

First of all, I'd like to welcome you all to this presentation.

Today, I will be talking about a hypothesis that I have developed on the **Historical Origins of the Bible**.

[0:15]

[Total Presentation Time: 45 minutes]

Primary Focus – The Hexateuch

Key Questions:

- When?
- Where?
- Who?
- How?
- Why?

Rodger Roberts

My primary focus is on the the first six books of the Bible, which are known as the **Hexateuch**, as these early books contain many of the clues about the Bible's origins, some buried deep within the texts, while a few others are hiding in plain sight.

In this presentation, I will try to answer the following **Five Questions**:

When did the books of the Hexateuch first emerge?

Where were they composed?

Who wrote them?

How did the religious ideology of the Bible evolve?

and

Why was the Hexateuch created?

To do this, I will use the following **Agenda** ...

[0:45]

Agenda

- Actual History of the Region (1550 to 600 BC)¹
- Emergence of Proto-Biblical Source Documents
- **The Biblical Exodus_B**¹
- **Hypothetical Origins of the Bible**¹
- **Evolution of Monotheistic Yahwism**¹
- Conclusion

Note 1: **Biblical references are shown in green** and **Hypothetical references in yellow** to distinguish them from historically attested events which are shown in white.

Rodger Roberts

I will begin by discussing the **Actual History of the Region** in the period between about **1550 and 600 BC**.

I will then describe the **Emergence of the Proto-Biblical Source Documents**, the early documents that later became the Hexateuch.

Next, I will examine the **Biblical Exodus_B**. I note that Biblical references in this presentation are shown in green and hypothetical references in yellow to distinguish them from historical references, which are shown in white. I also note that subscripts are used to help one keep track of the discussion, with a capital "**B**" subscript to show a **Biblical reference**, a capital "**H**" to indicate a **historical reference**, and a small "**h**" to designate a **hypothetical reference**.

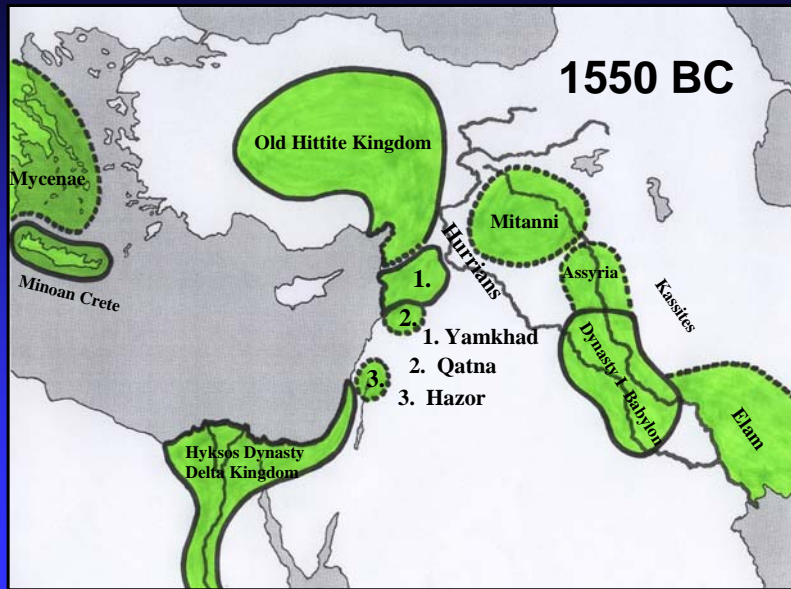
I will then outline the **Hypothesis on the Origins of the Bible** that I have developed.

I will also briefly discuss the **Evolution of Monothetheistic Yahwism**, the theo-political ideology implicit in the Hexateuch. I do not use the term "Judaism," because, at this early stage, the embryonic form of the religion had not yet evolved into what we now understand by that term.

I will then **Conclude** my presentation with a brief summary of my findings.

[1:30]

Actual History of the Region – Political Boundaries in the Late Bronze Age – 1550 to 1200 BC



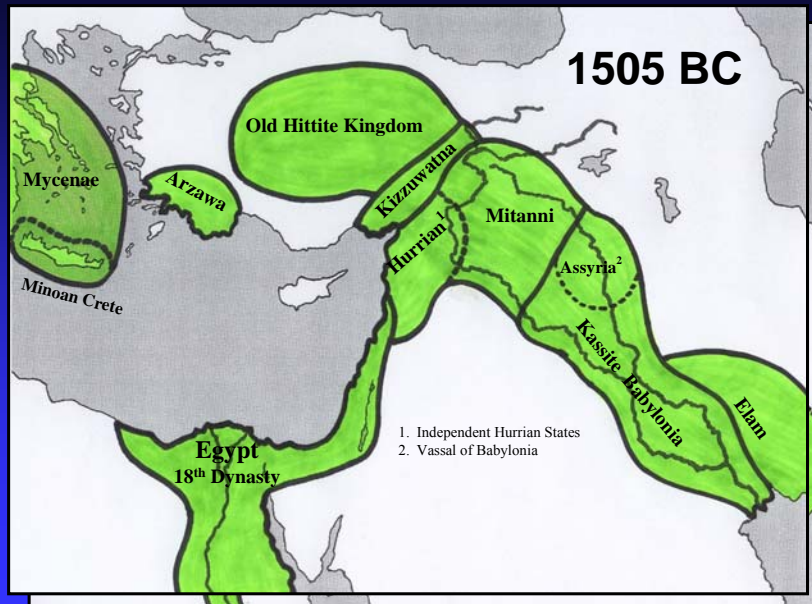
Rodger Roberts

In the next four historical maps, I will show the approximate political boundaries in the region in the Late Bronze Age, the period between about **1550 and 1200 BC**, which covers all of the traditional literary settings for the Biblical Exodus and the Biblical Conquest of Canaan 40 years later.

This first historical map shows the approximate spheres of influence in **1550 BC** when the Hyksos Dynasty ruled over Egypt. As can be seen, the Hyksos Delta Kingdom included the Southern Levant. Shortly thereafter, around 1545 BC, the princes of Thebes expelled the Hyksos Dynasty from the Nile Delta and established 18th Dynasty rule over all of Egypt.

[1:00]

Actual History of the Region – Political Boundaries

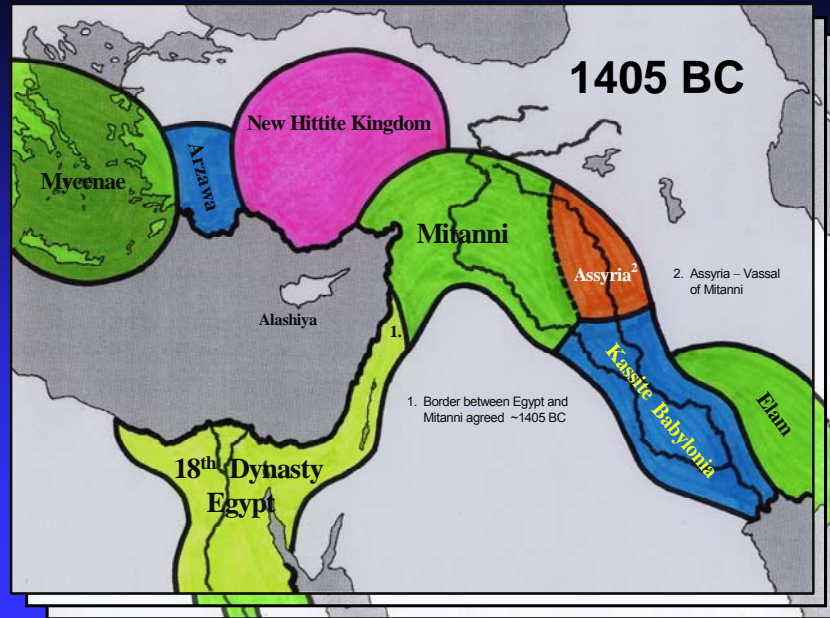


Rodger Roberts

By about **1505 BC**, Egyptian control extended over much of the Levant, the area along the Eastern Mediterranean coast, including all of the Southern Levant. This Egyptian control continued throughout the Late Bronze Age.

