

History 1010: Western Civilization to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

Prof. Lester • Fall 2010

Lecture 3: *The Ancient Near East: The Hebrews and Rise of the Persian Empire*

1. *The Levant Coast, 3000-1000 B.C.E. – Phoenicians, Canaanites and Hebrews*
2. *Hebrews and their History: Small States, Enduring Concepts*
3. *The Religion of the Hebrews – Evolving Beliefs*

*Coda: The Rise of the Persian Empire, 1000-500 B.C.E.*

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- A. Geography & Trade
- B. The Phoenicians and the Alphabet, ca. 1600

### **2. *Hebrews and their History: Small States, Enduring Concepts***

- A. The Hebrews and the Tribes of Abraham
- B. Kingdoms of Israel and Judah
- C. The First Dispersion of the Jews

### **3. *The Religion of the Hebrews – Evolving Beliefs***

- A. The Texts: The Hebrew Bible
- B. The Jewish Covenant and Hebrew Law
- C. Hebrew Monotheism
- D. Ethical Monotheism

### ***CODA: A Succession of Empires and the Rise of Persia Kingship, 1000-500 BC***

- A. Neo-Assyrians, Neo-Babylonians
- B. Persian Kingship – A Looming Empire

## The Ancient Near East, ca. 3000 -1200 B.C.E.



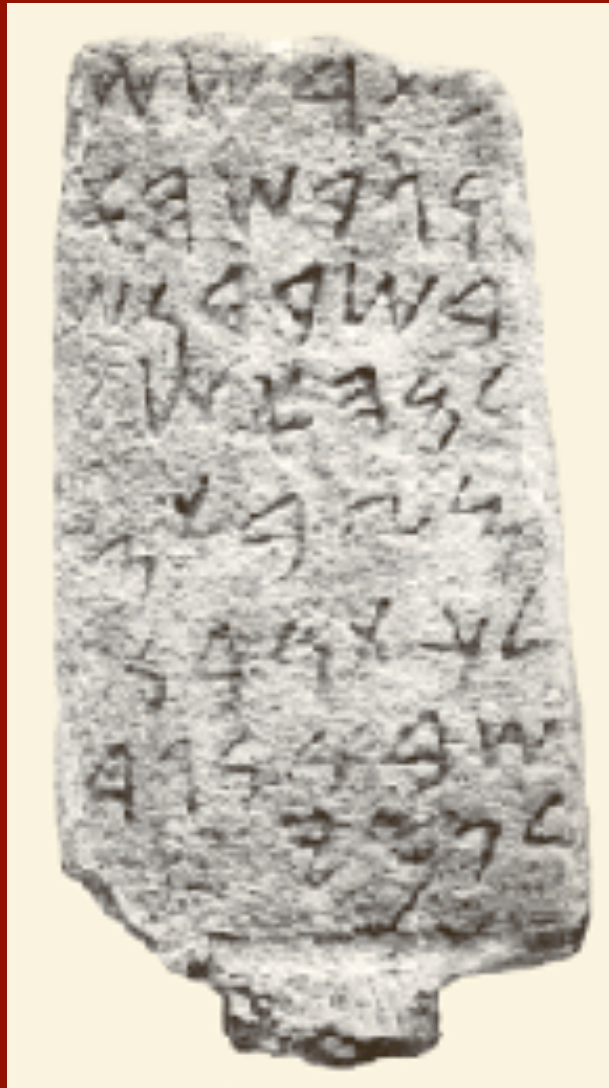
## Phoenician Sea Routes and Colonies ca. 900-600 BCE



