

THE BIBLE UNEARTHED: THE MAKING OF A RELIGION -- ILLUSTRATED SCREENPLAY & SCREENCAP GALLERY

directed by Thierry Ragobert
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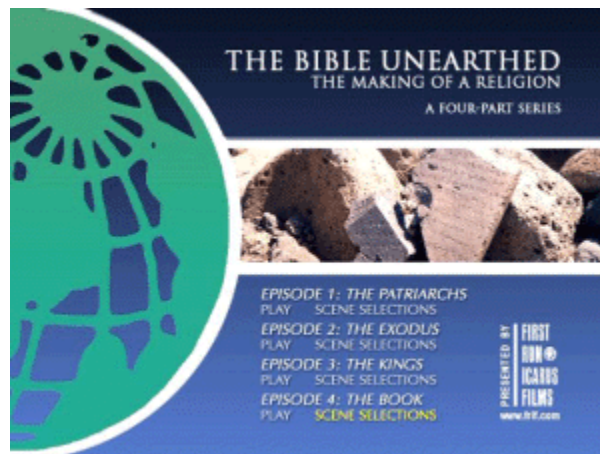
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A limited hangout is a form of deception, misdirection, or coverup often associated with intelligence agencies involving a release or "mea culpa" type of confession of only part of a set of previously hidden sensitive information, that establishes credibility for the one releasing the information who by the very act of confession appears to be "coming clean" and acting with integrity; but in actuality by withholding key facts is protecting a deeper crime and those who could be exposed if the whole truth came out. In effect, if an array of offenses or misdeeds is suspected, this confession admits to a lesser offense while covering up the greater ones.

A limited hangout typically is a response to lower the pressure felt from inquisitive investigators pursuing clues that threaten to expose everything, and the disclosure is often combined with red herrings or propaganda elements that lead to false trails, distractions, or ideological disinformation; thus allowing covert or criminal elements to continue in their improper activities.

-- Limited Hangout, by Wikipedia

[Transcribed from the video by Tara Carreon]

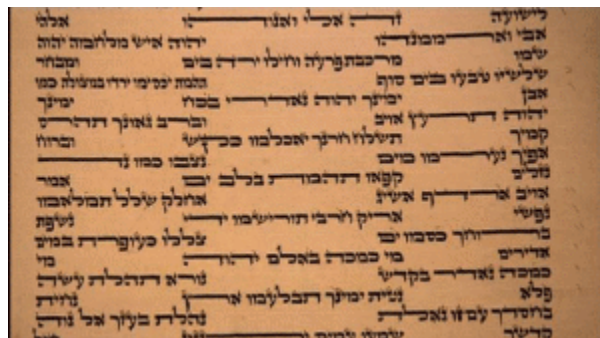
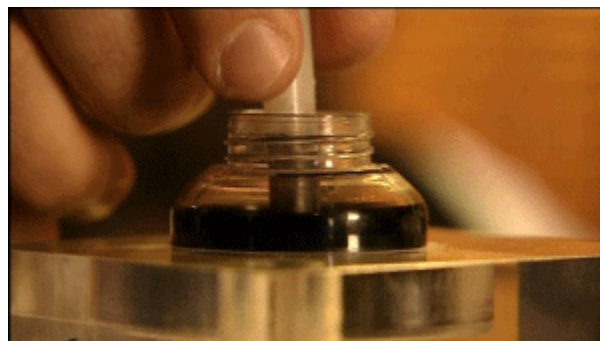


*THE BIBLE UNEARTHED: THE MAKING OF A RELIGION
A FOUR-PART SERIES
EPISODE 1: THE PATRIARCHS*

*France 5 presents in association with Arte France
A Cabiria Films
Maya Rothschild
SZ Productions
Isy Morgensztern
France 5
Co-Production
With the participation of ARTE France*



[Narrator] The Old Testament is an ENIGMATIC work.



It is both a book of ancient history [?], and a collection of rules that gave birth to a religion:



Judaism.



It is also the source of Christianity ...



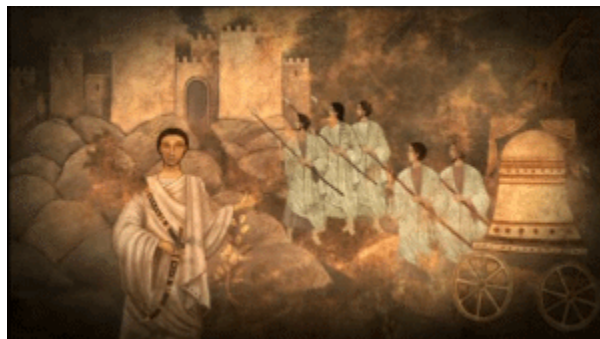
and several centuries later, inspired the Koran: Islam's founding text.