[0:15]

Actual History of the Region – Political Boundaries

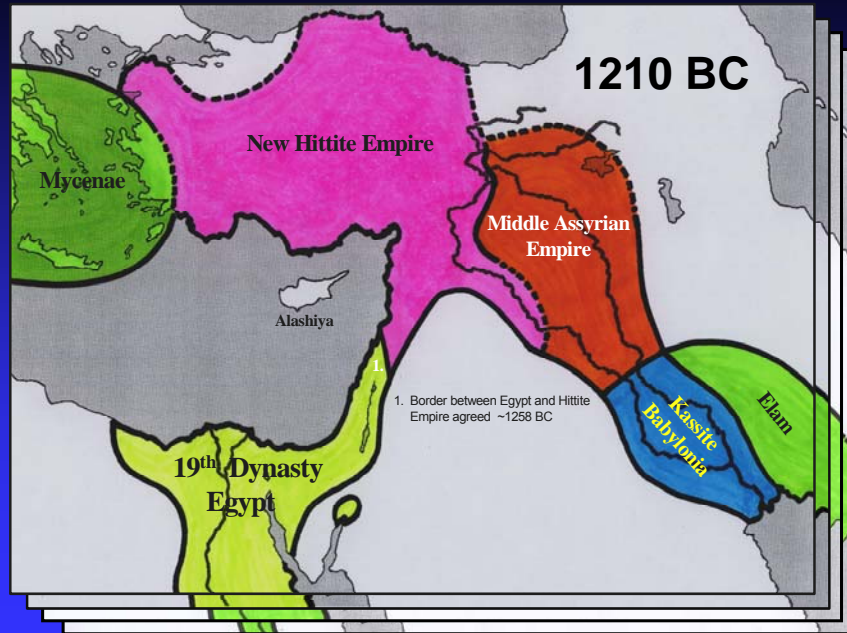


Rodger Roberts

1405 BC is one of the more popular literary settings for the biblical Conquest_B of Canaan. As can be seen, at that time, Egypt's historical north-eastern border was with Mitanni and it was located in the North-Central Levant.

[0:30]

Actual History of the Region – Political Boundaries



1210 BC is another popular literary setting for the biblical Conquest_B of Canaan. At that time, the historical border of Egypt was with the Hittite Empire and it was in the Central Levant and not at the Red Sea, as suggested in the Book of Exodus.

The key points to note from these four historical maps are that:

- (i) The Exodus, as described in the Bible, could not have occurred at any time during the Late Bronze Age because Egypt's border was not at the Red Sea; and
- (ii) The fleeing Israelites_B could not have escaped from Egyptian control by settling in the Promised Land because the Land of Canaan remained under Egyptian control throughout this period.

This situation prevailed until about **1150 BC** when Egypt abandoned its colony of Canaan.

[1:00]

Presentation
2018

Stele of Seti I from Bethshean in the Southern Levant – 1290 BC



Pharaoh in Canaan: The United Stele - Stele of
Seti I, commemorating a successful military
campaign against rebellious towns near Beth
Shean, 1290/80 BC. Beth Shean.
Cropped from Source Photo: Wikimedia
Commons. Author: Greg Boring
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:United_Steles_of_Seti_I_in_Canaan.jpg
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Rodger Roberts

This photograph is of a stele erected by the Egyptian pharaoh, **Seti I**, and is dated to **about 1290 BC**. It was found near **Bethshean in the Southern Levant**, at the site of an Egyptian military base and administrative center.

It provides clear evidence of Egyptian control over its colony of Canaan in the **13th century BC**.

[0:30]

Egyptian-Hittite Peace Treaty – 1258 BC

Egyptian Copy



Hieroglyphic text of the peace treaty between Ramses II and Hattusili III.
Source of Photo: Gudrun Meyer from de.wikipedia.org, 2007. Retrieved 2011-08-28.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramses%2CII%26Hattusili%2CIII>. Treaty
Licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International license](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)
(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).

Hittite Copy



Istanbul Archaeological Museum - Oriental pavilion. The tablet containing the Oldhittite treaty between the
Hittites and the Egyptians (1258 BC) - Picture by Giovanni Dall'Orto, May 28 2006.
Original and adapted from photo by Giovanni Dall'Orto, 2006.
Retrieved from Wikipedia, 2011-08-28.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramses%2CII%26Hattusili%2CIII>. Treaty
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Rodger Roberts

These two photographs show copies of the **Egyptian-Hittite Peace Treaty of 1258 BC**, which provide archaeological support for the border between Egypt and the Hittite Empire in the Central Levant in the 13th century BC.

The **Egyptian copy** on the left is inscribed in hieroglyphs on a wall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak at Thebes; and

The corresponding, and virtually identical, **Hittite copy**, on the right, is written in Akkadian cuneiform and is in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum.

[0:45]

Merneptah Stele – 1208 BC



Adapted by Rodger Roberts, 2011, from a base photograph by Author. Webscribe (Own work), 2003. Merneptah Stele known as the Israel stela (JE 31408) from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Base photo retrieved from Wikipedia on 2011.11.03. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merneptah_Stela. This image is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported \(CC BY-SA 3.0\) License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/). (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>) Permission is granted to anyone to copy, adapt, and/or distribute this image in accordance with the terms of such licence.

Rodger Roberts

This photo is of the **Merneptah Stele**, erected by the Egyptian Pharaoh, Merneptah, in about **1208 BC** to commemorate, among other things, his victory over a **people called, "Israel,"** in Egypt's colony of Canaan.

The reference to **Israel** is on the second to last line from the bottom and an enlarged rendering of this hieroglyphic inscription is shown on the right. The determinative to the left of the name, "**Israel,**" indicates a **people or tribe** rather than a **region, place, or kingdom**.

This stele, which is in the Cairo Museum, provides the **first extra-biblical reference** to a Southern Canaanite people called **Israel**.

It also provides further evidence of Egyptian control over the Southern Levant at that time.

[1:00]

Summary of Key Historical Events in 2nd Millennium BC

- Southern Levant under Egyptian Control 1500 – 1150 BC
- Philistine Invasion of Southern Levant – 1185 BC
- Egypt Vacated its Colony of Canaan – 1150 BC
- Cultural Continuity of Southern Canaanites in Central Hill Country between 12th and 9th Centuries BC
- This Precludes any Large Invasion by Outside Group
- No Evidence for any Exodus in 2nd Millennium BC in:
 - Egypt
 - Sinai
 - Southern Levant
- Conclusion: No Exodus-Type Event in 2nd Millennium BC

Rodger Roberts

I will now summarise the key historical events related to the Bible in the 2nd millennium BC, as follows:

The entire Southern Levant, including the Colony of Canaan, was under Egyptian control between about 1500 and 1150 BC.

The Philistines, a branch of the Sea Peoples from the Aegean, invaded the Southern Levant in about 1185 BC.

This eventually resulted in Egypt vacating its colony of Canaan in the Southern Levant around 1150 BC.

Archaeological evidence indicates that there was cultural continuity in the Southern Canaanite communities of the Central Hill Country throughout the 12th to 9th centuries BC.

This evidence precludes any large scale invasion of the Central Hill Country by an outside group like the biblical Israelites.

