

Material:

A. Ancient Religions:

- Religions rule- priests and king together rule cities, theocracy
- All ancient religions- polytheistic (multiple gods)
- All ancient societies had temples for gods
- All ancient societies have local gods which tend to have specific portfolios/power (rain, wisdom, thunder, wind, sun, moon, natural forces, fire, fertility etc.) Idols usually represented these gods.
- Jews- unique because monotheistic, believed in invisible G-d w/o idols. Temple- same as any other religious temple at that time just w/o idols
- Marduk- main Babylonian god

B. Hammurabi and his Code:

- Empire- powerful entity that uses coercion to exert control over other entities
- Hammurabi- King of Babylon, united Mesopotamia under rule
- Hammurabi- created first code of laws- Hammurabi's code- black basalt stele written in Akkadian cuneiform script, 282 laws in it.
- Many he wanted to publicize laws, maybe wanted to establish new laws as they came up
- United ppl with same laws
- People were culturally connected because of code

C. Phoenicians:

- Based in Lebanon
- Control trade all over Mediterranean Sea
- Develop new colors in dyes (red blue, Tyrian purple), have control over cypress (strong insect repelling rotting resistant) and cedar (smell repels moths)
- Develop new alphabet- each symbol is equivalent to a sound. Hebrew, Greek, Latin, English, alphabets sprout from Phoenician alphabet
- Colony- Carthage- most famous, later create own empire

D. Israel and Archaeology:

- Why matters- Minimalists/Maximalists
- 2 ends Judaism spectrum- Bible Minimalists (bible should be ignored, only true if you have insanely good proof in which you are forced to say that it is true) and Bible
- Maximalists (bible is true, only reason not to believe it if there is evidence that clearly shows that it's false)
- Specific examples of archaeology interpreted differently by these different perspectives.
Examples:
- Finding in City- no pig bones in trash heap. Minimalist- chose not to eat pig. Maximalist- biblical, keeping kosher
- Merneptah Stele- first mentioning of Israel. Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah says fought against Israelites. This is court history, still evidence.
- Tel Dan Stele- found in Tel Dan. From Aramean king, says was fighting against Israel and Judah, king from Judah from Beit David (minimalists- says Beit Dod, not David)
- Mesha/Moabite Stele- found in Jordan, also says fought Beit David

E. Solomon's Kingdom:

- Solomon- Mid 900s BCE
- Built temple
- Built larger temple
- Great diplomat
- Many wives
- Idol worshiper
- Forced labor from Israelites
- Tanach may "knock down" Solomon b/c court history about G-d: According to Tanach,

Solomon's kingdom breaks up b/c G-d is angry. actually- people upset at high taxes and slavery, and Rehoboam (Solomon's son) didn't listen → kingdom splitting up

- Split up into two kingdoms- Israel and Judah

F. Israel and Judah:

- Kingdom of North/Israel-stronger
- Kingdom of South/Judah-weaker

Encounter w/ Assyria:

- Assyria offers vassal state to both kingdoms while sweeping down through Syria and Lebanon, both agree
- Israel then rebels, loses, becomes puppet kingdom
- When at war w/Israel, Judah asks for help from Assyria, Assyria destroys Israel/transmigrated people. Judah benefits- most Israelites come to Judah after destruction (Jerusalem's population- 4x)
- Judah then rebels, initially Assyria succeeds in city after city, besieging (verb-lay siege) cities. Ex- Lachish- 2nd largest in Judea, completely wiped out and destroyed, burned to the ground (Assyrian art)
- Assyrian siege on Jerusalem- bible says that they withdrew siege due to angel who fought them causing them to withdraw and that G-d was the cause of Sennacherib's death. Sennacherib's prism says that they received bribes to withdraw and 15 years later he was killed by his sons in temple. These could both be correct, depends on perspective, both court histories. Assyrians didn't completely destroy Jerusalem, there probably was a problem with their army, the prophecy came true, Sennacherib did get killed by his sons, Assyrians were destroyed (Sennacherib's prism- 22,000 prisms at Nineveh, good at dating astronomically).

Encounter w/ Babylon:

- Judah fights Babylon, loses, becomes puppet state, Babylonian exile
- Judah fights Babylon again, gets destroyed along with temple and Jerusalem, more exile
- Questions/Concerns for exiled Judahites: where do I live?, what do I do for a living?, do we keep our religion going? (will it be allowed, how do we practice w/o temple, is G-d here in Babylon) after being exiled-is there a G-d? Does G-d care anymore?, how do you live in a foreign land?, will I return?
- Answers- Jeremiah 29: 1-14- live in the cities that you were exiled to, live as substantial farmers, have kids, keep on practicing (pray for your communities, don't listen to the religion there- maintain faith, practice religion there, pray to me instead of going to temple-you will be heard and answered, you will be returned after 70 years, stay and you will be rewarded).
- Prayer is a big shift because before this exile, mostly all you would do was give sacrifices. Now anyone can pray in anywhere they want to anytime. G-d becomes personal, part of your identity. This is the shift from Israelites/Judahites to Jews.
- Ezra- redacts Jewish history/law, redacts (assembled) the Torah together. He also changes the script of the Torah, writes it in Aramaic script (ktav ashuri)

