

Historical Survey: Kingdoms of Judah and Israel (1000-586 BCE)

September 11, 2006

- Finders' guide to biblical passages
- Chronological overview
- Significant themes in the biblical "memory" of Israelite history

Finders' guide to biblical passages

- Christian Old Testament organized differently than Jewish Bible.
 - Christian bible is chronological (traditional date of author). First historical works, then poetic.
 - Hebrew Bible has three major divisions: Acronym TNK pronounced Tanakh
- Tools:
 - Table of Contents: p. v-vi
 - Alphabetical list of books: p. xvii
 - Comparison of Biblical book orders: p. 2072

Outline of Books of the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Bible)

T orah (Law, Instruction)	N evi'im (Prophets)	K etuvim (Writings)
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges	Proverbs
Leviticus	1,2 Samuel	Job
Numbers	1,2 Kings	"S scrolls"
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	Daniel
	Jeremiah	Ezra
	Ezekiel	Nehemiah
	Twelve "minor" prophets	1,2 Chronicles



Chronological overview*

- "Prehistory"—to ca 1250 BCE
- Formation of Israelite polity—1250-1025
- "Unified Monarchy"—1025–928
- Divided Monarchy—928–586

Next time:

- Babylonian Exile 586–538
- Restoration under the Persians 538–333

* Precise chronologies vary.
See *Jewish Study Bible* 2106–2113 for more detail



Prehistory and early formation

- "Prehistory"—to ca 1250 BCE: Likely diverse origins
 - More than one group of settlers/invaders
 - Possibly only some with Egypt/Exodus connection (esp. Levites)
 - Possibly indigenous elements as well
- Formation of Israelite polity—1250-1025
 - Tribal league held together by cult (shrines, god, and ritual)
 - centripetal and centrifugal pressures
- See Callaway for more detail/discussion



"Unified Monarchy" 1025–928

- Saul (1025–1005)
 - Seemingly in response to external pressure: the expanding Philistines
- David (1005–965)
 - State formation—royal city (Jerusalem)
 - The father of a dynasty with long term significance
- Solomon (968–928)
 - Consolidation
 - Ultimately: over-exploitation



Divided Monarchy 928–586

- Rehoboam, Jeroboam, and the division
 - Rehoboam: the successor to Solomon
 - Jeroboam: appointed by God to undermine the kingdom
 - Dissent over taxes, but the seems as though Israel divides over existing fissures
- Kingdom of Israel 928–722
 - Generally the wealthier, more powerful of the two
 - Volatile political tradition: tied to prophetic/charismatic tradition of kingship?
 - Defeated by: Assyrians
- Kingdom of Judah 928–586
 - Tradition: a single dynasty throughout
 - Defeated by: Neo-Babylonians



Significant themes in the biblical “memory” of Israelite history

- Joshua’s lightning conquest vs. piecemeal conquest in Judges
- Tension in the biblical ideology of kingship:
 - King is chosen by God (God to Samuel: they’ve rejected **me**, not **you**)
 - Kingship is rejection of God’s direct rule
- Promise of a davidic **dynasty**
 - Promise of an eternal dynasty to David (2 Sam. 7:11–16)
 - Promise to Jeroboam about David (!) (1 Kings 11:29–39)
 - Psalm 132: Recounting of the promise to David
 - Psalm 89: You promised, God, now where are you?



Mesopotamia & "The Fertile Crescent"