Its characters have accompanied the West for over 2,000 years.



Our imaginations have been carried away with its STORIES.



But exactly what is contained in this book?



Where was it written?



And by whom?



Modern science has shown a new light on these questions ...



on the basis of findings drawn from stones and from the land.



A recent revolution in the area of archaeology has transformed the idea we once had of the society that put the Old Testament into writing.

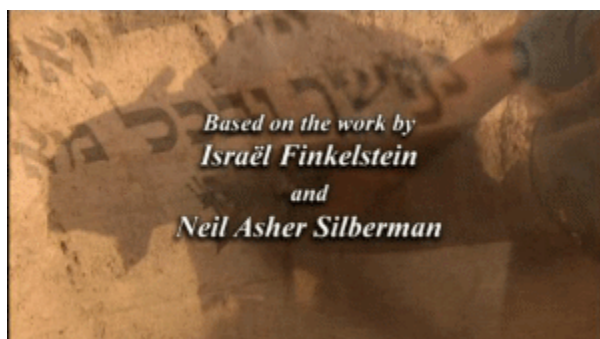




The investigation we are about to carry out was triggered by this revolution.



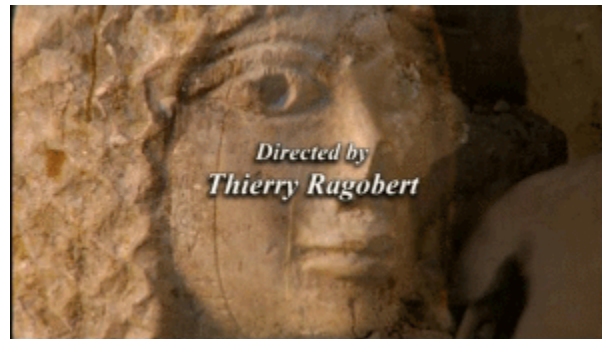
The Bible Unearthed



Based on the work by Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman



A film written by Isy Morgensztern and Thierry Ragobert



Directed by Thierry Ragobert



THE PATRIARCHS





[Narrator] The sun rises over the lands of Canaan, lands where, according to the Bible, lived the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.



Our investigation is about to begin at the beginning.



Their stories are told in the first book of the Bible, Genesis.



Israel Finkelstein, a researcher at the Archaeology Institute of the University of Tel-Aviv, has had joint charge of excavations in Megiddo, in the North of Israel, for almost ten years.





About 100 specialists and volunteers from all over the world are involved in this undertaking.





Megiddo is the jewel of Biblical archaeology. It's history goes back over 7 millennia of contacts and conflicts between the great powers that dominated the region in turn: Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, followed by the Persian empire.



Megiddo is a tel, an artificial hill created from layers of homes, palaces and temples that were built over each other during the centuries. The name "Megiddo," is often cited in the Bible. For Christians, it represents Armageddon, the site of the Apocalypse.



Many archaeological expeditions have been embarked upon on the basis of these Biblical references.



In 1903, the German archaeologist, Gottlieb Schumacher, organized the first digs here.



Vast quantities of material.





In the 1920s to 30s, U.S. billionaire John Rockefeller, financed an archaeological mission by the University of Chicago.





The mission was aimed at carrying out a methodical investigation.



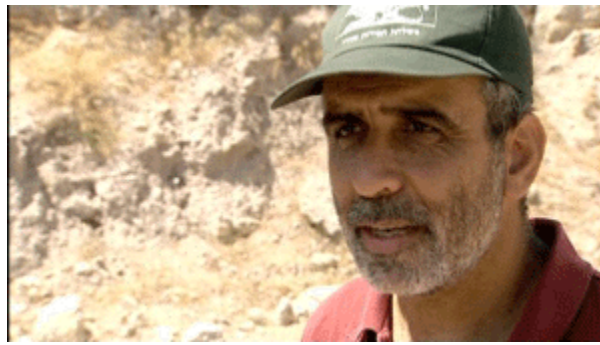
Thanks to the hundreds of workers recruited at the site, or in Egypt,



the mission was able to reach bedrock in this huge trench, which measures 20 metres in width, and is 15 metres deep.



