



A Study of the Book of GENESIS



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WEEK TWO

Genesis and the Bible: How Do Events, Regions, & People Link Together?

WHERE DID THE EVENTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TAKE PLACE?

- Israel's crossroads location had two important consequences:
 - 1) Many _____ and empires throughout history _____ to control, or at least have access to, Israel for trade and transportation to other parts of the ancient world.
 - 2) Many foreign _____ poured into ancient Israel. Thus, Israel was exposed to great cultural interchange and commerce throughout its history.

- _____

The ancient near east contains three geographical subregions joined by an arch of rich soil known as the "fertile crescent." Most of the terrain of the ancient world was rugged and inhospitable to human life. The fertile lands are bordered by nearly impassable mountain ranges to the north and vast deserts to the south. But within the crescent, flat lands and an abundance of water made this location the birthplace of human civilization.

– *Mesopotamia*

The Greek term *Mesopotamia* means "_____ the _____," and refers to the great stretch of land between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. This region extends from the mouth of the Persian Gulf northwestward along the bend of the Euphrates and reaches eastward to the Tigris at the foot of the Zagros Mountains. All of modern Iraq and parts of Iran, Syria, and Lebanon make up the area known as Mesopotamia.

Important Nations in Mesopotamia:

- _____: Between Tigris & Euphrates Rivers
- _____: At mouth of Tigris & Euphrates Rivers
- _____: West and Southwest of the Zagros Mountains

– ***Egypt***

The same geographical features that made early human civilization possible in Mesopotamia are also found along the northeastern coast of Africa along the _____ River, known as Egypt. One ancient historian fittingly described Egypt the “gift of the Nile.” Without question, the Nile is the central feature of Egypt, not only geographically but also historically and culturally. The Nile River stretches over 600 miles through the northeastern deserts of Africa, emptying into the Mediterranean Sea.

The region had very little rainfall except for coastal showers along the Mediterranean Sea, and the Nile had no smaller rivers feeding into it (tributaries). From a source far beyond the Egyptians’ understanding, the river rose predictably every June, peaking in September and returning to its normal level in November. The Egyptians knew how dependent they were on the river for their life, and they gave credit to their god-king, the _____, for the Nile’s annual flood.

– ***Syria-Palestine***

Between the regions of Mesopotamia and Egypt lies Syria-Palestine. It stretches from the northern bend of the Euphrates River along the Mediterranean coast, southward to the Sinai peninsula. The southern half of this region is what came to be the land of _____. While the great Euphrates and Tigris Rivers of Mesopotamia and Nile of Egypt helped unify the people of the regions, this region is peppered with smaller rivers that do not lead to the sea. This very narrow region is splintered into four subterrains (geographic landscapes).

- The western terrain is known as the _____ begins as a narrow strip in the north, then broadens in the south as the coastline slants westward. This subregion is one of the richest in ancient Israel because of its fertile soil and the accessibility of water (numerous springs and high groundwater level).

Important Nations in Coastal Plains:

- _____: Sea traders in the north, near Tyre & Sidon
- _____: Sea traders who settled in SW Palestine, about same time Hebrews came to Canaan.

- Just to the east of the Coastal Plains is the _____ . The foothills of this subregion rise sharply to an average of 3,000 feet, the highest point being Mount Hermon (9,200 ft.). Along these mountains lie the important cities of Bethel, Shiloh, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem.
- Farther eastward lies the most prominent geographical feature of the region, known as the _____. It is a deep depression in the earth's surface with an average width of 10 miles, and it descends from an altitude of about 300 feet to 1,275 feet below the Mediterranean at the Dead Sea (the lowest point on earth). In the center of the valley, the Jordan River flows down from the Sea of Galilee near the foot of Mount Hermon to the _____.
- The fourth and most eastern subterrain are the _____. Here the land rises sharply into a plateau, which gradually gives way to the Arabian Desert. Considerably higher than the Central Highlands, this mountain range reaches heights of about 5,700 feet.

These variations in landscape caused Syria-Palestine to segment into smaller territories occupied by diverse (and sometimes opposing) people groups. More importantly, the region forms a sort of fertile land bridge along the Fertile Crescent between Mesopotamia and Egypt, sandwiched between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan Valley. Throughout ancient history, the empires of Mesopotamia and Egypt sought to control access to Syria-Palestine for its military and economic benefits.

