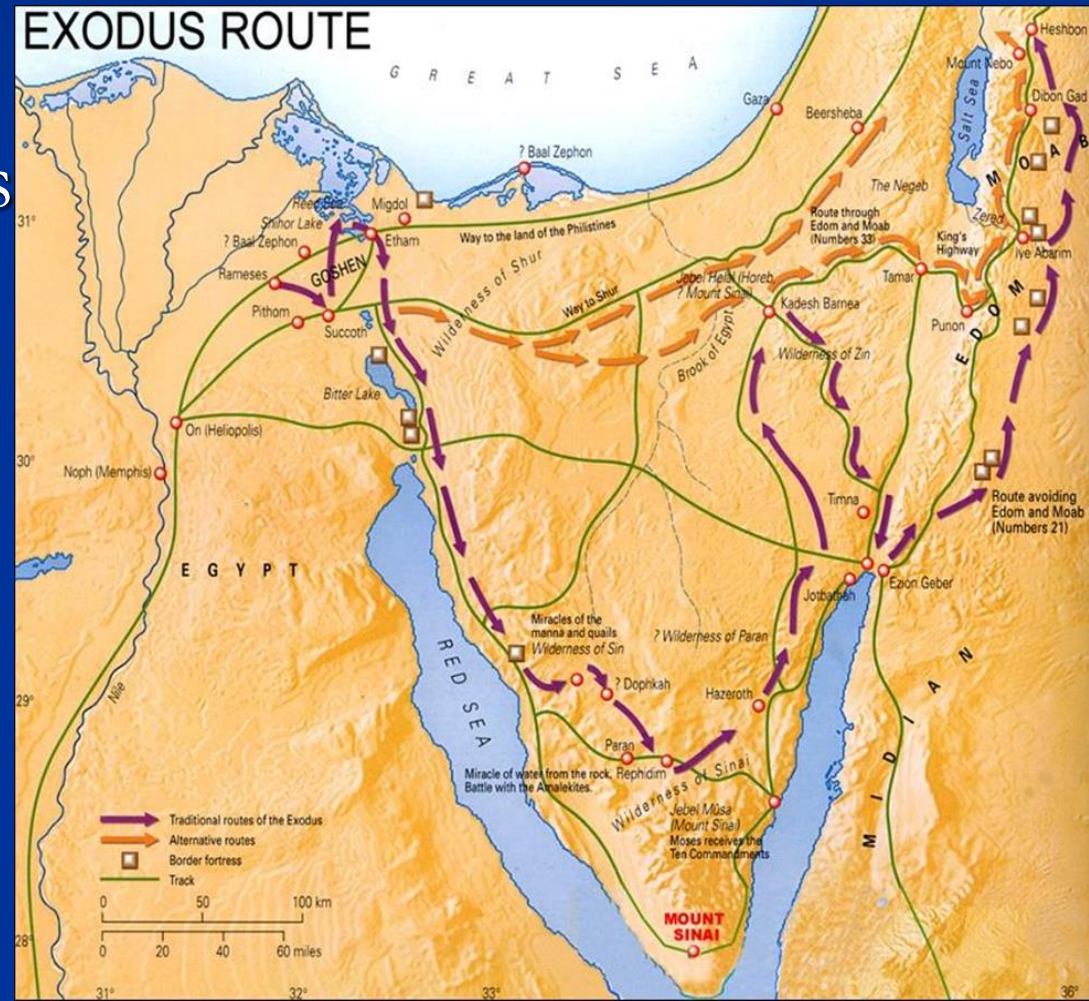
- Tamar (Genesis 38)



The Biblical Narrative: The Torah

■ The Time of Moses (ca. 1280 BCE; Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)

- The Call & Leadership of Moses
- The Divine Name YHWH (3:14)
- Prophet (4:10; 6:28)
- The Exodus from Egypt (13:17-15:27)
- Miriam Exod 2, 15)



Women who are Prophets

■ The OT

- Miriam (Exod 15:20)
- Deborah (Judg 4:4)
- Huldah (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chr 34:22)
- Noadiah (Neh 6:14)
- Isaiah's (also a prophet) baby mama (Isa 8:3)

■ The Rabbis add:

- The matriarchs, esp. Sarah & Rachel
- Rahab (Josh 2)
- Hannah (1 Samuel 1-2)
- Abigail (1 Samuel 25-30; 2 Samuel 1-3; 1 Chr 2-3)
- Esther