[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] This is a key for understanding the history of Megiddo, and the history of the entire country.



It is a unique opportunity which was given to us by earlier excavators.



There's this incredible section, going all the way down to bedrock ...



giving you a history of about 7,000 years ...



from bedrock down there, all the way up to the 5th Century B.C.



20 strata. In fact, more than that. 25 cities built one on top of the other.



A unique situation. There is nothing like that anywhere else in the entire region, even beyond the borders of this country.



And this opens up a window for us into the belly of the mound,



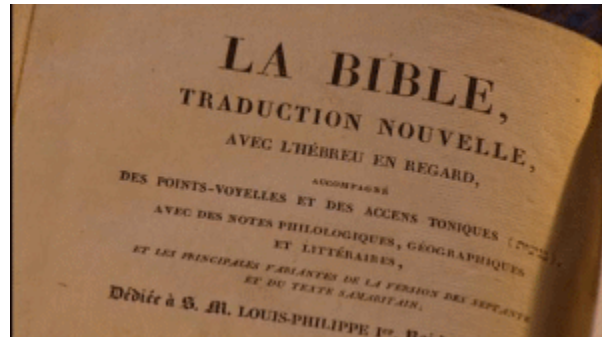
and a window into the open book, the history of Megiddo in the Bronze and Iron Ages. And the history not only of Megiddo, but the history of the entire country.



[Narrator] An unparalleled site that is the cradle of Biblical archaeology, Megiddo serves as a reference for the dating of sites throughout the whole of the Near East.



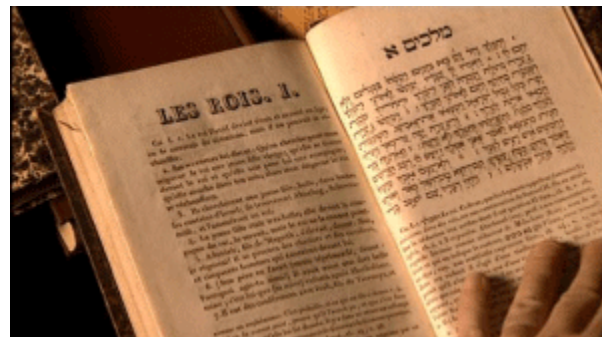
Located at a strategic and economic crossroads between Egypt, Levant, and Mesopotamia, Megiddo is going to play a crucial role in our investigation.



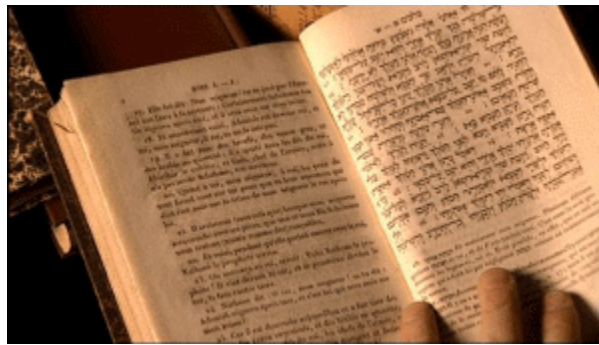
The Old Testament is the name commonly given to the Hebraic Bible.



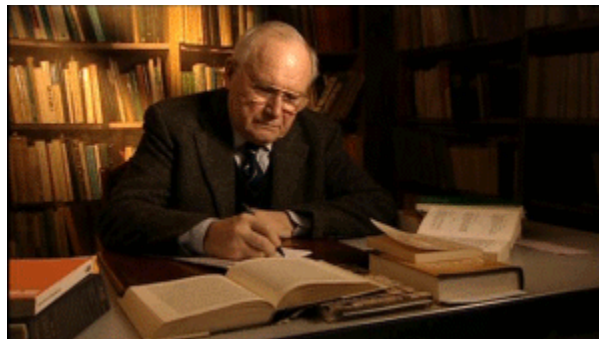
It is essentially a religious book.



For many centuries, it was considered as being unnecessary and even dangerous to question the historical events related in its pages.

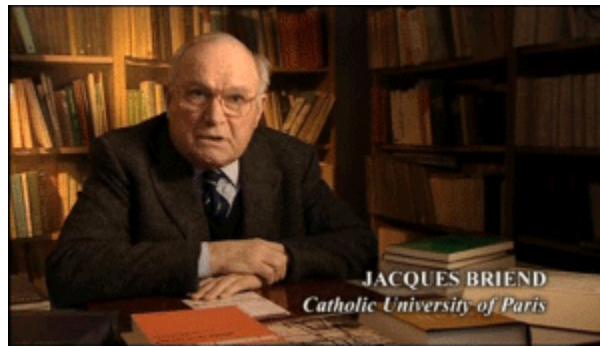


This attitude would change as a result of what are known as "THE LIGHTS."

