

CHART 1. CHRONOLOGICAL LANDMARKS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN PERIOD

General History	Israel and its Antecedents
c. 3100. Invention of cuneiform writing by the Sumerians in southern Mesopotamia. c. 2615–2175. Old Kingdom period of Egyptian history (building of the pyramids). c. 2360–2180. First large-scale territorial empire in Mesopotamian history: Sargon of Akkad. 21st–19th centuries. Movement of Amorites and other barbarian peoples into the settled areas of Mesopotamia and Canaan. 2060–1950. Third Dynasty of Ur. 1792–1750. Reign of Hammurabi of Babylon. 1450–1200. Hittite empire in Asia Minor and Syria. 13th–12th centuries. Wave of invasions in Syria and Palestine by Arameans, “Sea Peoples,” and other groups. 1100 BCE	21st–15th centuries. Middle Bronze Age in Canaan; probable origins of the patriarchal traditions of Israel. 1678–1570. Canaan and Egypt ruled by the Hyksos; possible setting for the descent of Israel’s ancestors to Egypt. 1570–1304. New Kingdom or Empire period of Egyptian history; Egypt dominates Canaan. c. 1275–1250. Exodus of Israelites from Egypt. c. 1250–1200. Israelite conquests in Canaan, leading to formation of a tribal alliance. Occasional inter-tribal leadership by judges. c. 1100. Early iron age; rise of Philistine league of cities along the sea-coast. c.1050. Victory of Philistines over Israelites at Aphek. c. 1020–1000. Saul as first king of Israel. 1000 BCE
969–936. Hiram I, king of Tyre in Phoenicia, ally of David and Solomon.	c. 1000–961. David, second king of Israel. c. 961–922. Solomon, third king of Israel. c. 922. Secession of northern tribes from the Davidic dynasty; split between northern kingdom (Israel) and southern kingdom (Judah).

General History	Israelite History	Israelite History
900 BCE 900-842. Ben Hadad I and rise of Aramean state of Damaseus. Early 9th century. Resurgence of Assyria. 854. Beginning of temporary decline of Assyrian power west of Mesopotamia, permitting domination by Aram-Damaseus over Israel.	<i>Northern Kingdom (Israel)</i> 875-842. Dynasty of Omri. Religious conflicts during reign of Ahab son of Omri, involving the prophets Elijah and Elisha. 842. Jehu overthrows the Omri dynasty, attacks worship of Baal in Israel.	<i>Southern Kingdom (Judah)</i> 873-849. Jehosaphat, king of Judah, allied with Israel and Tyre. 836. Overthrow of Ahab's daughter, Athaliah, in Jerusalem; restoration of Davidic dynasty.
800 BCE Early 8th century. Renewed Assyrian campaigns west of Mesopotamia. 745-727. Conquests of Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser IV, establishing permanent empire in Syria and Palestine.	785-745. Reign of Jeroboam II and revival of Israel; the prophets Amos and Hosea. 722. Siege and fall of Samaria; Assyrian deportations of northern Israelites; end of the northern kingdom.	734-715. Ahaz refuses to join anti-Assyrian alliance; Judah spared. c. 715-687. Reign of Hezekiah; the prophets Isaiah and Micah. 701. Assyrian seige of Jerusalem, re-establishing Judah's subservience to Assyria.
700 BCE 625-605. Nabopolassar, the last Assyrian ruler; the Assyrian empire crumbles.	640-609. Reign of Josiah; resurgence of Judean independence; Deuteronomic movement of religious reform. Early period of the prophet Jeremiah.	

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General History	Jewish History
600 BCE Early 6th century. Division of the Assyrian empire between the Babylonians (ruled Mesopotamia and Syria-Palestine) and the Medes (in Iran and northern territories). 546–530. Cyrus the Persian overthrows the Median kings, puts an end to the Babylonian empire. Persian empire dominates the ancient Near East (to the 330s).	597. Babylonian siege of Jerusalem; first deportations of Judeans to Babylon. 587. Second Babylonian siege of Jerusalem. Fall of the city, destruction of the Temple, massive deportations to Babylon. Prophets of the exilic period: Ezekiel, Second Isaiah. 538. Cyrus’s edict permitting the Judean exiles to return home. c. 515. Completion of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah. Judah a semiautonomous province of the Persian empire (to the 330s).
500 BCE 490s–480s. Unsuccessful Persian efforts to conquer European Greece. 450s–430s. Periclean Athens. 431–404. The Peloponnesian Wars in Greece. 427–347. The philosopher Plato.	c. 450s–440s. New wave of return from Babylonia under Nehemia and Ezra; social and religious reforms in Judah.
400 BCE 384–322. The philosopher Aristotle. 336–323. Reign of Alexander the Great; 334–331, Alexander defeats the Persians and conquers the Near East. 301. Beginning of the stabilization of Hellenistic kingdoms under Alexander’s generals.	4th century. Possible crystallization of the Samaritan tradition. c. 333. Alexander’s army occupies Judea and Palestine.

General History	Jewish History
300 BCE 3rd century. Rise of Rome as the main power in Italy; Alexandria in Egypt as a major center of Hellenistic culture.	3rd century. Judea under the rule of the Ptolemies, the Hellenistic kingdom based in Egypt. Rise of the Jewish community of Alexandria and the first translations of parts of the Bible into Greek. 201-198. Judea passes to the rule of the Seleucids of Syria, Mesopotamia, and adjacent areas.
200 BCE 175-163. Rule of Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes.	175. Beginning of dominance by Hellenizing elements in Jerusalem. 167. Antiochus IV converts the Temple to a pagan shrine; beginning of the Maccabean revolt. 164. Temple retaken by the Maccabees, who purify and rededicate it.