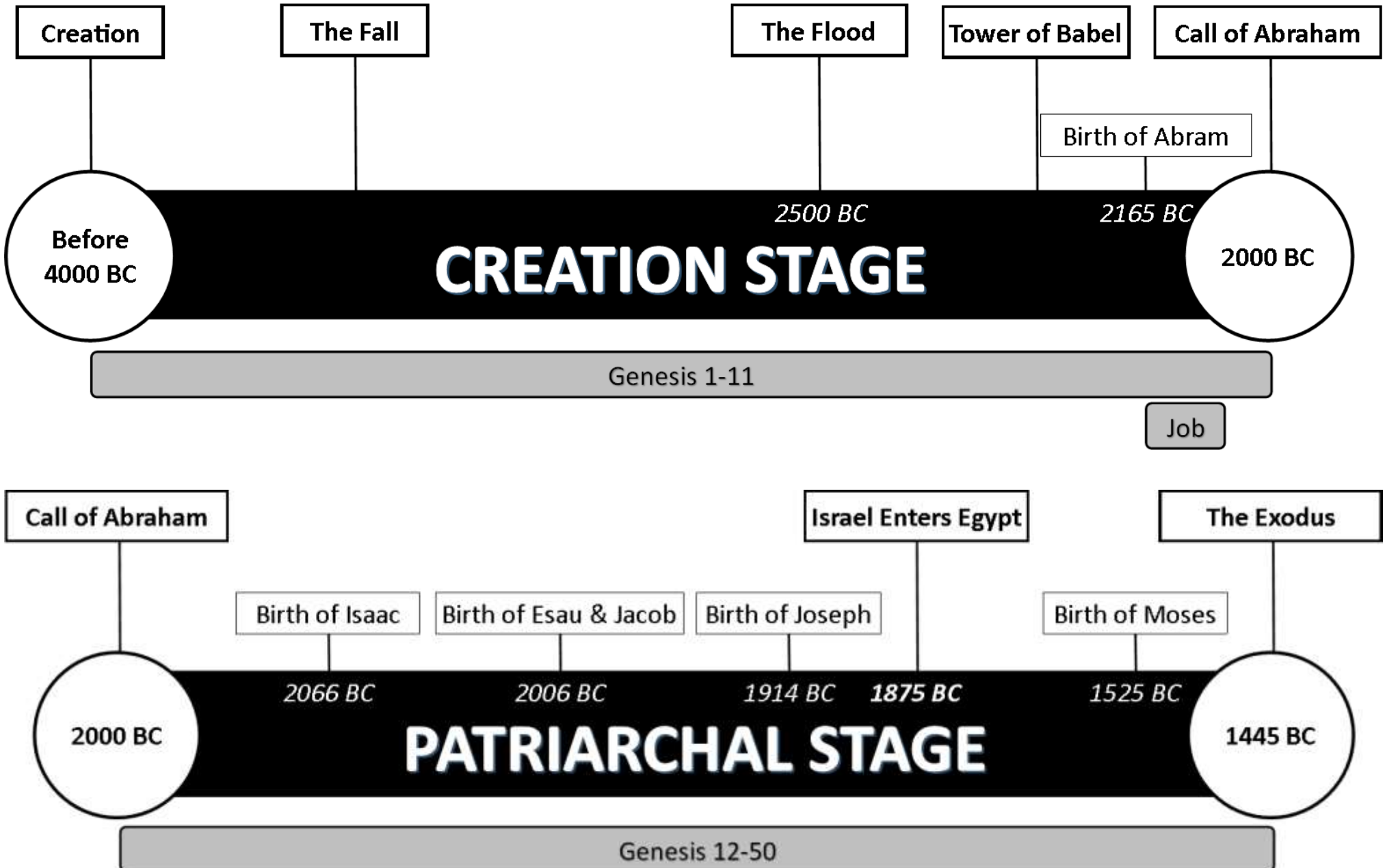
Important Nations of People of Palestine:

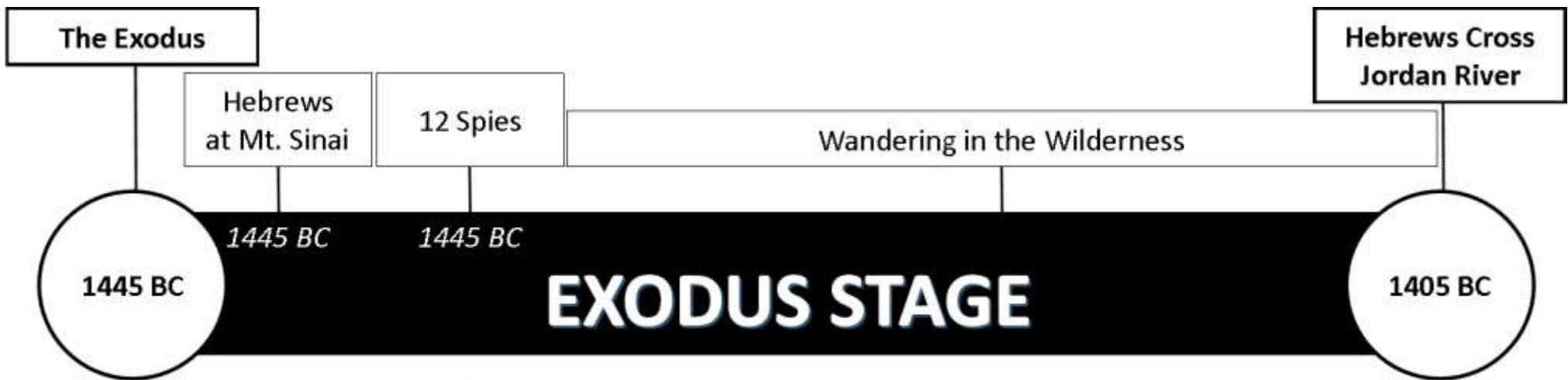
- *Canaanites*: General term for the inhabitants of the land, especially to those who lived west of Jordan River.
- *Jebusites*: Lived in Jerusalem
- *Perizzites*: "villagers," those who lived outside of walls of cities, mostly in middle of Palestine.
- *Hittites*: Came from ancient kingdom N of Palestine (modern Turkey).
- *Amorites*: people who lived in the hill country of Palestine.

Semitic Peoples Surrounding Palestine

- *Edomites*: Descendants of Saul to S of Palestine
- *Moabites*: Descendants of Lot to E of Jordan River & Dead Sea
- *Ammonites*: Descendants of Lot to N of Moabites

HOW DO THE EVENTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FIT TOGETHER?