In addition, there is no evidence at all of any Exodus-type event in the 2nd millennium BC in:

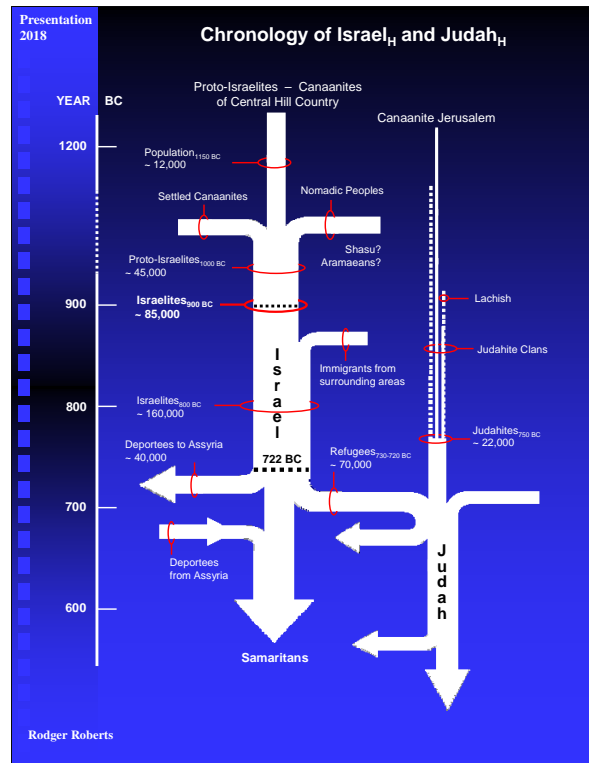
Egypt

The Sinai, or

The Southern Levant

The prevailing Conclusion among most modern biblical scholars, then, is that no Exodus or Conquest type event occurred in the 2nd millennium BC.

[1:00]



This is a chronology of the historical Israel_H and Judah_H between about 1200 and 600 BC, showing Israel's history on the left and Judah's on the right, based on the archaeological evidence, with particular reliance on the population studies of Prof. Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University.

As previously noted, the entire Southern Levant, including Egypt's Colony of Canaan, was under Egyptian control between about 1500 and 1150 BC.

The ancestors of the historical Israelites were the Canaanites of the Central Hill Country. For convenience, I refer to these early Canaanite ancestors as Proto-Israelites. About 1208 BC, the Egyptian pharaoh, Merneptah, encountered the People or Tribe of Israel in this general area and recorded the event on the Merneptah Stele.

Around 1150 BC, Egypt abandoned its Colony of Canaan. The population of the Proto-Israelites at that time was only about 12,000 people. Over the next 150 years the Proto-Israelites were joined by Canaanites from the settled areas and nomads, who may have included the Shasu and some Aramaeans. By 1000 BC the Proto-Israelite Population had risen to about 45,000.

The population in 900 BC was around 85,000. About that time, the Proto-Israelites formed the historical kingdom of Israel. Its first major king was Omri, who established his capital at Samaria. Israel became a reasonably powerful regional kingdom and attracted immigration from the surrounding areas. By 800 BC, its population had risen to about 160,000.

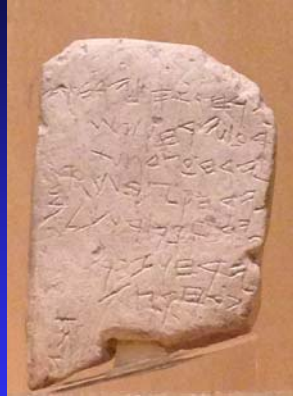
In the region of Judah, Canaanite Jerusalem was a tiny principality which dated back to the early 2nd millennium BC. Its population remained below about 2,000 throughout this early period. Around 900 BC, a second urban center emerged at Lachish. The Judahite clans in the rural areas continued to grow in number. By 750 BC, the population had risen to about 22,000. This is approximately when the small historical kingdom of Judah emerged.

The kingdom of Israel was destroyed by Assyria in about 722 BC and about 40,000 of its subjects were deported to other parts of the Assyrian Empire and replaced by foreigners. The resulting mixed population became known as the Samaritans.

Around this time about 70,000 Israelites fled south to the relative safety of of the kingdom of Judah.

Emergence of Proto-Biblical Source Documents Historical Date Range: 950 to 600 BC

Gezer Calender – 925 BC



Gezer calendar as displayed at the Israel Museum
Cropped from Source Photo: Wikimedia Commons. Author: oscarwhite
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gezer_calendar_in_Israel.jpg
Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.ru>

Ketef Hinom Silver Plaque – 600 BC



Русский: Серебряный свиток КИИ. Фото, подготовка, транскрипция
Adapted from Source Photo: Wikimedia Commons. Attribution: Tamar Shapira
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ketef_Hinom_22.jpg
The copyright holder of this file: Tamar Shapira; silver swayed to use it for any purpose, provided that the copyright holder is properly attributed. No additional restrictions, derivative work, commercial use, and all other use is permitted.

Rodger Roberts

We will now take a look at the emergence date of the **Proto-Biblical Source Documents**, which later evolved into the Bible's early books.

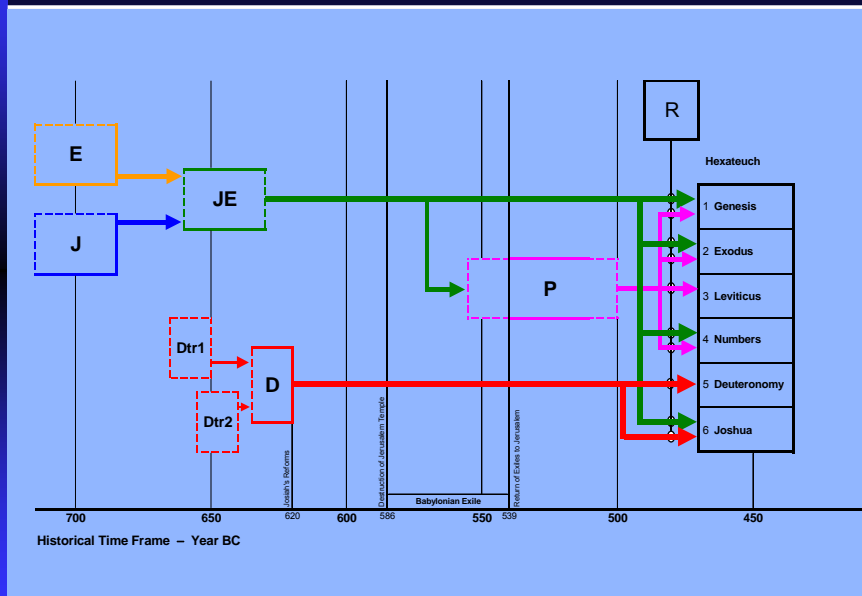
The photograph on the left, is of the **Gezer Calendar**, which is dated to about **925 BC**. It is the earliest archaeological evidence of the existence of the **paleo-Hebrew script**. Clearly, the Bible could not have been written in Hebrew before Hebrew became a written language and so this artefact allows us to infer the earliest date for the emergence of the **Proto-Biblical Source Documents**.

The photo on the right is of the **Ketef Hinom Silver Plaque**, found in a cave in **Jerusalem** and dated to about **600 BC**. It contains the first extra-biblical evidence of a passage from the Bible, in this case, a verse from the **Priestly Benediction**, in the **Book of Numbers**. The name, **YHWH**, in the paleo-Hebrew script, can be seen on the 6th line from the top.

So, from these two artefacts, we can narrow the range for the emergence of the **Proto-Biblical Source Documents** to the period between about **950 and 600 BC**.

[1:15]

Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis – Proto-Biblical Source Documents



Rodger Roberts

About 130 years ago, the German biblical scholar, **Julius Wellhausen**, identified similarities in the style of verses and the name used for the **Biblical Deity** in the Bible's early books and grouped such verses into **categories labelled E, J, D, P and R**.

These groupings became known as the **E (or Elohist-Source)**, in which God's name was **Elohim or El**; the **J (or Yahwist-Source)** which used **YHWH** (pronounced **Jehovah** in German or **Yahweh** in English) for the name of the Deity; the **D-Source (or Deuteronomic History)**; the **P (or Priestly-Source)**; and the **Redaction (or R-Source)**.