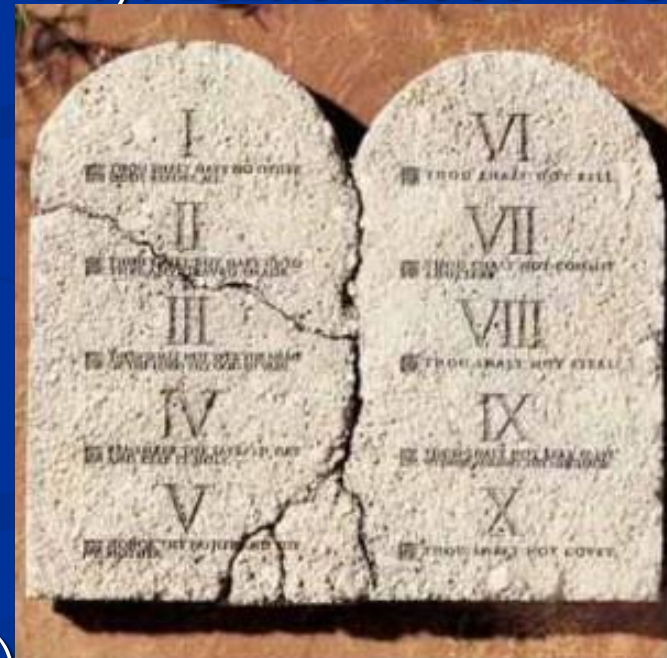
■ The NT

- Anna (Luke 2:36)
- The four daughters of Phillip (Acts 21:9)
- The prophets of Corinth (1 Cor 11:5)
- The rival of John (Rev 2:18-28)

The Biblical Narrative: The Torah

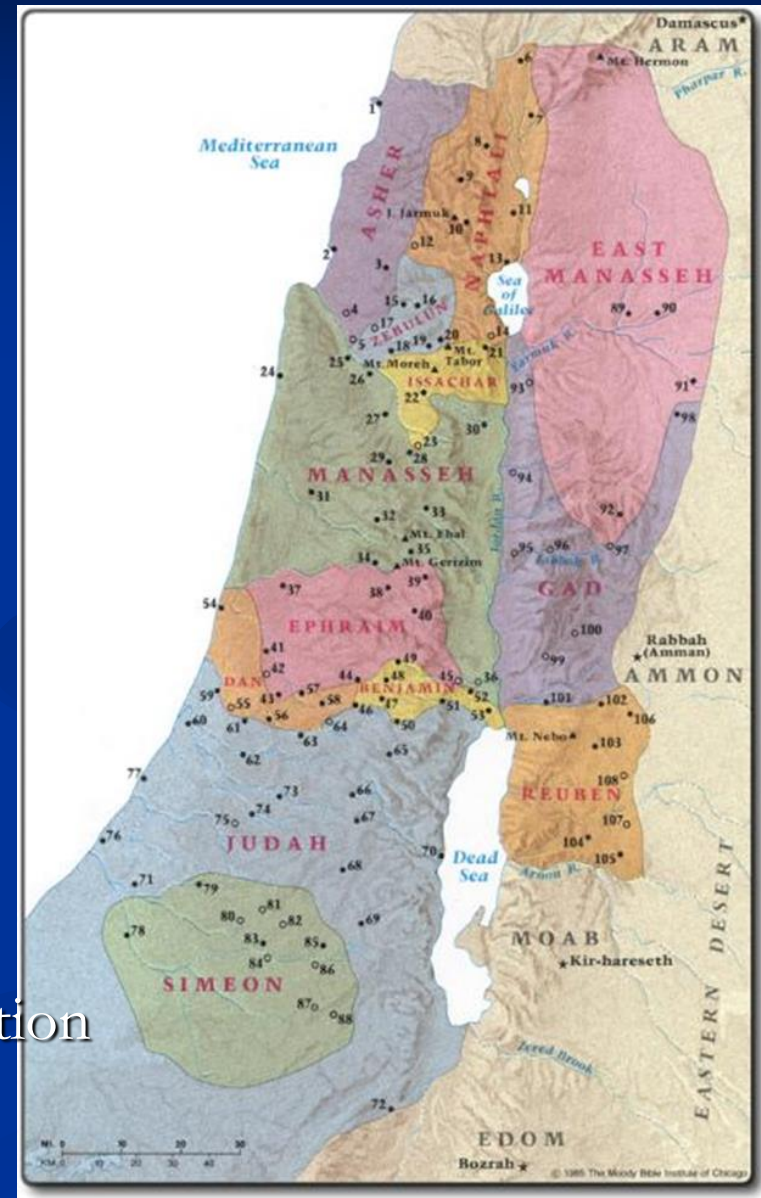
■ The Time of Moses (con't)