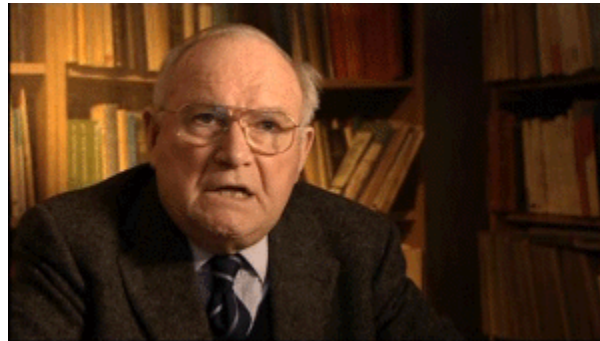


The Bible would undergo a re-reading on the basis of tools provided by science and reason.





[Jacques Briend, Catholic University of Paris] Mid-19th-century Germany saw a critical exegesis of the Bible which triggered reactions particularly in England.



This ultimately led scholars to come to Palestine in an attempt to use archaeology in order to prove the historical veracity of the Biblical texts.



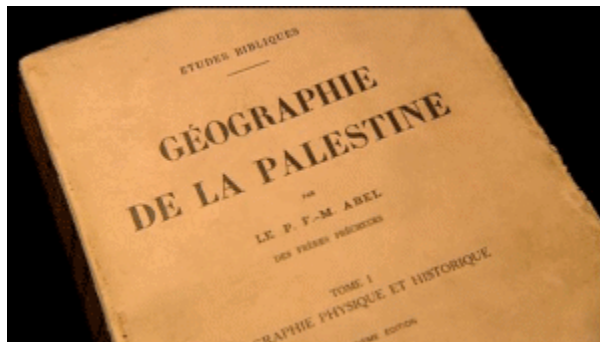
[Narrator] Researchers, most often from European and U.S. religious circles, worked throughout the region ...

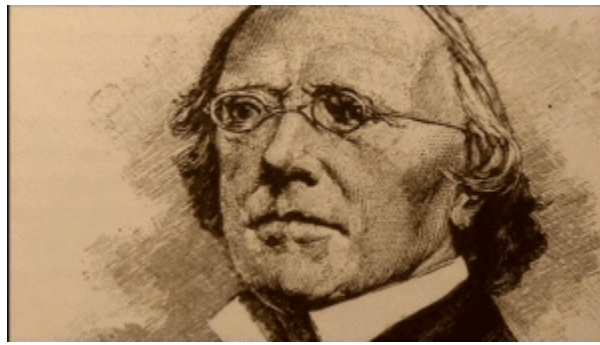


looking for evidence to prove the historical nature of the Bible.



They included Fathers [Marie Joseph] LaGrange, [F.M.] Abel and [L.H.] Vincent





Edward Robinson, a theologian trained in the Semitic languages, identified dozens of sites that have retained practically the same names for 2,500 years.



These ADVENTURERS drew up the first Biblical maps of the holy land.



According to an expression popular at the time ...

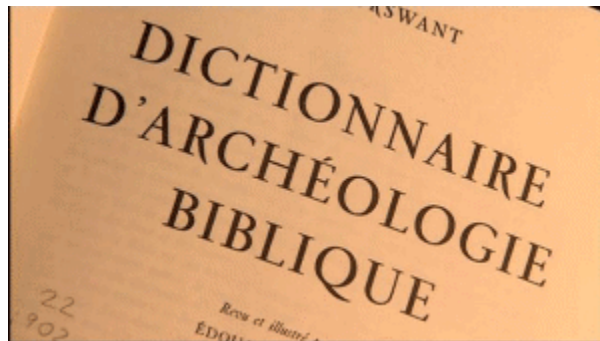


the archaeologists carried a spade in one hand, and a Bible in the other.