Wellhausen suggested that each **Source** had a different author(s) and was composed at a different time(s). His theory, known as **Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis**, has been updated in various forms and is now generally accepted by biblical scholars.

The **E and J Sources** were likely composed early in the **7th century BC**;

The **D-Source** in the mid **7th century BC**;

The **P-Source** was probably created towards the end of the **Babylonian Exile** and into the **Restoration Period**; and

The **R-Source** redactions likely occurred in the **5th century BC**.

An early form of the composite **Hexateuch** was probably in existence by about **450 BC**, which date approximately coincides with the emergence of **Judaism**.

[1:45]

Emergence of Proto-Biblical Source Documents

- **Outer Time Boundaries:**
 - After 950 BC
 - Before 600 BC
- Written in Kingdom of Judah_H – Hence after 750 BC
- **Genesis-Exodus Reflect Egypt of 7th – 6th Centuries BC:**
 - Table of Nations (Genesis 10:2-23)
 - Products of Camel Caravan Trade (Genesis 37:25)
 - Nile Delta and Sinai – 26th Dynasty (ca. 672 – 525 BC)
 - Eastern Frontier Defences
- **Conclusion: Proto-Biblical Source Documents Emerged in Judah_H in 7th Century BC**

I will now summarise the **Emergence of the Proto-Biblical Source Documents** referenced in the previous slides as follows.

The **Outer Time Boundaries** for their creation are:

After **950 BC** and
Before **600 BC**.

Most scholars now acknowledge that the Proto-Biblical Literature was first **Written in the Kingdom of Judah** and this, in turn, implies a date after that state emerged, namely, after about **750 BC**.

The composition date can also be inferred from the **books of Genesis and Exodus** which reflect the **Egypt** of the **7th – 6th Centuries BC**, as evidenced, for example, by:

The **Table of Nations** (Genesis 10:2-23)

The **Products of the Camel Caravan Trade** (Genesis 37:25)

The descriptions of the **Nile Delta and Sinai**, which reflect the 26th Dynasty of Egypt (ca. 672 – 525 BC)

And the **Frontier Defences**, which describe the **Egyptian border** along the **Eastern Nile Delta** of that period.

The prevailing **Conclusion** among scholars, then, is that the **Proto-Biblical Source Documents Emerged** in the historical kingdom of **Judah_H** in the **7th Century BC**.

[1:30]

Some Traditional Biblical Exodus_B Dates

1445 BC – 480 Years from Solomon's Temple (Hebrew and Latin Vulgate Bibles)

1405 BC – 440 Years from Solomon's Temple (Eastern Orthodox Bible)

1250 BC – Adjusted Biblical Link to Merneptah Stele

1225 BC – Biblical Reference to Sea Peoples

1210 BC – Biblical Reference to City of Rameses (Pi-Rameses)

All Exodus_B Dates Precluded by the Historical Evidence

Rodger Roberts

There are several different **Literary Settings** for the **Biblical Exodus_B** depending on which religious tradition one refers to.

- **1445 BC** is one of the more common dates, and is based on the reference, in the **Hebrew Masoretic Texts** and the **Latin Vulgate Bible**, to the Exodus occurring **480 years before** the building of **Solomon's Temple**.
- **1405 BC** is based on **440 years**, for the same interval, in the **Eastern Orthodox Bible**.
- **1250 BC** is another popular date, derived by biblical scholars who place the Biblical Exodus_B 40 years before the date of the **Merneptah Stele**.
- **1225 BC** is inferred from the reference in the **Book of Numbers** to the **Sea Peoples**, whose historical invasion of the Levant occurred around **1185 BC**.
- And finally, **1210 BC** is derived from the rebuilding of the city, **Pi-Rameses** (referred to in the **Book of Exodus** as the store city of **Rameses**), during the reign of **Rameses II** (a.k.a. **Rameses the Great**).

As noted before, all of these traditional literary settings for the **Exodus_B** are **precluded by the historical evidence**.

[1:30]

Exodus as Described by Ancient Historians

Historian	Inferred Date of Exodus	Leader	Group	Destination
Hecataeus 4th Century BC	750 to 700 BC (linked to founding (read: <i>expansion</i>) of Jerusalem)	Moses	Jews (associated with an epidemic)	Judaea
Artapanus 3rd and 2nd Centuries BC	727 to 700 BC Ethiopian Invasion of Egypt	Prince Mousos	Hebrews (associated with a series of plagues)	Southern Levant
Apion 1st Century BC and 1st Century AD	748 BC 1st Year of 7th Olympiad	Moses	Egyptians, suffering from a plague, named as ancestors of the Jews.	Judea
Lysimachus 1st Century BC and 1st Century AD	725 to 720 BC Reign of Bocchoris (Bakenrenef of 24th Dynasty)	Moses	Jews, afflicted with diseases, including leprosy.	Judea
Josephus 1st Century AD	727 to 700 BC Ethiopian Invasion of Egypt	Moses	Hebrews	Land of the Canaanites
Tacitus 1st and 2nd Centuries AD	725 to 720 BC Reign of Bocchoris (Bakenrenef of 24th Dynasty)	Moyses	Jews – associated with disfiguring disease	Judea, inferred from the founding of a city and temple

Rodger Roberts

I will now review descriptions of the Exodus by the following ancient historians:

Hecataeus of Abdera was a Greek philosopher born in the 4th century BC.

Artapanus of Alexander was a Jewish historian from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC.

Apion was a Graeco-Egyptian official who lived in the 1st century BC into the 1st century AD

Lysimachus of Alexander was a Jewish historian who lived in the same period.

Josephus was a Jewish-Roman historian who lived in the 1st century AD.

Tacitus was a Roman historian who was once consul of Rome who lived in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD.

The key points to draw from the accounts of these ancient historians are as follows:

1. All place the Exodus in the second half of the 8th century BC.
2. All name the leader of the Exodus Group as Moses or some derivative thereof.
3. Except for Apion, who identifies the Exodus group as originally Egyptian, they refer to the Exodus Group as **Jews or Hebrews and not as Israelites**.
4. Where they give or imply a destination, they identify it as **Judah and not as Israel**.

In the next three slides, I will present **archaeological evidence which supports this 8th century BC date for the Exodus** and its destination as the **Kingdom of Judah**, as suggested by these ancient historians ...

Archaeological Evidence of an Egyptian Presence in the Kingdom of Judah_H : Monolith of Silwan – Jerusalem 8–7th Century BC



Source of base photo: Wikipedia, retrieved 2010.12.11: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monolith_of_Silwan. Adapted by Rodger Roberts in 2011 and converted to greyscale from photograph supplied by User: דוד כהן 2007. (Monolithic structure traditionally recognized as tomb of King Solomon's wife - the daughter of Pharaoh). The copyright holder of the base photo has released it into the public domain, worldwide, and the author, Rodger Roberts, of this adapted image releases such adapted image on the same conditions.

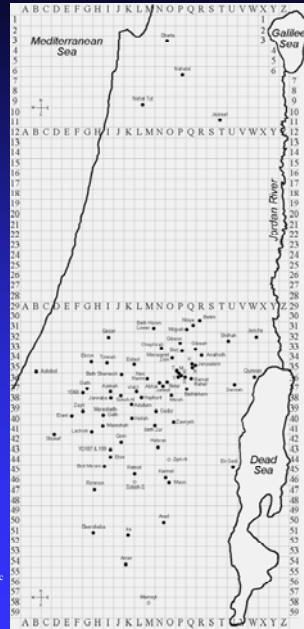
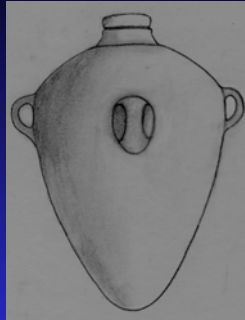
Rodger Roberts

This photograph shows the **Monolith of Silwan**, an Egyptian style tomb dated to the **8th or 7th century BC**, which is still standing in occupied East Jerusalem. It was carved out of solid rock in a cliff face and was originally topped by a pyramid that has since been chiselled away.