- God Provides in the Wilderness (Exodus 16)
- Joshua introduced (17:8); eventually succeeds Moses
- The Sinai Covenant (Exodus 19-24): Israel becomes God's Chosen People
 - The Ten Commandments (20)
 - The Torah
 - Begins with the Covenant Collection (20:22-23:19)
- The Golden Calf (Exodus 32-34)



The Conquest of the Promised Land

- The Time of the Conquest and Settlement of Canaan (ca. 1200 BCE; Joshua - Judges)
 - The Spies and Rahab
 - Joshua 2
 - The Fall of Jericho
 - Joshua 6
 - The Tribes and their Territories
 - Joshua 13-20
 - The Levites
 - Joshua 21
 - The Covenant Renewal Tribal Confederation
 - Joshua 24



The Biblical Narrative: The Former Prophets

- **The Time of the Conquest and Settlement of Canaan (ca. 1200 BCE; Joshua - Judges)**
 - The Judges → charismatic leaders called by God
 - 6 Major Judges: Othniel (3:7-11), Ehud (3:12-30), Deborah (4:1-5:31), Gideon (6:1-8:35), Jephthah (11:1-12:7), Samson (13:1-16:31)
 - 6 Minor Judges: Shamgar (3:31); Tola, Jair (10:1-5); Ibzan, Elon, Abdon (12:8-15)



The Biblical Narrative: The Former Prophets

■ The Time of David and the Nation (ca. 1000 BCE; 1 and 2 Samuel; 1 and 2 Kings)

- Hannah
- Samuel, the last judge
- The call for a king
- The United Kingdom under a Monarchy with Kings David and Solomon (ca. 1000–920 BCE)
- David becomes the model king in Israel's story



The Biblical Narrative: The Former Prophets

God's Covenant with King David: 2 Samuel 7

- A descendant of David will always be king over the people
- Kings are “anointed” in the ancient world
 - a king is an “anointed one” → a “Messiah” or “Christ”
- God will raise up a messiah, a descendant of David, to restore the people and be king should they ever need it

Χριστος



- The addition of the hope for a messiah: “messianic expectations” to the relationship
- David's son King Solomon builds the Temple: the House of God



The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah

- The Division of the Kingdom (ca. 920 BCE)
 - The Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes)
 - The Southern Kingdom of Judah (2 tribes)
- The Rise of the Assyrian Empire and the Fall of the Northern Kingdom (721 BCE)
- The people of Israel are deported into Assyria never to return.



The Babylonian Empire

- The rise of the Babylonian Empire and the fall of the Southern Kingdom (587 BCE)
- People of Judah are deported into Exile