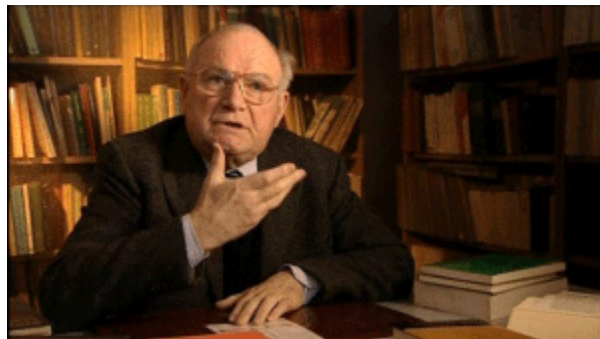




They were the originators of both a method and a state of mind:



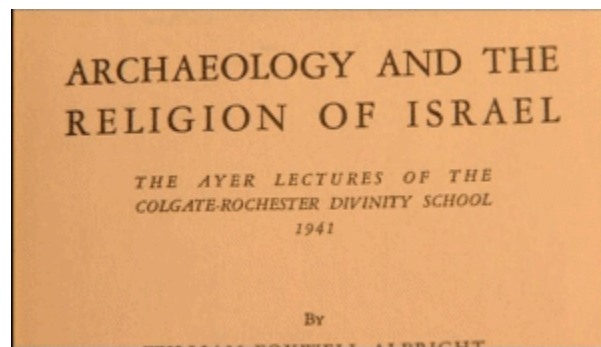
Biblical archaeology.



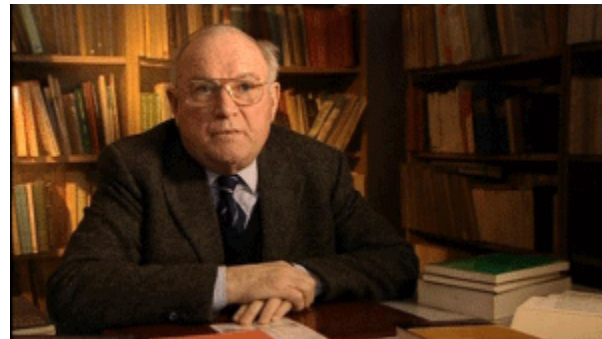
[Jacques Briand, Catholic University of Paris] It would take quite some time before Biblical archaeology fell out of favor.



As late as the 1930s, the American archaeologist William Foxwell Albright, was convinced that his archaeological research



would enable him to prove the historical veracity of the Bible.



And this movement continued practically until 1960.



[Narrator] THE APPROACH HAS STILL NOT COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED,

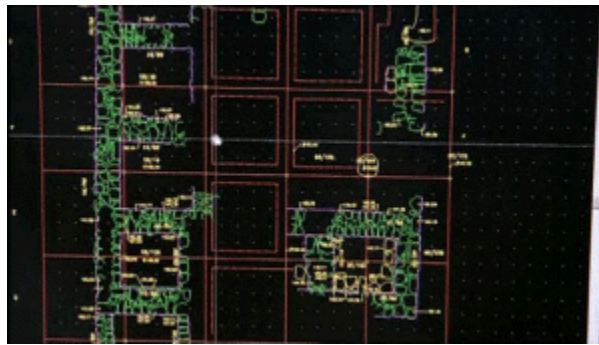


but in recent years, researchers have opened up a new path that has transformed archaeology into an independent scientific discipline.



These specialists consider architectural vestiges, ceramics and debris of all types, as the elements in a huge tableau vivant ...





a human reality that has to be sampled, understood, and interpreted in scientific terms



[Israel Finkelstein] He was very satisfied that [inaudible] is still in place. He thinks that it's nice and should be kept in place. It's this one over here.





[Narrator] How has this new approach changed what we know about the origins of the Old Testament?

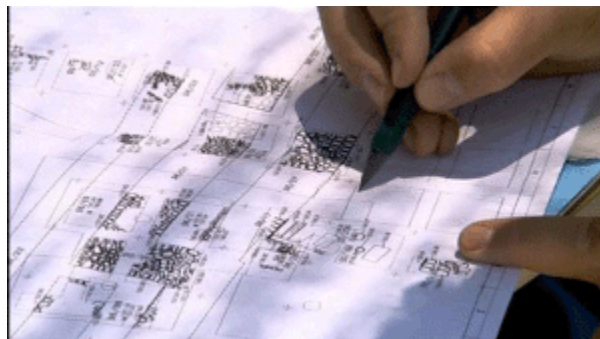


This is the investigation being carried out by Israel Finkelstein in Megiddo, and in the Levant's archaeological sites.





Allowing these books of stones to shed light on a work of paper.