It provides clear **Archaeological Evidence of an Egyptian presence** in the kingdom of **Judah** around that time.

[0:30]

Lamelekh Jars with Egyptian Motifs in the Kingdom of Judah_H around 700 BC



L.M.K seal impression: type 822; Rodado Beach collection #22; photographed Feb-21, 2003 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lmk-seal_impression-822.jpg
Source of Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Author: Funhistory
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lmk-seal_impression-822.jpg
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L.M.K seal impression: type 344; Rodado Beach collection #21; Dec-19-2003 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lmk-seal_impression-344.jpg
Source of Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Author: Funhistory
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lmk-seal_impression-344.jpg
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Wikipedia, retrieved 2011-10-29:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L.M.K_seal
Map: Source/Uploader/User/Author: Funhistory.
The author, Funhistory, has released this work into the public domain, worldwide.

Rodger Roberts

This slide illustrates the so-called **Lamelekh Jars**, dated to around **700 BC**:

- These large storage jars were about 65 centimetres tall. Each had four handles and were stamped with Egyptian motifs.
- These Egyptian Motifs include the winged sun disk and the four winged scarab along with Hebrew inscriptions that link them to Hezekiah's royal administration.
- More than 1000 fragments have been found in over 70 sites throughout the historical kingdom of Judah.

These Lamelekh jars, then, provide further archaeological evidence of substantial Egyptian influence throughout Hezekiah's kingdom at that time.

[1:00]

Egyptian Motifs on the Royal Insignia of the Official Seals of King Hezekiah (ca. 726 – 697 BC)



LMLK, Ezekiah seals: "Winged disk sun" and scarab
Source of Photo: Wikimedia Commons. Author: Rubén Betanzo S.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:LMLK_Ezekiah_seals.jpg
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Rodger Roberts

These two photos show the **Royal Insignia** used on the **Official Seals of Hezekiah, King of Judah** between about **726 and 697 BC**.

As can be seen, they contain Egyptian Motifs:

- The winged sun disk;
- The ankh symbol, the hieroglyph for life or eternal life and also called the Key of Life; and
- The winged scarab

They also contain Hebrew inscriptions, which reference Hezekiah by name.

These Seals were used to stamp the official documents used in Hezekiah's administration. They provide evidence of Egyptian influence at the highest levels in Hezekiah's court. Such influence would have required a transmission vector, the best explanation for which is a migration to Judah around that time of high ranking Egyptian officials.

[1:15]

Derivation of Exodus_h Date

- If Biblical Exodus_B modeled on actual migration when did it likely occur?
- Probabilistic rather than deterministic approach
- Treated Exodus_h Date as a problem in measurement – references as imperfect readings
- Broad Range of Dates: 950 to 600 BC
- **Relevant Factors:**
 - Political Instability in Egypt
 - Dislocation of the High Priests of Amun from Thebes
 - References by Ancient Historians
 - Biblical Cushite (Kushite) wife of Moses_B
 - 430 Year Biblical Sojourn_B of Israelites_B in Egypt – possibly linked to Egypt's withdrawal from Canaan in 1150 BC.
 - Rabbinical Literature that placed Moses in Egypt during the Ethiopian Invasion
 - Judah's receptivity to immigration:
 - Probably linked to an external threat – Assyria
 - May have been linked to Judah's attempt to forge alliance with Egypt
 - The Monolith of Silwan, the Lamelekh Jars, and Hezekiah's Official Seals provide a *terminus ante quem*, around 700 BC, for the Exodus_h
 - Date of the Proto-Biblical Source Documents in 7th Century BC

Rodger Roberts

The next step in my investigation was to derive the **Hypothetical Exodus_h Date**, which I did using the following methodology.

I began with the simple question: "If the Biblical Exodus_B was modeled on an actual migration, when did it likely occur?"

I decided to use a probabilistic technique rather than the deterministic approach favoured by most biblical scholars because it allowed me to tease out a meaningful result even though there was a considerable amount of uncertainty in the data itself.

The determination of the Exodus Date, then, simply became a problem in measurement, in which the relevant references were treated as imperfect readings of an actual event.

I had already established the broad range between about 950 and 600 BC and so the problem reduced to one of determining the most probable date within such range.

Relevant factors were:

Political instability in Egypt.

The Dislocation of the High Priests of Amun from Thebes.

References by the ancient historians to an Exodus in the 8th century BC.

The Biblical reference to the Cushite (Kushite) wife of Moses_B was probably significant.

The start of the 430 year Biblical Sojourn_B of the Israelites_B in Egypt was possibly linked back to Egypt's withdrawal from Canaan in 1150 BC.

The Rabbinical Literature that places Moses in Egypt during the Ethiopian invasion of that country may have been of relevance.

Judah's receptivity to immigration:

Was probably linked to an external threat, which in the time frame under consideration would have come from Assyria; and

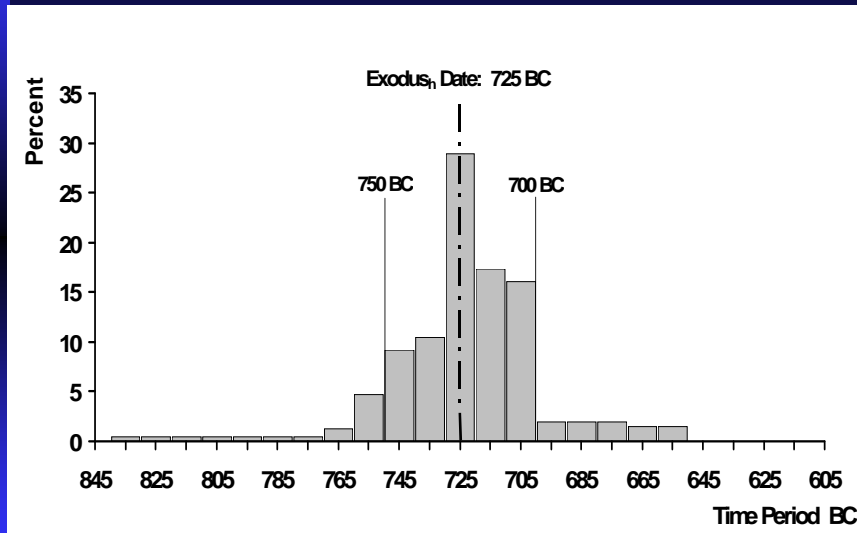
May also have been linked to Judah's attempt to forge an alliance with Egypt.

The Monolith of Silwan, the Lamelekh Jars, and Hezekiah's Official Seals, provide a *terminus ante quem*, around 700 BC, for the Exodus_h.

And, finally, the date of the Proto-Biblical Source Documents provides a second potential end date, around 650 BC, for the Hypothetical Exodus_h.

[2:30]

Histogram of the Relative Probability of Potential Exodus-Type Events – Suggests Hypothetical Exodus_h Date of 725 BC ± 25 Years



Rodger Roberts

I summed up the results of this analysis in this Histogram, which shows the **Relative Probability of Potential Exodus-Type Events** against the **relevant time frame**.

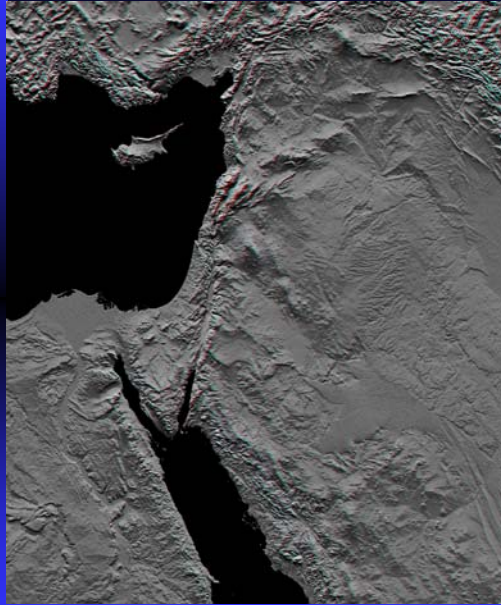
It shows that the most probable date for an Exodus-type event is **725 BC ± 25 Years**.