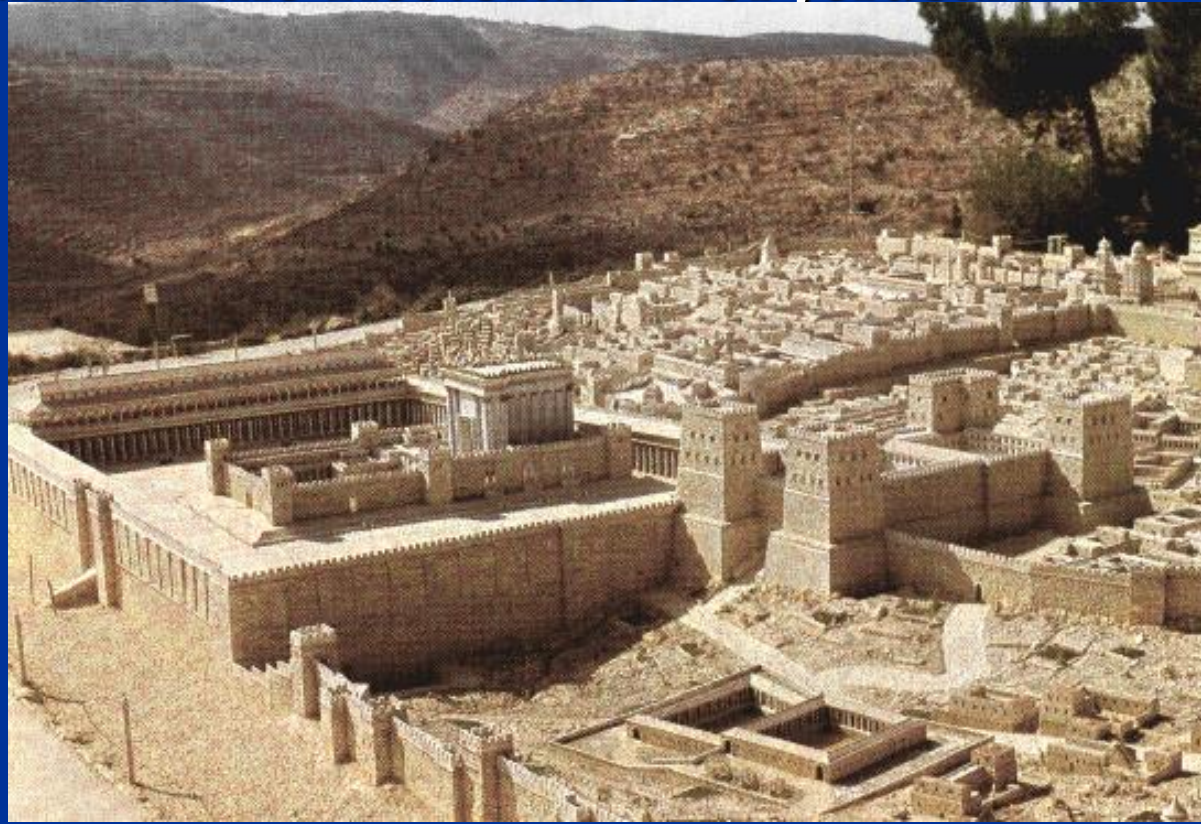
The Persian Empire

- The Time of the Exile of Israel (587-538 BCE)
- The Rise of the Persian Empire and King Cyrus



Israel After the Exile

- **The Return and Restoration of Jerusalem (538 BCE; Ezra and Nehemiah)**
 - The Edict of Cyrus (538 BCE)
 - The Return to Judah and the Restoration of Jerusalem
 - The Diaspora
 - The Building and Dedication of the Second Temple (515 BCE)



Other Post-Exilic Literature

■ Ruth

- Seems to have been written in this early post-exilic time
- But is set in the time of the Judges
- When it was written, intermarriage was a hot conflict
- The tradition that David had foreign ancestry survived and becomes a challenge to this call for “purity”

■ Esther & Judith

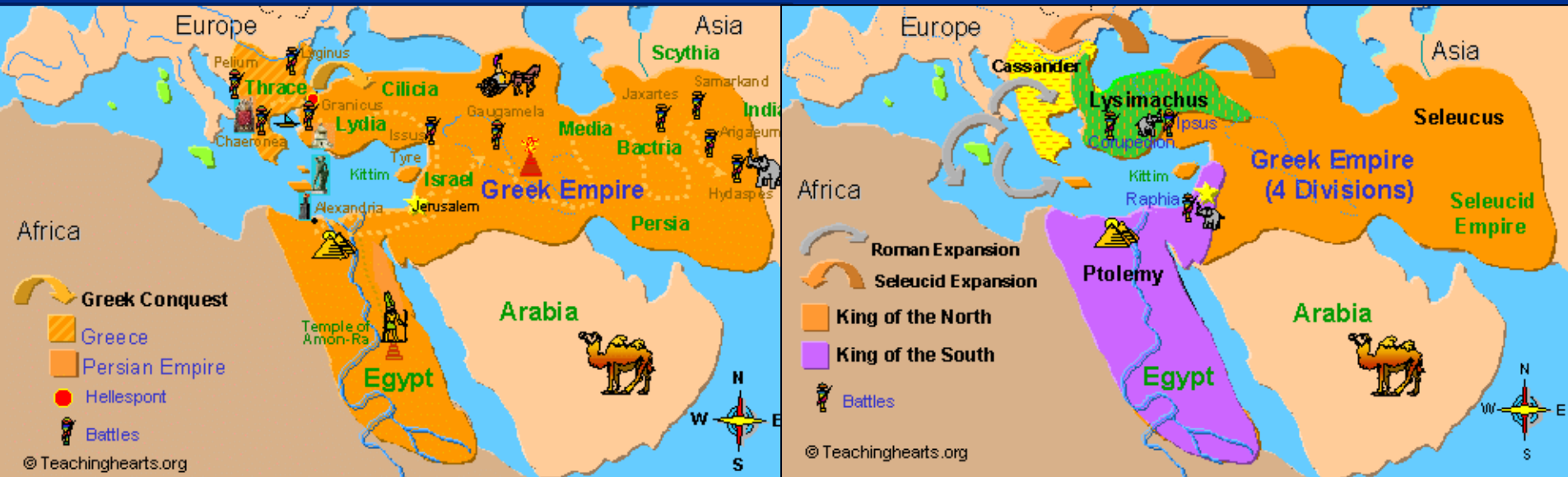
- Tales of great faith in the face of the challenges of exile and post-exilic life