Encounter w/ Persia:

- In book of Ezra, says Cyrus made declaration that he liked G-d and to rebuild the temple- possible writing to every religion, possibly not. This declaration shows that G-d is with Cyrus, and G-d's will is to have him as emperor - trying to gain their support. The Jews then start to rebuild the temple under Cyrus. When Cambyses comes to power, they are forced to stop building → Samaritan nation (nation that says that they are real Bnei Yisrael) says that they are real Jewish Nation, Cambyses allows them to build and makes Jews stop. Darius the Great then allows them to finish in 515 BCE. They build Temple 2.0 (will be renovated, will be added to).
- In book of Esther, after temple II built, reveals about the Persians:
- Ahasuerus- unknown Persian king
- The Persian empire stretched from India to Ethiopia, had "Satrapies" (provinces)- ruled by satraps (governor)

- Persians had bureaucracy- way of running and working for government (bureaucrats)
- Shushan- other name for one of Persian capitals- Susa. Other Persian Capital- Persepolis
- Ahasuerus made feast for bureaucrats and governors
- Ahasuerus asks eunuchs, not advisors, for advice. Eunuchs- men with cut off testicles- no distractions, can't have kids. Another hidden thing- Ahasuerus had all of the women in the "beauty pageant" sleep with him, whoever he chose would be his wife and whoever he didn't chose would be concubines. --that's why Esther so afraid not to be wife, to go to King to ask for Feast.
- Haman- strange, not eunuch. Persians confused when Haman's decree occurs → shows how Jews were accepted in Persian society, this shows really the first instance in which we see antisemitism, first time being attacked because they are weird and different (maybe Amalek), first time someone says that they should go against Jews because they are different.
- Jews were scattered all over Persian Empire b/c most of the Jews in the Persian Empire didn't to return to Judea when the temple was rebuilt (Esther- post rebuilding of Temple II)
- Important Prophets- Jeremiah, Ezra

G. Assyria:

- Based in Mesopotamia, capital- Nineveh
- Strong force- revolutionary iron forging (iron- stronger and easier to melt) from Hittites.
- First group to build roads- easier for trading, transport, transport armies, transport supplies, send messages easier.

Process of Destruction:

- Assyrians ask different countries to be Vassal States- state/person that owes royalty to upper state that controls you. Vassals owe loyalty, soldiers, taxes to Assyrians, but they still have their place.
- If a vassal state rebels against a big empire (Assyria) and loses, they turn into a Puppet Kingdom- king is replaced (new king, maybe same family) but has to follow orders from Assyria, and Assyria occupies your kingdom. You don't want Assyria to occupy your kingdom b/c they kill ppl, steal stuff, and rape people- dangerous.
- If you are a puppet kingdom and you rebel you will become destroyed- kill people, transmigration (spread citizens all over empire- don't know language, religion, etc. of new country)
- Kings- Sennacherib

H. Babylonia:

- City of Babylon rebels, creates Neo-Babylonian Empire. Neo- new/renew/revive. Revive art, culture, religion, literature. Not going to be the same, new.
- They don't destroy you when you rebel, they take your leaders (ex- war leaders, artists, thinkers, rulers, entertainers) from other civilizations and bring them to Babylon → making their civilization better. We use some of their new revolutions today:
- Ex- number/time system. Numbers- have ones column, tens column, and 60s columns--- time system that we still use today. Was created by people who knew how to do these kinds of maths who were brought to Babylon from their old civilization.
- Kings- Nebuchadnezzar, Nabopolassar, Hammurabi

I. Persia:

- While Assyrian and Babylonian empires- based in Fertile Crescent, Persian- significantly larger
- Cyrus the Great- expands empire east and west. He rules in a very different way, which we can see from these sources:
- Jewish- Ezra 1- letter written to Jews saying that Cyrus likes G-d, G-d is with him, and to go rebuild the temple. It's written in the perspective of the Jews, meaning that G-d, add Cyrus make this declaration saying that he likes the G-d of the Jews. It is possible that Cyrus is writing letters to every group/religion (insert God here) to go home and make your temples, but also could've written Marduk and the Torah interpreted that as G-d. This letter shows that G-d is with Cyrus, and G-d's will is to have him as emperor- trying to gain Jews' support.

- Jews start Rebuilding under Cyrus, when Cambyses comes to power, Jews forced to stop building---Samaritan nation (nation that claims they are the real Bnei Yisrael) claim that they are the real Jewish nation. Cambyses allows Samaritans to rebuild and makes the Jews stop. Darius the Great then allows them to finish the temple in 515 BCE- Temple 2.0 (Will be renevated, will be added to)
- Kings- Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius I

Read over sources/text studies, flash cards, and test specifics.