This date of **725 BC**, then, becomes my suggested **Hypothetical Exodus_h Date**.

[0:30]

Presentation
2018

Historical Setting for the **Hypothetical Exodus_n** Between 750 and 700 BC

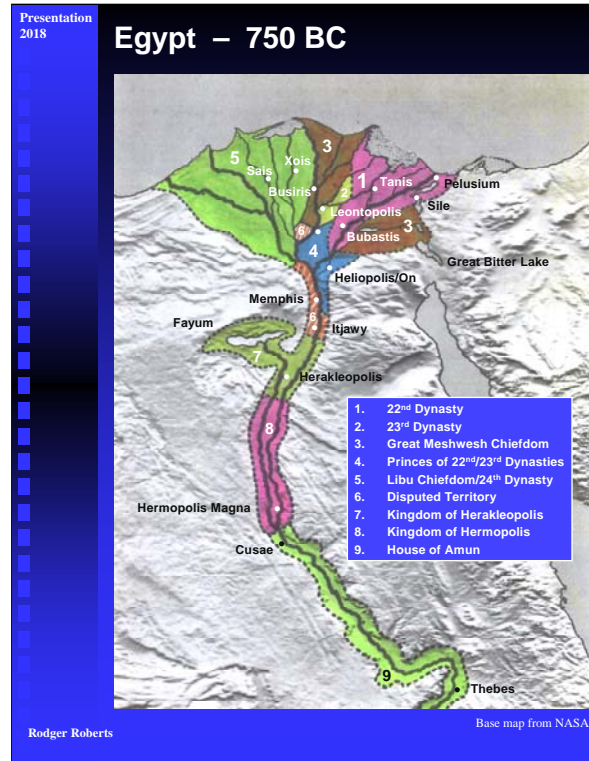


Base Photo from NASA

Rodger Roberts

I will now discuss the **Historical Setting** for the **hypothetical event on which, I suggest, the Biblical Exodus_b** was based, which hypothetical event, as previously inferred, probably occurred in the **8th century BC**, between about **750 and 700 BC**.

[0:15]



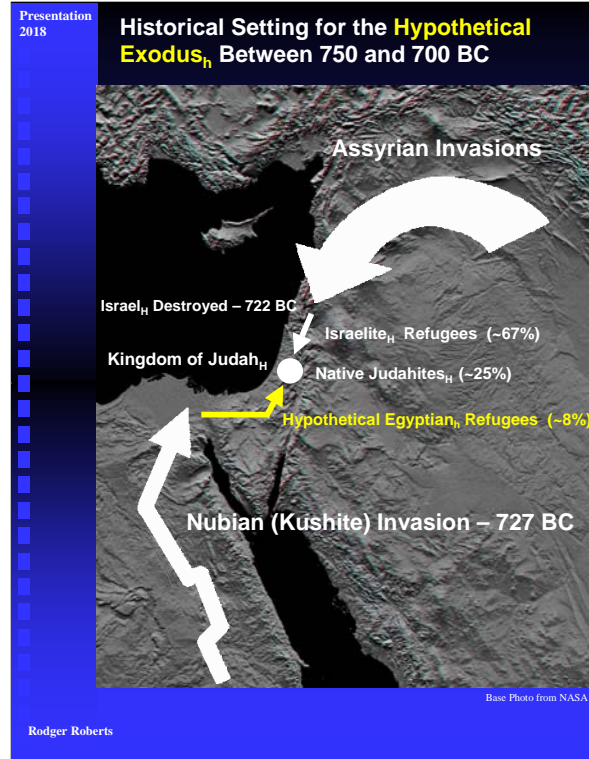
We will first take a look at the **Egypt of 750 BC**.

As can be seen, the country had fragmented into 9 separate polities, each of which was ruled by an independent Libyan-Egyptian elite. For our purposes, the relevant polities were:

1. The 22nd (or Libyan Dynasty), which had ruled a united Egypt since the 10th century BC, and was, by then, confined to the Northeast Delta around the ancient capital of Tanis.
2. The new 23rd Dynasty was limited to a small enclave in the central Delta around its capital, Leontopolis.
3. The Great Chiefdoms of the Meshwesh were located in the Central and Eastern Delta areas.
9. The House of Amun in the South, was ruled by the High Priests of Amun at Thebes.

The **key points** to note are:

- i. In 750 BC, Egypt was no longer one country.
- ii. The competing factions had so weakened the region, it was susceptible to a foreign takeover.
- iii. The north-eastern boundary of Egypt at this time was at the edge of the Nile Delta, in a location consistent with the Biblical descriptions in the book of Exodus.



Around 740 BC, Assyria began a series of invasions of the Levant.

Israel was destroyed in about 722 BC.

As a result, many Israelites fled south to the relative safety of the kingdom of Judah.

Around the same time, the Nubians or Kushites invaded Egypt from the south and advanced north along the Nile Valley, eventually reaching the Nile Delta.

In about 727 BC, the Kushites established the 25th Dynasty over the whole of Egypt.

I suggest that this invasion resulted in a flow of **Egyptian refugees to Judah**. This group of refugees constitutes the **Hypothetical Exodus, Group**.

As a result, the population of Judah changed dramatically and by about 701 BC is estimated to have been comprised of:

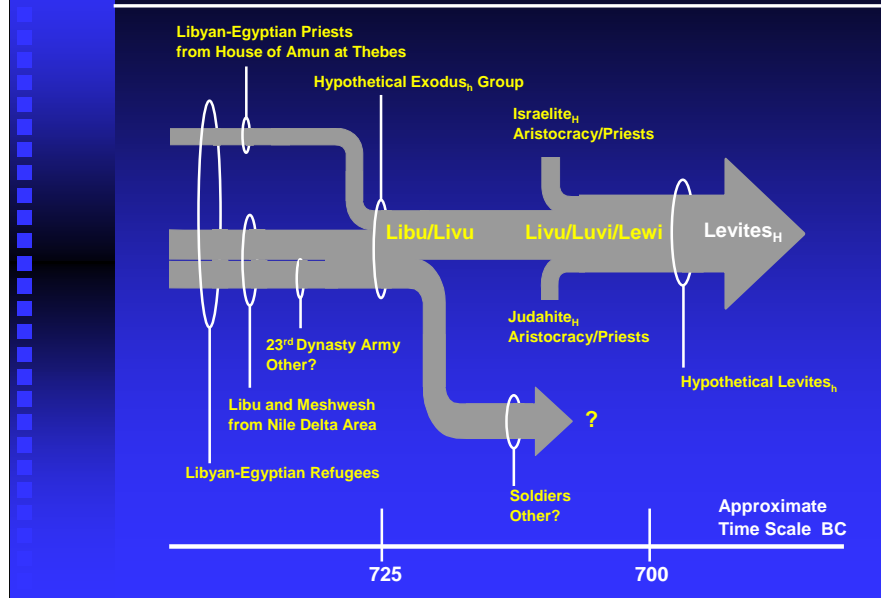
Israelites Refugees - 67%

Native Judahites - 25%

Egyptian Refugees - 8%.

[1:30]

Transition_h from Exodus_h Group to Levites_H



I will now suggest how the Hypothetical Exodus_h Group from Egypt became the historical Levites_H of the kingdom of Judah_H.

As previously noted, this hypothetical group migrated from Egypt to Judah around 725 BC.

