

**Aim:** What were the historical circumstances and geographic context for the founding of Judaism?

**HW:** p. 41-43 in paragraph form.

**Objective: How did Judaism form?**

- **Identify** who the Ancient Israelites were and where they lived.

**Introduction**

→ **Directions:** Examine the video below, then fill out the chart with what you see, think, and wonder.

The Israelites were a group of people who lived in **Middle East**. They established a kingdom starting around 1030 BCE-1020 BCE that lasted until it was conquered by the Assyrian empire in 722 BCE. The Israelites were the first people to practice a religion that became known as **Judaism**.



Watch [IsraelPalestine for Critical Thinkers: #1 Ancient Roots](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sG0YeAX6MFk) (start-2:33).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sG0YeAX6MFk>

<p><b>See</b></p> <p>List three things you <i>see</i> in the video.</p>	<p><b>Think</b></p> <p>Based on your observations, who do you <i>think</i> the Ancient Israelites are and what Ancient Israel was like.</p>	<p><b>Wonder</b></p> <p>Write two questions you have about the video.</p>
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- Pillars
- Statues
- deserts
- Mediterranean Sea
- Mountains
- Valleys
- Jordan River

- farmed all the time
- difficult to travel + to get resources.

- What type of food did they eat?
- What did they do in their free time?
- What resources do they need have collect?
- What language did they speak?
- What do they do when they are sick?
- How did they come up with the names for their land?

## Geographic Context

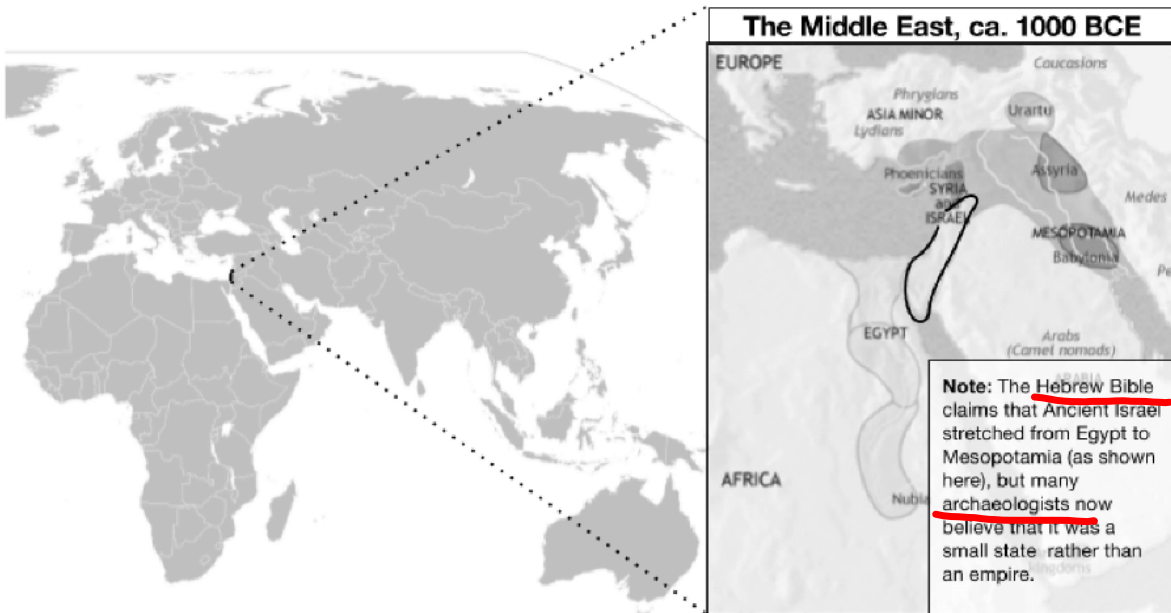


Think Like a Geographer



Contextualize

→ Directions: Use the text and maps below to answer the questions that follow.



Timemap of World History [www.timemaps.com](http://www.timemaps.com). Image used from webpage [Middle East 1000 BC](http://Middle East 1000 BC) accessed 6/21/2017

<p>1. Based on the map above, which region of the world was Ancient Israel in?</p> <p><i>Middle East</i></p>	<p>2. Describe the relative location of Ancient Israel. Use three other locations to describe where Ancient Israel was.</p> <p><i>South of Syria SE of Europe W of Mesopotamia</i></p>
<p>3. Based on the video, what geographic features were located in Ancient Israel?</p> <p><i>Mts, deserts, rivers, valleys</i></p>	<p>4. Based the video and on your knowledge of Early River Valley Civilizations, why might the Ancient Israelites have settled in the location identified on the map?</p> <p><i>settled by river for water to farm + for transportation.</i></p>

5. Based on the "Note" in the map, identify two sources that were used to create this map. What different information do the sources provide about the location and size of Ancient Israel?