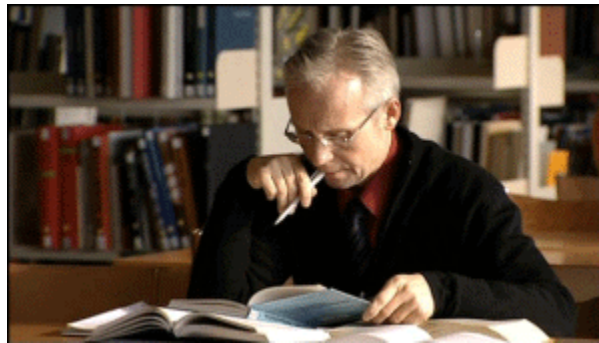


The Bible is the world's most widely read book. Its specialists include exegetes, epigraphs, specialists in literature, linguists, historians, and theologians.



Cantonal and University Library of Lausanne, Switzerland

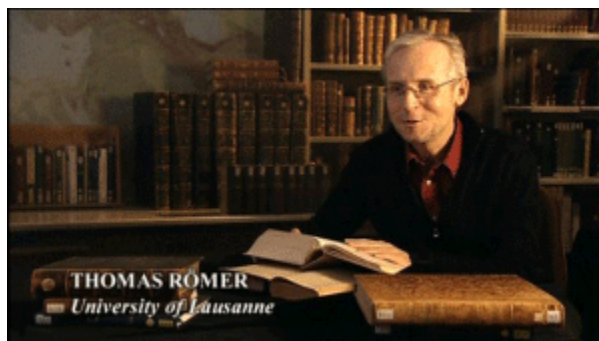




Thomas Romer is a professor of the Old Testament at the Lausanne Faculty of Theology.



He will be our guide with respect to this work.



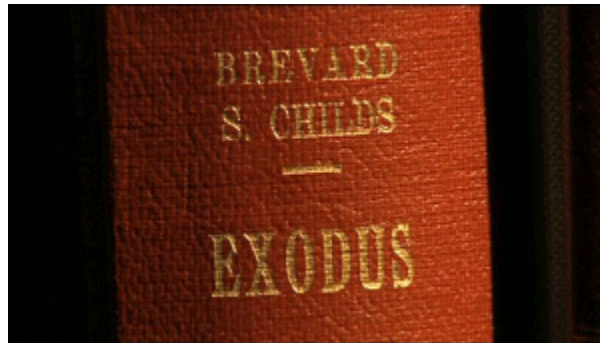
[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] What is the Hebraic Bible? First of all, it is obviously the founding text of Judaism. It is also the text that is at the origin of three monotheisms: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In more precise terms, it is the history [?] of the Hebraic people, a national history [?] that begins with the Patriarchs and goes through to the royalty.



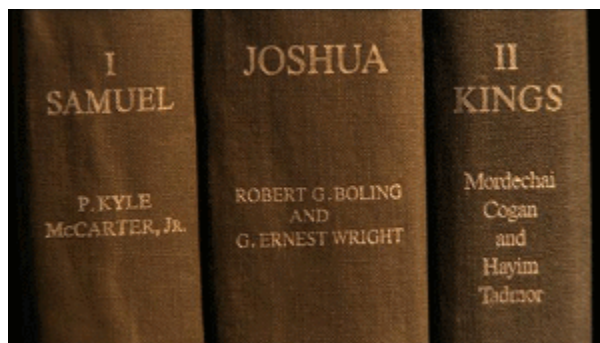
With this national history [?] also became a universal history [?] through the prophets, and by being opened up to other nations. So the Hebraic Bible is both a very specific book related to the Hebraic people [?], and due to its acceptance and enlargement, a book that carries a universal message.



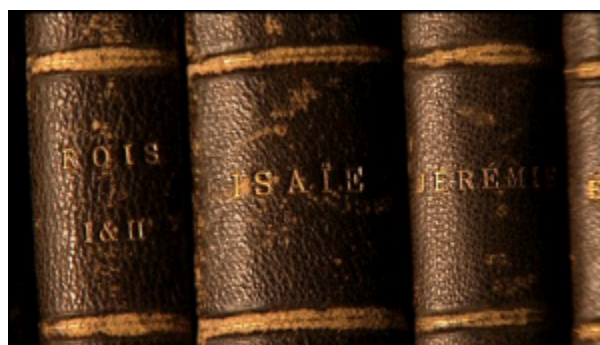
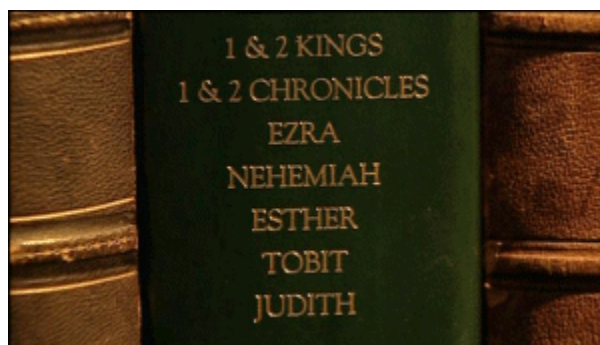
[Narrator] The Old Testament is composed of a series of books ...