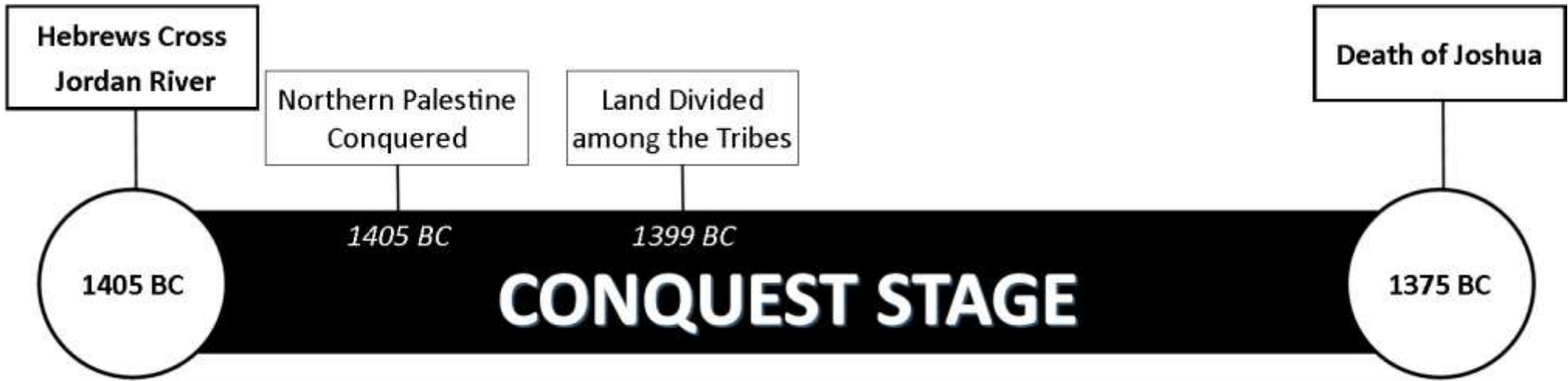


Exodus, Leviticus

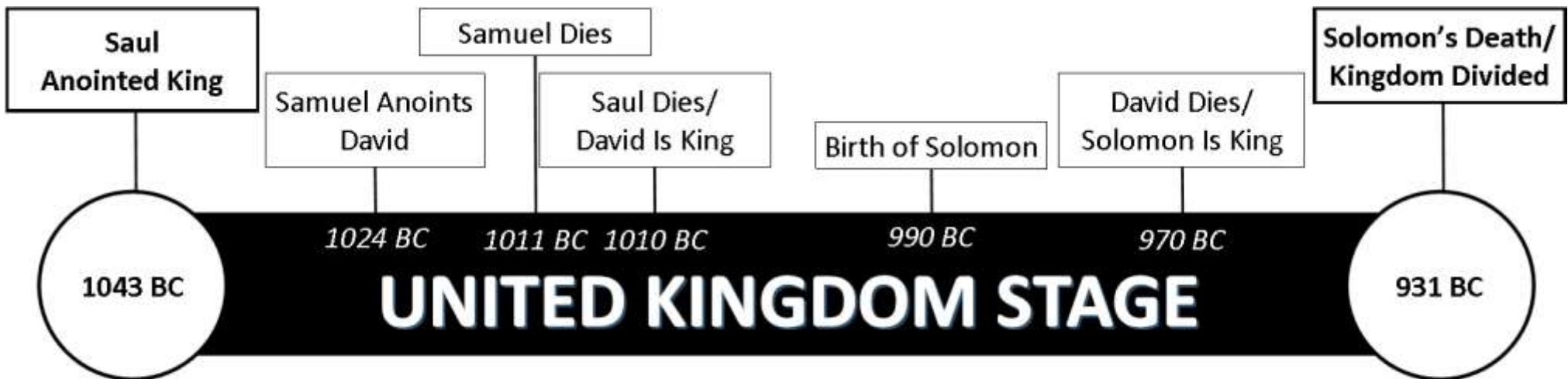
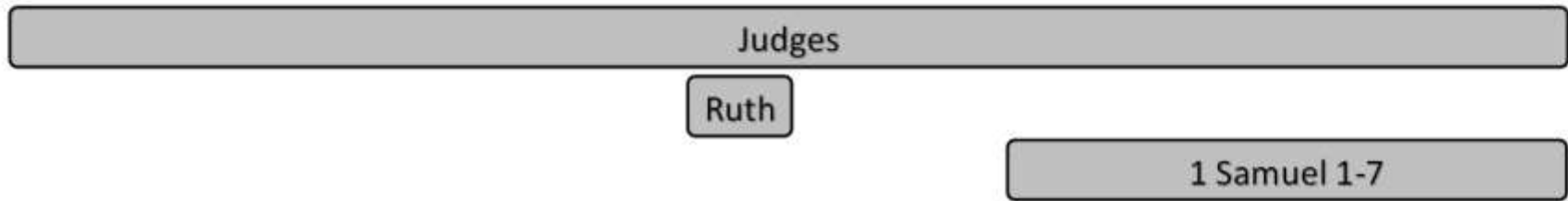
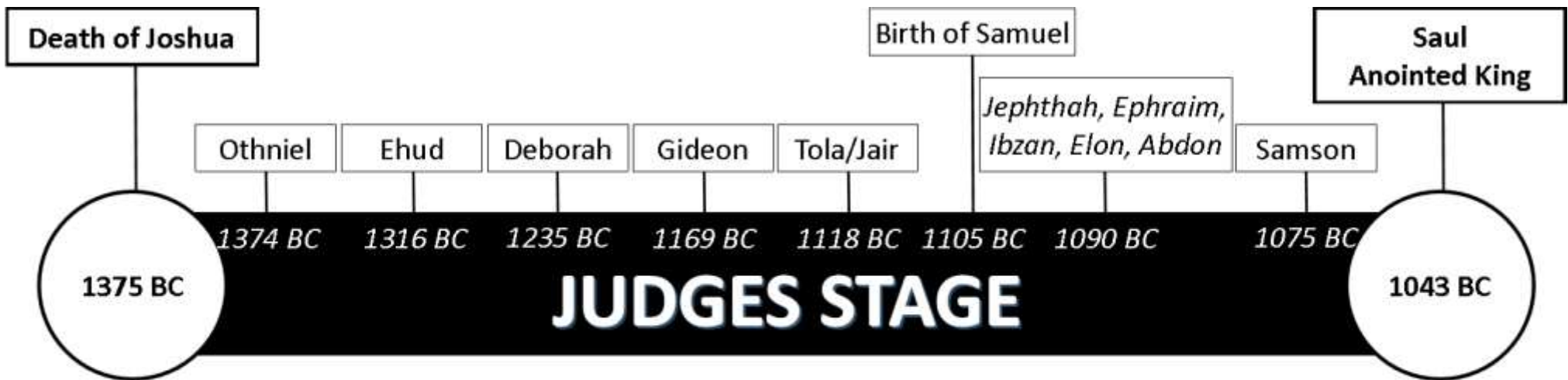
Numbers