This Group consisted of Libyan-Egyptian Refugees who were known as the Libu or Livu, (Libu being the Egyptian name for Libyan) who, in turn, were comprised of:

- Libyan-Egyptian Priests from the House of Amun at Thebes

- Elements of the 23rd Dynasty army

- Possibly, other smaller groups

- And the Libu and Meshwesh peoples of the Nile Delta Area.

Some segments of the Exodus Group probably joined Judah's secular society, such as some of the lower ranking soldiers and other subgroups. I suggest, however, that the core of the Exodus Group worked closely with King Hezekiah to use their wealth, power, and military expertise to unify Judah and strengthen it against an impending Assyrian invasion.

In the Southern Levant, their name evolved from Livu to Luvi to Lewi.

It is likely that they were joined by members of the Israelite and Judahite Aristocracy and Priests and the resulting composite group became the Hypothetical Levites, the theo-political ruling elite referenced in the Bible,

Whom, I suggest, eventually became the historical Levites_H.

[1:30]

Profile of the Hypothetical Moses – Maasha_h

- Born about 755 BC
- Ethnicity – Libyan-Egyptian (Livu/Libu)
- Tribe – The Maasha (Meshwesh) from the Nile Delta
- Affiliation – 23rd Dynasty based in Leontopolis
- God – Amun, the Egyptian “King of the Gods”
- Religion – Essentially Monotheistic
- **Military Commander – Siege of Hermopolis**

Rodger Roberts

Moses or Moshe is the **leader** of the **Biblical Exodus_B** and the **central figure** of the **Old Testament**.

I will now table a Profile of the Hypothetical Moses, whom I have called **Maasha_h**, a name that links his tribe of origin, the **Maasha**, with the Hebrew word, **mashah**, which the Book of Exodus claims is the origin of the name, **Moshe**.

I suggest that Maasha_h was:

- Born about 755 BC
- His Ethnicity was Libyan-Egyptian (known as Livu/Libu)
- His Tribe of Origin was the Maasha (known in English as the Meshwesh) from the Nile Delta
- His Affiliation was probably with the 23rd Dynasty based in Leontopolis
- His god was almost certainly Amun, the Egyptian “King of the Gods”
- As a follower of Amun, his religion would have been essentially monotheistic
- According to the historian, Artapanus, he was a Military Commander who participated in the Siege of Hermopolis

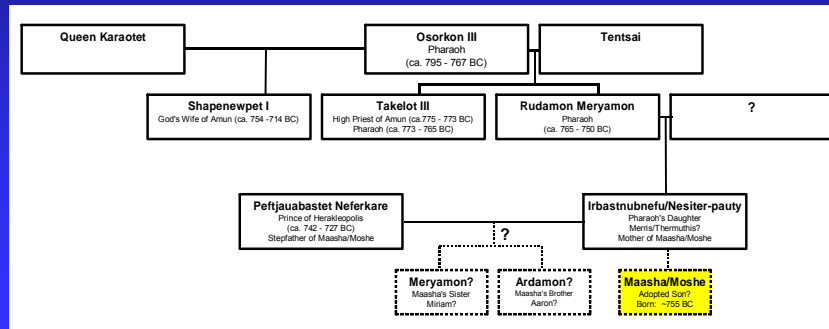
This profile, in turn, allowed me to tease out his Conjectured Family of Origin, as follows ...

[1:15]

Profile of the Hypothetical Moses – Maasha_h

- Born about 755 BC
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- God – Amun, the Egyptian “King of the Gods”
- Religion – Essentially Monotheistic
- Military Commander – Siege of Hermopolis

- **Conjectured Family of Origin:**



Rodger Roberts

... With the Hypothetical Moses or **Maasha_h**, shown in yellow.

He was the son of **Irbastnubnefu/Nesiter-pauty**, the daughter of **Rudamon Meryamon**, the second to last pharaoh of the 23rd Dynasty, based in Leontopolis.

His father or step-father was **Pefitjauabastet Neferkare**, the Prince of Herkleopolis.

There may also be links between:

Miriam, the biblical sister of Moses, and **Meryamon**, the name of his grandfather; and

Aaron, the biblical brother of Moses, and the Semitic form, **Ardamon**, of the Egyptian name, **Rudamon**, of his grandfather.

[0:45]

Evolution of Monotheistic Yahwism Temple of Amun at Soleb – 14th Century BC

Yahweh Inscription:



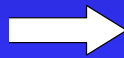
Sketch by Rodger Roberts, 2011. Adapted from several sources listed in Notes on Figure 5.7.2.5 below.



Author: Francis Frith, ca. 1862. Photography Collection, New York Public Library. Downloaded 2011/06/11
Source: http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/digitalgallery/object/objectDetail.do?objectId=11096&imageID=76483&word=col_1f%3A179&=1¬word=&d=&c=&f=&k=&W=ord=&f=&d=&s=Scope=images&sl=level

Read glyphs from top to bottom and right to left.

- 1.
- 2.
4. 3.
6. 5.
- 7.
- 8.



1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
t3 ta	s3 sa sha	su soo swt	w u	y	h	w3 wa ua	w u
Translation: land sha su u y h wa w							

Rodger Roberts

We will now briefly examine the **Evolution of Monotheistic Yahwism**.

The Bible states that only the Israelites_b worshipped the God, **YHWH**, (or Yahweh). The historical record, however, suggests otherwise, and shows that Yahweh was revered, alongside other deities, all the way from the Northern Levant to Arabia.

This slide provides evidence that the Egyptians were aware of the god, **Yahweh**, as early as the **14th century BC**.

The photograph on the right shows the ruins of a temple of the **Egyptian supreme god, Amun, at Soleb in present-day Sudan, dated to the 14th century BC**. The sketch on the left is of a hieroglyphic inscription on a shield on one of the columns in that temple, which shows that Yahweh was linked to the Shasu, a nomadic bedouin-like tribal people from the Southern Levant, the Sinai, and NW Arabia.

This hieroglyphic inscription has been translated as, "**The land of the Shasu of Yahweh**," or similar variations thereof.

[1:15]

Evolution of Monotheistic Yahwism Yahweh and His Asherah – Kuntillet 'Ajrud ~ 800 BC



Cropped from Source Photo at: cyclowiki.org. Attribution: [Zellev 2](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ya%20and%20Asherah.jpg)
([CC0/zero/nature](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ya%20and%20Asherah.jpg) | [Bazaban](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ya%20and%20Asherah.jpg))
http://cyclowiki.org/wiki/%D0%A4%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB-God_391ec.jpg
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Painted on a jar found in Kuntilat 'Ajrud in the Sinai Peninsula
Source of Photo: [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ajrud.jpg). Attribution:
Unknown Jewish Merchant
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ajrud.jpg>
This work is in the [public domain](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ajrud.jpg) in its country of origin and
other countries and areas where the copyright term is the
author's life plus 70 years or less.
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restrictions under copyright law, including all related and
neighboring rights.

Rodger Roberts



Yahweh, or his abbreviated form Ya, is attested as early as **2500 BC**, alongside other deities in ancient Ebla (in modern-day Syria).

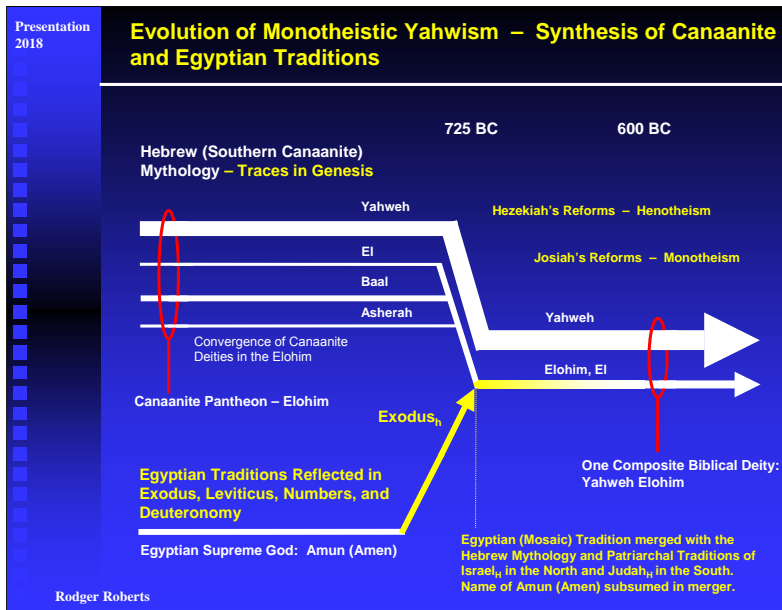
The ancient beliefs embracing the god, Yahweh, took nearly two millennia to evolve from polytheism to full monotheism.

