

An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible Week 4

ONLINE STUDY GROUP

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

SPRING 2023



Prayer

Holy God of Abundance,

as we sow and reap and gather into barns; as we work and earn and calculate our net worth, let us consider the birds of the air.

Let us consider the lilies of the field.

Let us notice and look and give thanks for the food that feeds us and the food that feeds the birds; for the clothes that cover and warm us and the colors and textures that clothe the flowers and fields.

May we live in gratitude—

not gratitude as a denial of today's problems, a refusal to admit that tomorrow will bring troubles of its own,

but a gratitude that is deep trust, a choice to embrace the grace.

Holy God of abundance, ease us away from worry and point us on the path toward your Kingdom.

Amen.

Israel's Beginnings

WHAT WAS THIS SOCIETY LIKE?

THREE MAIN HYPOTHESES ABOUT ISRAEL'S SOCIAL ORGANIZATION




1. Pastoral Nomads

Hypothesis

- Seasonal movements of livestock
- “Out of the desert” – land-hungry pastoral nomads conquering Canaan

But

- The Arabian Desert was not a source of peoples
 - Pastoral practices were not limited to nomads
 - The exodus was not a pastoral-nomadic trek – flight, expulsion or armed escape
 - People of the exodus were unfamiliar with the desert
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2. Religious League of Tribes

Hypothesis

- Israel was a religious confederacy of twelve tribes – shared the common religion of Yahwism
- A central shrine – Shechem, later Bethel, Gilgal, Shiloh
- A council of tribal delegates
- A confederacy like Greek amphictyonies (an association of neighboring states in ancient Greece to defend a common religious centre)

But

- Overstates the importance of religion
 - There was a league of tribes but not like the Greek models
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3. Organized Tribes

Hypothesis:

- **A coalition of tribes**
- **Makeup:**
 - **Peasants (80%)**
 - **Nomads**
 - **Mercenaries and plunderers**
 - **Craftsmen**
 - **Renegade priests**
- **From the indigenous underclasses of Canaan**
- **A social and religious revolution against king states**
 - **Tribute**
 - **Dominated by Egypt**

Organization of Society

Free uphill farming

- Grains, wine, oil, fruits, vegetables
- Small herds

Technology

- Metal farming tools
- Waterproof cisterns
- Small-scale irrigation
- Rock terracing

Mutual aid

- Defense – military cooperation
- Religion – congregation, priests

Equal access to resources

- Organized into extended families, federated tribes
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Covenant

Not just religious

- Israel's needs were not provided supernaturally


Ordering of Old Israel's communal life

- Religion + politics

A "people"

- Social institutions
- Ritual practice of a covenant with their deity

Binding together the tribes

- A common project of winning their freedom and providing security
 - "Make no treaties" with Canaanite ruling classes and their religious practices
 - Self-determination
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Divisions of the Hebrew Bible

Catholic Bibles

Catholic Bibles include forty-six books in the OT (as listed by the Council of Trent in 1546) and the books of the NT. The OT includes the following books not found in Jewish Bibles: Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, and Baruch with the Letter of Jeremiah. The book of Esther includes the six additions to Esther, and the book of Daniel includes the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon.

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis	Judith	Daniel
Exodus	Esther (with the Additions)	Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews
Leviticus	1 Maccabees	Susanna
Numbers	2 Maccabees	Bel and the Dragon
Deuteronomy	Job	Hosea
Joshua	Psalms	Joel
Judges	Proverbs	Amos
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Obadiah
1 Samuel	Song of Solomon	Jonah
2 Samuel	Wisdom of Solomon	Micah
1 Kings	Sirach	Nahum
2 Kings	Isaiah	Habakkuk
1 Chronicles	Jeremiah	Zephaniah
2 Chronicles	Lamentations	Haggai
Ezra	Baruch	Zechariah
Nehemiah	Letter of Jeremiah	Malachi
Tobit	Ezekiel	

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	1 Peter
John	1 Thessalonians	2 Peter
Acts	2 Thessalonians	1 John
Romans	1 Timothy	2 John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	3 John
2 Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

Jewish Bibles

Jewish Bibles include the books of the Hebrew scriptures (Tanak). Most modern editions present the twenty-four books (counting the Twelve Prophets as one book) in the following order:

TORAH	PROPHETS	WRITINGS
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges	Proverbs
Leviticus	Samuel (1 & 2)	Job
Numbers	Kings (1 & 2)	Song of Solomon
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	Ruth
	Jeremiah	Lamentations
	Ezekiel	Ecclesiastes
	The Twelve:	Esther
	Hosea Obadiah Nahum Haggai	Daniel
	Joel Jonah Habakkuk Zechariah	Ezra-Nehemiah
	Amos Micah Zephaniah Malachi	Chronicles (1 & 2)

The Deuteronomistic History

SEVEN BOOKS – ONE HISTORY



What's in the DH?

WORKS INCLUDED

Deuteronomy

Joshua

Judges

1 & 2 Samuel

1 & 2 Kings

HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Entry into the promised land

Tribal confederation

Rise of the monarchy under Saul

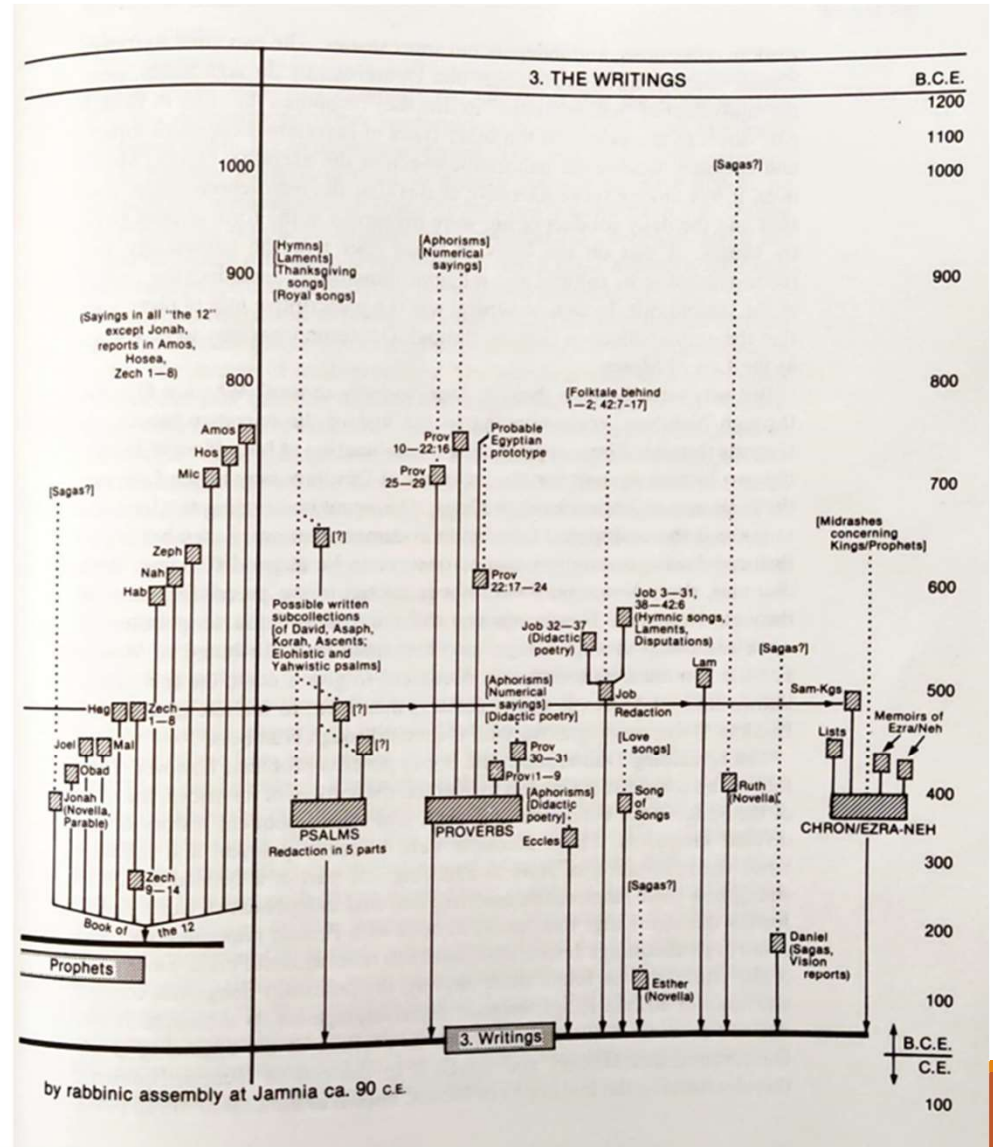
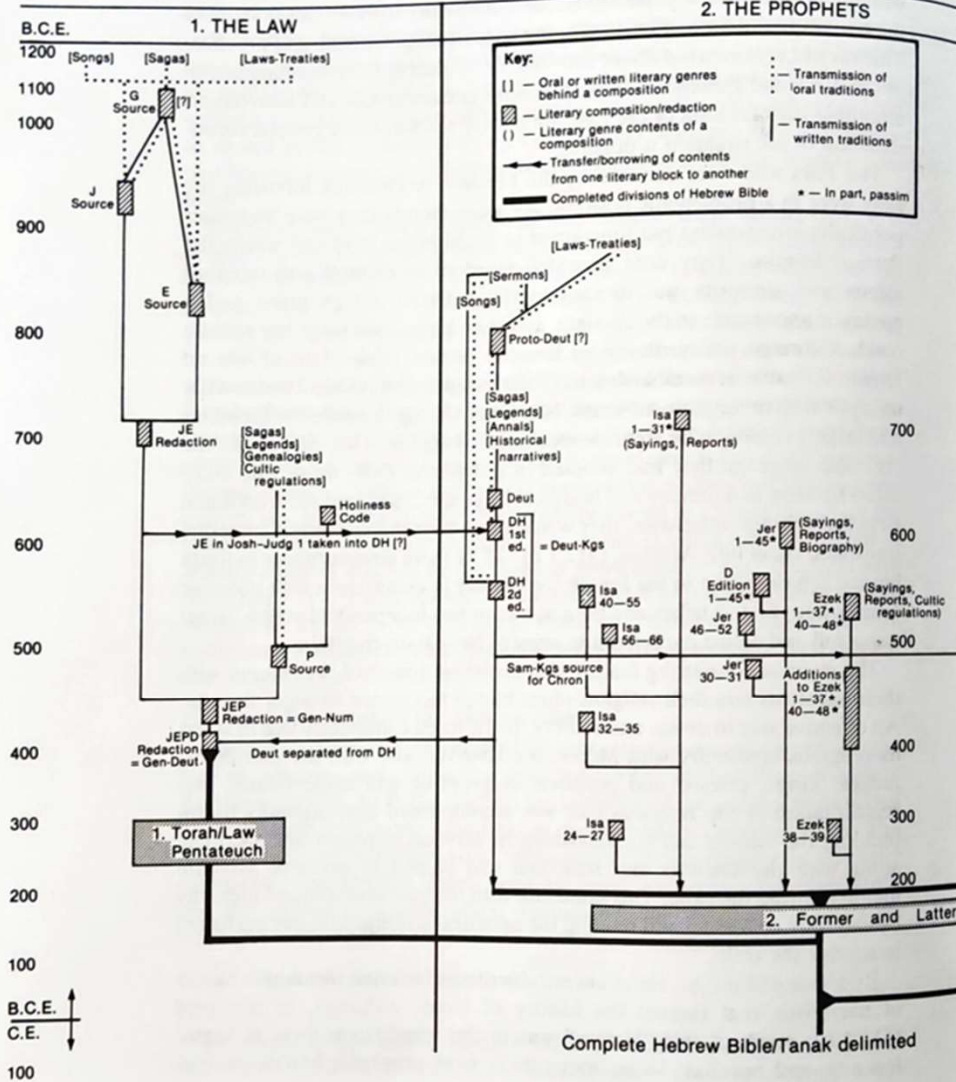
United monarchy under David and Solomon

Divided kingdoms:

- North (Israel)
- South (Judah)

CHART 3

From the Small Oral/Literary Units to the Large Compositions and Collections



Next Week

1 Samuel 8, 16

2 Samuel 6–7, 21

1 Kings 5–8

1 Kings 11–12

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.