Psalm 90

Deuteronomy



Joshua



Solomon's Death/
Kingdom Divided

Assyria
Conquers Israel

Elijah

Elisha

863 BC

851 BC

722 BC

Northern Kingdom of Israel

931 BC

DIVIDED KINGDOM STAGE

Southern Kingdom of Judah

586 BC

790 BC

Uzziah Is King

605 BC

597 BC

1st Stage 2nd Stage 3rd Stage

Babylon
Conquers Judah

1 Kings 12-22

2 Kings

2 Chronicles 10-36

Joel
(835)

Jonah
(760)

Isaiah
(740-680)

Nahum
(650)

Jeremiah
(627-580)

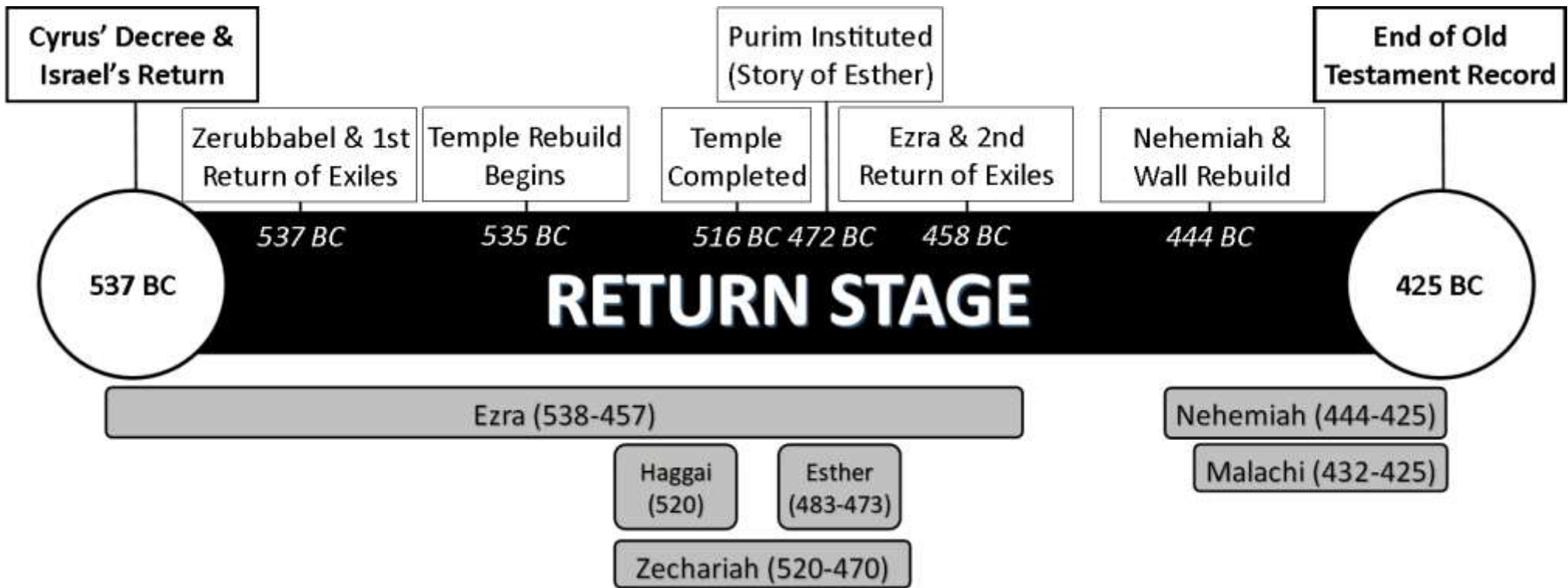
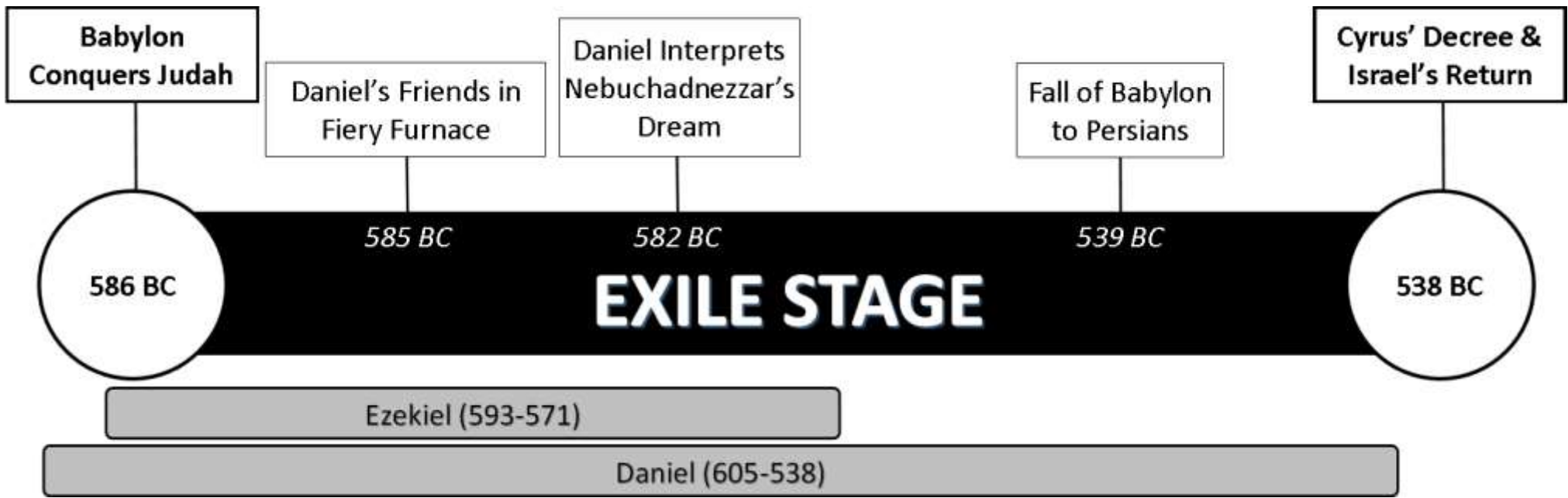
Lamentations
(588)

Obadiah
(845)

Hosea
(755-710)

Zephaniah
(630-625)

Psalms
74, 79



A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

How Did Genesis Originate?

As with every book of the Bible, Genesis was written under the direction of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21). The question, then, is exactly how did the Holy Spirit direct the origination of Genesis? Amid a crowded field of speculation, two major theories have risen to the top:

- _____ **Hypothesis**. Most liberal and secular scholars suggest that during the period of Israel's history from around the time of King Hezekiah to that of Ezra the Scribe, a number of unknown Jewish writers and editors compiled and modified several old legends and traditions. These stories were not transmitted only by their Israeli ancestors but also by the Egyptians, Babylonians, and others.
 - _____ (@3000 BC) – Also known as *The Seven Tablets of Creation*, this is the Babylonian creation epic that tells the story of the great god Marduk's victory over the forces of chaos and his establishment of order at the creation of the world. The story features a great battle between gods Marduk and Tiamat that results in the creation of the Earth and mankind. The storm god Marduk is ultimately declared a champion, which enables him to rule over the other gods and become the chief god in the Babylonian religion. Marduk uses Tiamat's body to form the sky and the earth. He forms the great Mesopotamian rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, from the tears in her eyes. Finally, he forms mankind from the blood of Tiamat's son and spouse, Kingu, in order for them to serve the gods.
 - _____ (@2750 BC) – Written on twelve stone tablets, it was composed in the form of a poem. The main figure is Gilgamesh, who actually may have been an historical person, who lived during the first dynasty of Uruk. The story offers an account of a universal flood with significant parallels to the Flood of Noah's day.