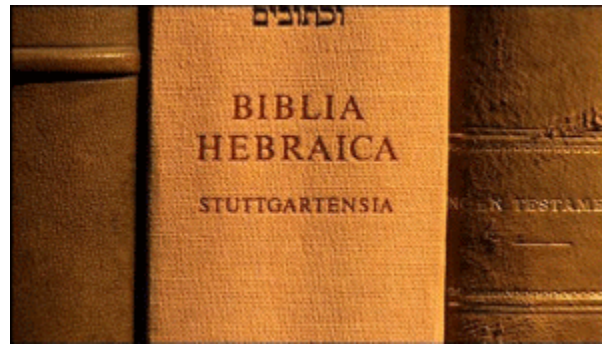
which is the very definition of the word "Bible,"



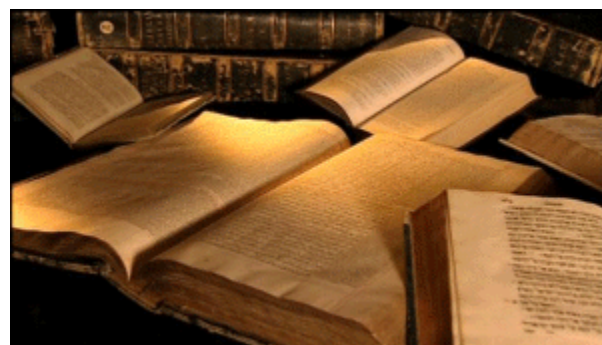
"Ta Biblia," which in Greek means "The Books."



It is a collection of legal texts, poems, and moral reflections,



and a history book [?] of the creation of the world and the people of Israel. [?]



It was the first book ever to be printed. Like all great [?] religious texts, it is a controversial document that has been used by some to justify wars and invasions, and by others to deliver a message of peace.



Its wealth [?] is such that it is never far from the minds of our archaeologists.





It is not possible to carry out digs in the Holy Land [?] without being conscious of the gravity [?] of the situation.



Israel Finkelstein, an archaeologist, and Neil Silberman, a historian,



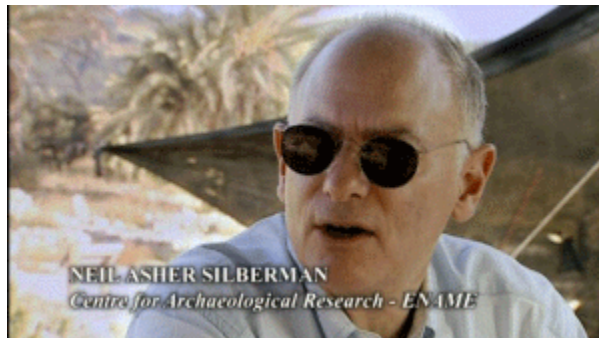
have decided to write a book together that will compare the discoveries made by archaeology



with the most famous of Biblical stories.



They know they are embarking on A VERY SENSITIVE MISSION.