Early depiction of a Phoenician Ship that navigated the Mediterranean



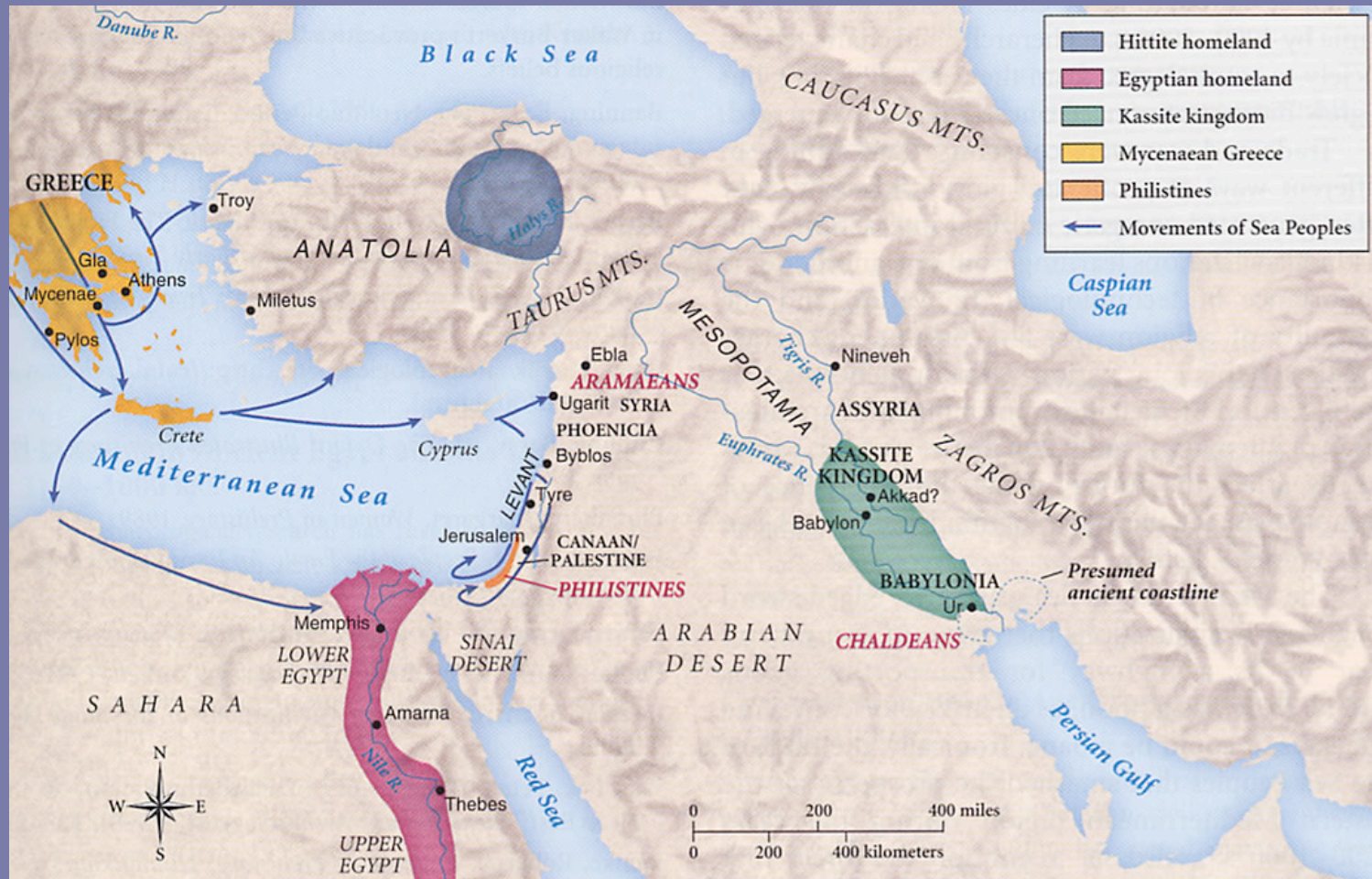
Example of the Phoenician alphabet on sandstone, ca. 1500 BCE



## The Written Word: Languages

- Cuneiform – ca. 3100 B.C.E., Sumerian, first written language, on clay tablets.
- Hieroglyphics – ca. 3100 B.C.E., system of writing developed in Egypt, “sacred letters,” employed around 700 pictorial forms.
- Demotic script, a cursive script also employed in Egypt for everyday documents.
- Phoenician Alphabet – ca. 1600 B.C.E. – one letter = one sound.
- Greek Alphabet – ca. 700 B.C.E.

# The Ancient World ca. 1000 B.C.E.



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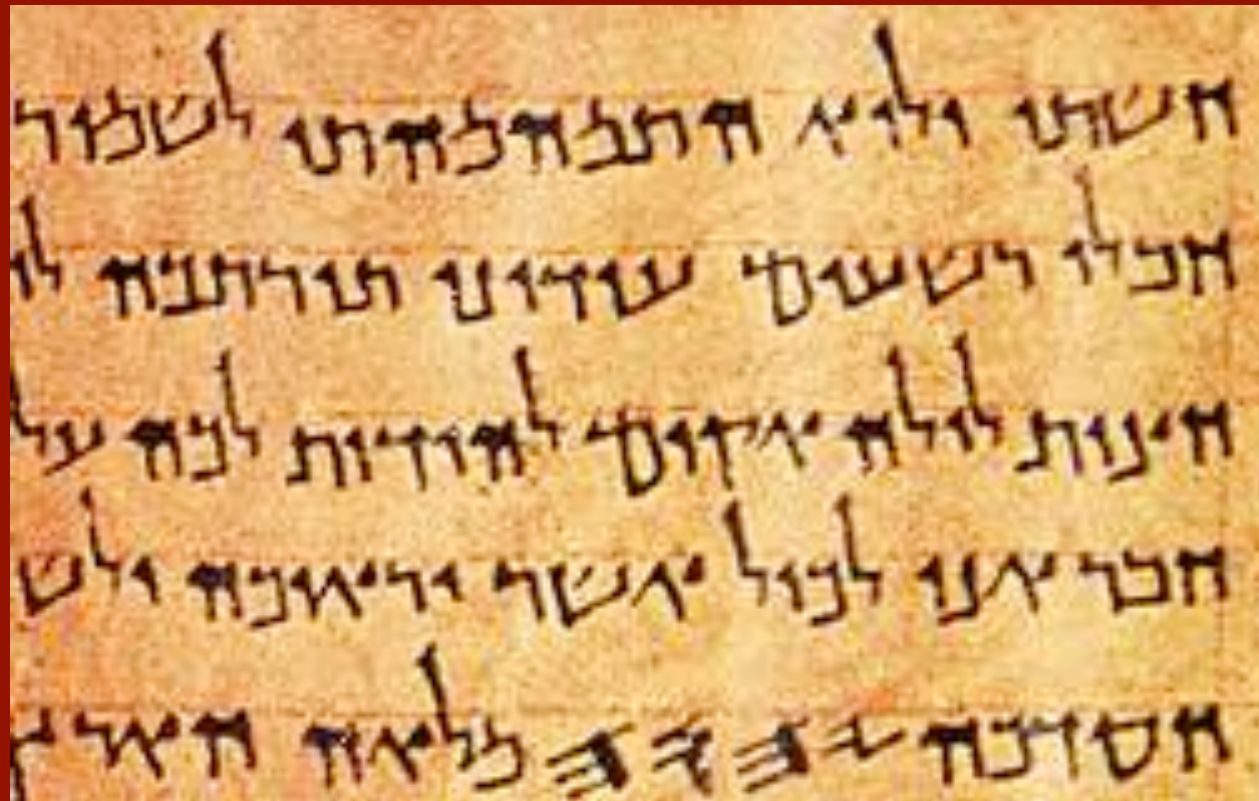
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Example of early Hebrew Script – originated, from the Phoenician ca. 1200  
BCE