This collection of stories became what is known as the Book of Genesis. In addition, these anonymous Jewish writers and editors allowed the idea that this eclectic array of legends and traditions came down from Moses.

- This hypothesis is also known as the _____ Hypothesis, each letter representing a supposed writer of one of the portions:
- “_____ Document”: Dated at @850 BC and marked by the use of the divine name Jehovah.
 - “_____ Document”: Dated at @750 BC and marked by the use of the name Elohim.
 - “_____ Document”: Dated at @620 BC and believed to be a further editorial emendation of the first documents, as well as containing most of the Book of Deuteronomy.

- “_____ Document”: Dated at @500 BC and represents supposed revisions by a group of Jewish priests.

Support for this hypothesis comes from what are believed to be peculiarities of language and style, references to customs and cultures, and other internal evidences. The underlying assumption here is the basic evolutionary concept of human development. Simply put, adherents of this theory believe that humankind had not evolved to the state of culture described in Genesis until much later than the time of Moses.

Most of the evolutionary presuppositions have been proven either unreliable or outright false by modern archaeological discoveries:

- There is no question that writing was practiced widely, in many forms, and long before the time of Moses.
- Archaeologists now affirm that the culture described in Genesis (at least from the time of Abraham and beyond) is consistent with the eyewitness records from those times.

- _____ *of Patriarchal* _____ *by Moses.*ⁱ

The tradition of both the Jewish scribes and early Christians subscribes to Moses as the author of Genesis. It is the first book of what is called the Pentateuch among non-Jewish scholars, the others being Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. All of them together form one book called the *Torah*, or Law of Moses, among the Jews.

➤ **Luke 24:27**

Assuming Moses is the author still leaves the question of how he received and transmitted the text of Genesis. To that question, there appear to be three different possibilities (all through the guidance of the Holy Spirit):

- Moses received it by _____ from God.
- Moses received it all by _____, passed down over the centuries from one generation to the next.
- Moses collected _____ of these oral traditions and compiled them into a final form known as Genesis.

Among these options, the most viable is the third, that ***Moses collected, compiled, and formatted written accounts of oral traditions to form the Book of Genesis.*** There are a couple of reasons for accepting this view:

- 1) While all of these suggestions are consistent with the common belief of Mosaic authorship and the doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration, _____ *can only be found to the extent it would have taken to form Genesis in the third option.*

- 2) *Of the 200+ references to Genesis found in the New Testament, _____ ever states that Moses was the actual author.* This is especially significant since Moses is mentioned by name at least 80 times, and about 25 of them refer to specific passages attributed to Moses in the other books of the Torah.

The Compilation of Patriarchal Records

It is my position that Moses compiled and edited earlier written records that had been handed down through oral tradition from one generation to the next. In other words, Adam, Noah, Shem, Terah, and others each wrote down an individual account of events that they heard and which occurred in their lifetime. These records were preserved until they finally came into Moses' possession. To provide the historical backdrop for the establishment of the infant nation of Israel, Moses selected those accounts that were relevant to his Spirit-led purpose, added his own explanations, comments, and transitional sections, and finally compiled them into the form now known as the Book of Genesis. It is suggested that glimpses of these original documents that were passed down can still be seen in Genesis now, particularly through the key phrase: "These are the generations of ...". The term "generation" (Hebrew, *toledoth*) essentially means "origins" or by extension "record of origins." If this is correct, then Genesis can be divided into ten parts:

- 1) Heavens & Earth – Genesis 2:4
- 2) Adam – Genesis 5:1
- 3) Noah – Genesis 6:9
- 4) Sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, & Japheth – Genesis 10:1
- 5) Shem – Genesis 11:10
- 6) Terah – Genesis 11:27
- 7) Ishmael – Genesis 25:12
- 8) Isaac – Genesis 25:19
- 9) Esau (Edom) – Genesis 36:1
- 10) Jacob (Israel) – Genesis 37:2

ⁱ Information that make up much of this section comes from Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 25-27.