- Hebrew Bible
- Artifacts.

Objective:

**How do we know what we know about Ancient Israel? How is our knowledge limited?**

- **Describe** what we know about Ancient Israel.
- **Explain** how our knowledge is limited.

**Introduction**

→ **Directions:** Respond to the question below.



Predict

If you wanted to know more about Ancient Israel and the Ancient Israelites, what types of evidence would you consult?

- Hebrew Bible  
- Artifacts

→ **Directions:** Read about each of the following sources and answer the questions that follow.



**Source**

Much of what we know about Ancient Israel and the Israelites comes from **Judaism's sacred text**, the **Hebrew Bible**, also known as the **Torah**. Christians know the Torah as the "**Old Testament**." Many Jewish people believe that the words in the Torah came from the God they believe in and as a result, are true.



**Corroborate**

**Historians** examine the Torah as a source. They investigate how it was created, who wrote it, when they wrote it, and any bias the writers might have had. Historians try to **corroborate** the information in the Torah using **archaeological evidence** from where the Israelites lived and the records left by other civilizations at the time.

### The Torah (Hebrew Bible)

The Torah consists of five books titled Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It includes an **origin story** of the world in which the god, called Yahweh, created everything for humans. The books tell of God's agreement with Abraham to favor the Jewish people (identified as the covenant), describes the Israelites' escape from slavery in Egypt led by Moses, and their long journey to the "promised land." The Torah also contains the Ten Commandments, and other lessons on how to live one's life according to God.



Two men reading the Torah which is often written as a scroll as it would have been in Ancient Israel.

[ReadingOfTheTorah.jpg](#) by Roylindman is published under the [CC BY-SA 3.0 Unported](#) license

Traditionally, it is believed that the five books of the Torah were written by Moses, but because of many repetitions, inconsistencies, and a description of Moses' death, many scholars believe that the Torah was compiled by multiple writers, or groups of writers, between the 10th and 6th centuries BCE.

Depending on the perspective with which you read the Torah, it can be a historical text (or primary source) which provides clues about how the Israelites lived or it can be a religious text which provides rules to govern people's spiritual lives.

1. What can historians learn from the Torah?

- how the Israelites lived,  
- what they believed!

2. What limits does the Torah have as a historical source?

- inconsistencies  
- written by many different people

### Archaeological Evidence

For the last 150 year archaeologists interested in the Bible have combed the Middle East looking for evidence to corroborate the stories in the Torah.

Archaeologists have yet to find evidence of Abraham, Moses, or the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt in the records and remains left by the Egyptians or other civilizations, but other discoveries have been made.

#### The Merneptah Stele

An inscription on a stele (large stone monument) that lists all of the areas conquered by the Pharaoh Merneptah around 1206 BCE mentions people called the "Israelites." This shows that the Israelites lived in the area that the Torah says they lived at around the time it claims they were there.



To the left: A section of the Merneptah Stele.

Below: A drawing of the inscription on line 27 of the stele that reads, "Israel is laid waste, his seed is not"



Citation [1](#)  
Citation [2](#)

#### How large was the kingdom of Israel?

The Torah states that Israel was a large kingdom that ruled from Egypt to Mesopotamia and was ruled by the kings named Saul, David, and Solomon. In 1993, archaeologists discovered an inscription which dates about 840 B.C.E. that mentions a "House of David," which supports the Torah's claim. In addition, the Torah describes a construction project that Solomon undertook to erect gates in the Israelite towns. Archaeologists have found gates matching the description in three settlements and dated those gates in the 10th-century BCE. These two pieces of evidence suggest that the kingdom of Israel existed and that David and Solomon were rulers of it.



Other evidence though suggests that the kingdom was not nearly as large and powerful as the Hebrew Bible claims. Most of the Israelite settlements found in the Middle East were small communities, not large cities and not spread over as large an area as the books of the Torah suggest.

3. What can historians learn from archeological evidence?

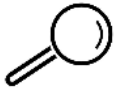
4. What limits does archeological evidence have as a historical source?

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FA

**SQ 23:** How do we know what we know about Ancient Israel? How is our knowledge limited?

→ **Directions:** Based on what you have learned, complete the task below.



Source



Corroborate

Part I

**Describe** what we know about Ancient Israel. **Explain** how our knowledge is limited.



FA

SQ 22: How did Judaism form?

→ **Directions:** Based on what you have learned, complete the task below.



Contextualize

Part I

Identify who the Ancient Israelites were and where they lived.



Think Like a  
Geographer