This slide contains a photograph and related sketch of an artefact found at a shrine at Kuntillet 'Ajrud in the NE Sinai, which is dated to about 800 BC.

It makes reference to "**Yahweh and his Asherah**," indicating that, at that time, Yahweh was believed to have had a wife or consort, the Canaanite goddess, **Asherah**, also known as **Elath**, after whom the coastal town of **Eilat**, in modern-day Israel, is named.

It provides evidence that the later monotheistic doctrine associated with Yahweh was still evolving from its earlier polytheistic forms as late as **800 BC**.

[1:15]



I will now suggest how **Monotheistic Yahwism**, the theo-political religious ideology implicit in the **Hexateuch**, evolved from a **Synthesis of Canaanite and Egyptian Traditions**.

The **Hebrew or Southern Canaanite Mythology** was based on the **Canaanite Pantheon** of 70 gods, called the **Elohim**.

Over time, the number of gods declined and their characteristics were **absorbed into fewer and fewer deities**. By the **8th century BC**, the major remaining deities were:

Yahweh, the dominant god.

El, the head of the pantheon.

Baal, the storm or warrior god, and

Asherah, the goddess, who was the consort of both **Yahweh** and **El**.

Traces of this **Canaanite Mythology** can still be found in **Genesis**.

Even though there were many gods in Egypt, there was only one **supreme god, Amun (or Amen)**, the King of the Gods.

Remnants of the **Egyptian Traditions** are still discernable in the books of **Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy**.

Around **725 BC**, the **Exodus_n** occurred. As a result, there was a merging of the **Egyptian (or Mosaic) traditions with the Hebrew Mythology and Patriarchal Traditions of Israel_n in the North and Judah_n in the South**.

The subsequent transition to **Monotheistic Yahwism** appears to have occurred in two stages:

The first stage began with **Hezekiah's Reforms** and resulted in a **Henotheistic** type theo-political doctrine, which, I suggest, flowed from **Hezekiah's desire to unite his people through a unifying religious ideology**.

The second stage was initiated by **Josiah** and resulted in something closer to full **Monotheism**.

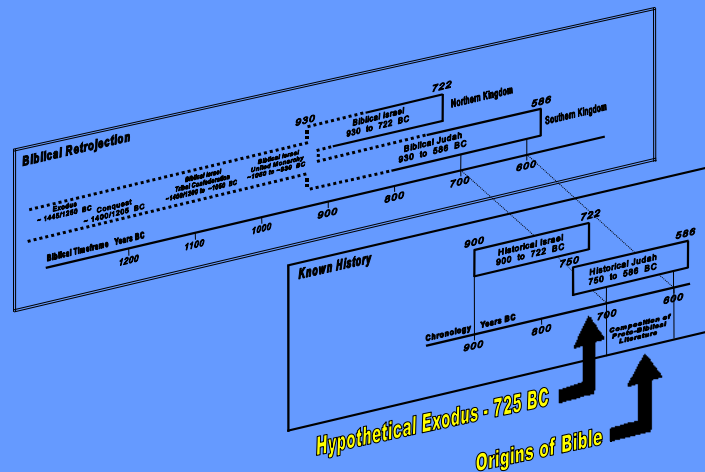
This process was largely complete by about **600 BC**, by which time, **only one god remained**, the **Composite Biblical Deity, Yahweh-Elohim**, generally translated as **Lord God**.

It is noted, however, that even though only one god remained, the individual names, **Yahweh, Elohim and El**, of the formerly separate gods, were retained in the respective **Yahwist and Elohist strands of the Hexateuch and survive to the present day, as we saw in Wellhausen's Hypothesis**. **El**, for example, is specifically named in the **Bible** as the **God of Israel**.

The name of the Egyptian god, **Amun (Amen)**, appears to have been largely subsumed in the merger.

[3:00]

Relationship Between the Known History, the Hypothetical Exodus, and the Origins of the Bible



Rodger Roberts

I will now **conclude my presentation with two summary slides.**

The first is this conceptual diagram which shows the relationship between the Known History, the Biblical Account, and the Origins of the Bible.

The **foreground plane** is a **chronology** of the actual histories of **Israel and Judah.**

The **plane in the rear** depicts the **literary setting** of the Bible and is called the **Biblical Retrojection.**

As can be seen, the Biblical account is firmly anchored in the actual histories of **Israel and Judah in the 8th and 7th centuries BC** and this is indicated by the **solid lines.** The more mythical aspects of the biblical account are represented by the **dotted lines,** which extend back into a **2nd millennium BC literary setting,** including the **United Monarchy, the Tribal Confederation, the Conquest of Canaan, and the Biblical Exodus,**

The **Origins of the Bible** can be traced to the **Proto-Biblical Source Documents** created by the **Levite scribes** in the Temple in Jerusalem in the **Kingdom of Judah** in the **7th century BC,** most of whom, it is **hypothesised,** descended from the Libyan-Egyptian priests who migrated to Judah in a **Hypothetical Exodus** in about **725 BC.**

[1:30]

Answers to the Questions about the Origins of the Biblical Tradition

When: 7th Century BC

Where: Jerusalem Temple – Kingdom of Judah

Who: By the Levite Priests – Descendants of Libyan-
Egyptian Immigrants (Livu/Libu)

How: By the Synthesis of Egyptian and Canaanite
Traditions

Why: So King Hezekiah Could Unite His People
Through the Worship of One God

Rodger Roberts

I can now answer the questions I posed at the beginning of this presentation, as follows.

When did the books of the Hexateuch first emerge? In the 7th century BC.

Where were they composed? In the Jerusalem Temple in the Kingdom of Judah.

Who wrote them? The Levite Priests, the theo-political ruling elite, most of whom descended from the Libyan-Egyptian immigrants known as the Libu or Livu;

How did the religious ideology of the Bible evolve? Primarily through the synthesis of Egyptian and Canaanite traditions, which resulted in one composite deity, **Yahweh-Elohim**;

and finally,

Why were the books created? In order for Hezekiah, the King of Judah, to use religion to unify his kingdom as it braced itself against an impending Assyrian invasion. Assisted by the Libyan-Egyptian leader, Maasha_n, Hezekiah introduced a new, centralised, monotheistic, theo-political, religious ideology, focused on the worship of **One God**, in order to create a single (albeit somewhat mythical) identity to unite the subjects of his kingdom.

And that concludes my presentation. I will be happy to answer your questions. I will also refer those, who wish a more detailed account, to the book I wrote on the subject entitled, **The Fundamental Question**.

[1:30]

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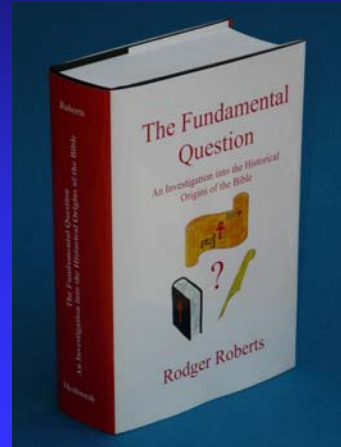
Questions?

The Fundamental Question An Investigation into the Historical Origins of the Bible

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www.the-fundamental-question.com

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Rodger Roberts