## **The Hebrew Bible:**

**1) The Torah:** The first 5 Books, sometimes called the “Books of Moses” The Greeks referred to them as the Pentateuch (*Penta* meaning five) == the first five books of the Bible. Also called “the teachings” and ‘the laws” - included texts of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

**2) The Prophets:** Contains the historical books – including the book of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles == those texts that tell of the unfolding relationship between Yahweh, the Hebrew God, and His People. They also include the texts of the Greater Prophets, including the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, as well as the Lesser Prophets such as Amos and Micah.

**3) The Writings:** --A catchall designation or term for the poetic material such as the Psalms (attributed to King David); the Canticles, like the Song of Solomon, and the beautiful, descriptive, and moving literature including that of Proverbs and Wisdom – which has a long an enduring resonance throughout the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic poetic tradition.

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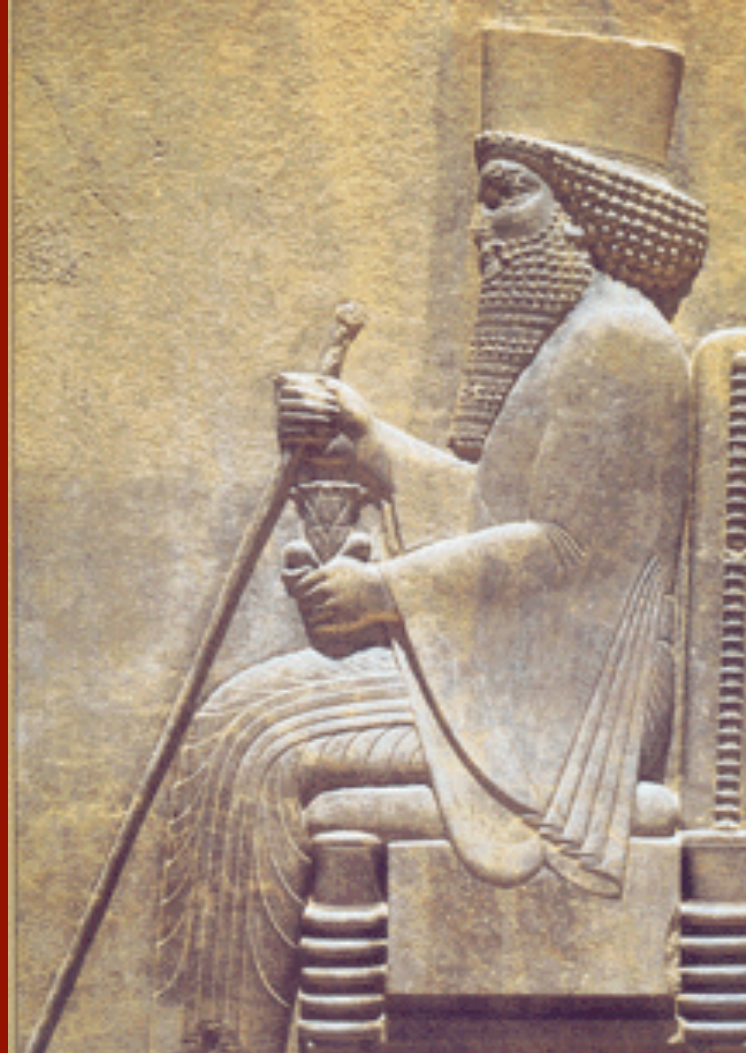
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## The Persian Empire ca. 490 B.C.E. – from Thrace to India



**Darius the Great – 522-486 B.C.E.**

Ruler of the Persian Empire, reigned during its height



## Palace of Persepolis, began under Darius the Great



## The Persian Empire ca. 490 B.C.E. – from Thrace to India