Other Post-Exilic Literature

- There are 5 *megilloth* contained in the Writings
 - These *little scrolls* are read annually in the liturgies for holidays of the Jewish calendar
 - They appear in the canon in the order in which they are celebrated annually:
 - Song of Songs (Passover, spring),
 - Ruth (Pentecost, early summer),
 - Lamentations (9th of Ab, summer),
 - Ecclesiastes (Tabernacles, fall), and
 - Esther (Purim, winter).

The Greek Empire

Alexander the Great & the Greek Empire (333 BCE; 1 and 2 Maccabees)



The Greek Empire at 333 BCE
(under Alexander the Great)

The Greek Empire post-323
BCE (the death of Alexander)

The Poetic and Wisdom Literature

- **The Development of the Poetic & Wisdom Literature**
 - The Exile and Diaspora brought the search for wisdom into the culture and literature of Israel during the post-exilic period
 - The Late Post-Exilic Era therefore brought about the final form of the collections of Poetic and Wisdom Literature
- **Poetic Literature**
 - Psalms, Song of Songs
 - Psalm 22 – God as midwife
- **Wisdom Literature (2 types: prudential & reflective)**
 - Job Proverbs Ecclesiastes
 - Sirach (aka ben Sira, Ecclesiasticus) Wisdom of Solomon
 - Proverbs – Woman Wisdom (Sophia)

The Biblical Narrative

- ▶ Judah first ruled by the Ptolemies; came under the harsher rule of the Seleucids in 198 BCE
 - ▶ Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Seleucid King over Judea
- ▶ **The Maccabean Revolt (167-164 BCE)**
 - Hellenizing oppression by Antiochus IV
 - Mattathias resisted the forced worship of Zeus
 - Judah the Maccabee (The Hammer)
 - The Rededication of the Temple (Hanukkah)

Apocalyptic Literature

- **Classic Jewish Apocalypse: The Book of Daniel**
 - Giving hope during the crisis of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Maccabean Revolt ca. 165 BCE
- **The Structure of the Book of Daniel:**
 - 1:1 – 6:28 The Court Tales: Daniel's Experiences in the Foreign Courts of Exile
 - 7:1 – 12:13 The Apocalypses: Daniel's Dreams and Visions
 - 13:1 – 14:42 Other Legends of Daniel: Susannah, Bel, and the Dragon
- **The Son of Man (Daniel 7)**
- **The Resurrection of the Body (Daniel 12)**
- **Susannah, model of faith; Daniel the detective (Dan 13)**

The Biblical Narrative

- ▶ **2nd Period of Independence in Israelite History under the Hasmonean Dynasty (The Maccabees; 164- 63 BCE)**
 - ▶ Issues over kingship and priesthood
 - ▶ Kings (Messiahs; God's Anointed Ones) are to come from the line of David
 - ▶ High priests are to come from the line of Aaron, called the Zadokites
 - ▶ Jewish groups the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes emerged
- ▶ **The Rise of Rome and the beginning of Roman domination period (63 BCE into NT times)**

The Roman Empire in NT Times



Palestine within the Roman Empire during NT Times

