The Old Testament Story†

**Patriarchs** (2200-1550 BCE)
- Abraham
- Moses

**Exodus** (ca. 1300 BCE)
- Creation
- Exod. from Egypt likely occurs under Pharaoh Ramses II (ca. 1280 BCE)

**Conquest & Settlement** (1200-1000 BCE)
- Conquest of Canaan begins under Joshua
- Period of the judges
- David conquers Jerusalem and makes it the capital capital (ca. 1000 BCE)

**United Kingdom** (922-721 BCE)
- Solomon builds the first Temple and walls of Jerusalem
- Division of the united kingdom. Jeroboam I, new king of the north, established religious centers at Dan and Bethel to ensure national unity.

**Two Kingdoms** (922-721 BCE)
- Northern Kingdom of Israel
- Solomon conquers Jerusalem and makes it the central capital
- Pharaoh Merneptah’s stele mentions an “Israel” in Canaan (ca. 1209 BC).

**Judah Alone** (721–587 BCE)
- Southern Kingdom of Judah
- Time of the Prophets: Most of the biblical prophets active during the last days of the kingdom of Israel (Amos, Hosea), and the kingdom of Judah (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc.), calling them back to covenant faithfulness before it was too late.

**Babylonian Exile** (587-539 BCE)
- Destruction of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians (721 BCE), led by King Sargon II. Northern Israel dispersed throughout the Assyrian empire

**Return & Restoration** (539-333 BCE)
- Under the Persian King Cyrus, the Jews are allowed to return home from Babylon. Under Ezra the Temple is rebuilt (called the “Second Temple”), and Nehemiah directs the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

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• **ANE:** Major ANE superpower during this period was Egypt (Canaan under its control)

• **Hebrew People:** This was the formative period for the Hebrews. God’s promise to Abraham (Genesis 12) set out God’s plan of redemption, including: descendants (“great nation”); blessing (“I will bless you”); and land (“Go to the land I will show you”).

• **Israel:** While the initial settlement appears to be a success (cf. Josh 1-12), Israel was continually plagued by infighting and oppression by foreign nations (see Judges).

• **ANE:** Philistines invade Canaan

• **ANE:** There is a power-vacuum in the ANE, allowing Israel to prosper

• **Israel:** High point for the nation; David established Israel militarily; Israel prospered economically and culturally under Solomon

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• **ANE:** Babylon displaces Assyria as the superpower of the ANE

• **Israel:** Despite some high points (Hezekiah, Josiah), Judah follows the kingdom of N. Israel to apostasy and its exile in Babylon. The Babylonian exile was a time of redefining Israelite faith and religion. Synagogues likely developed during this time, and many biblical books were completed.

• **ANE:** The Persians under Cyrus take control of the ANE

• **Israel:** Jews allowed to go home under Cyrus. Judaism emerges from the furnace of the exile. Israel is no longer an independent nation, but a province (“Yehud”) of the mighty Persian empire.

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† Prepared by Tyler F. Williams (2002).