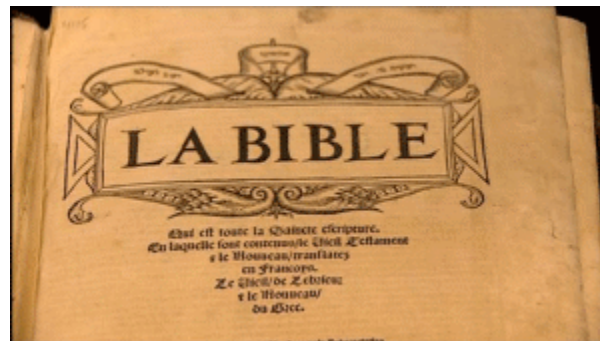
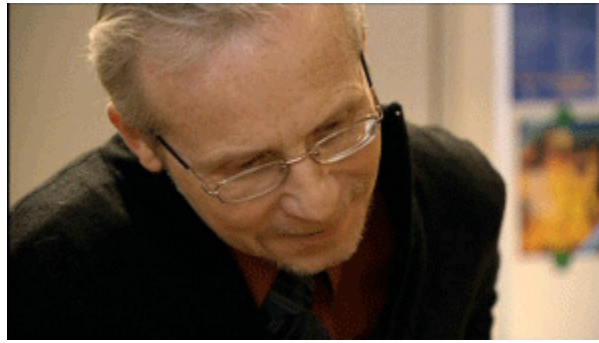
[Neil Asher Silberman, Centre for Archaeological Research - ENAME] The Bible is, of course, one of our most important ancient Near Eastern texts. [?] But it's got a larger significance than that, obviously. It's an ancient text that is the core of the religion of hundreds of millions of people all over the world. So we are aware of the sensitivities of the Bible. But what we're trying to do is bring the most modern discoveries, the best insights that we can, to help the understanding, and really transform the modern understanding of what the Bible really represents in its ancient context.



[Narrator] Their book provides the outline for our investigation and its chronology, from the most distant times to the most recent periods.



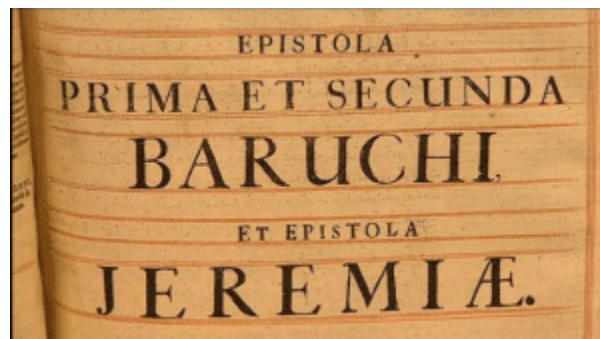
The first five books of the Old Testament make up what is called The Pentateuch, or the Torah in Hebrew.

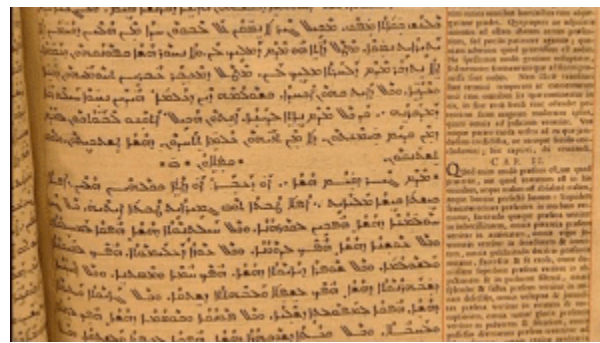


They are particularly important for those who claim monotheisms,

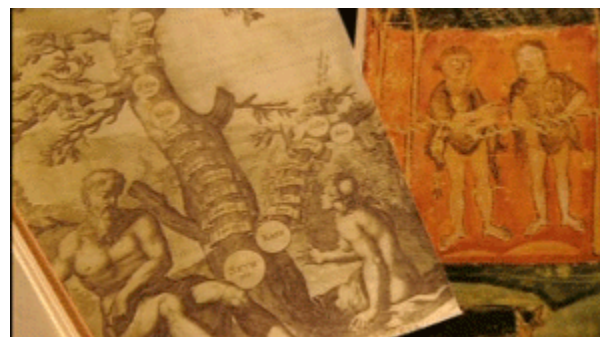


and are common to both Judaism and Christianity.





[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] The Hebraic Bible begins with a universal story.



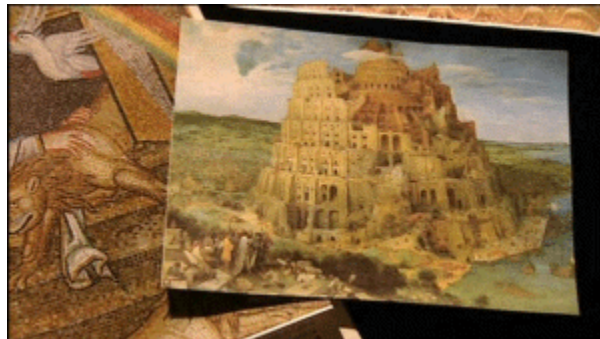
The first 11 chapters tell the story of creation, the creation of human beings and the world.



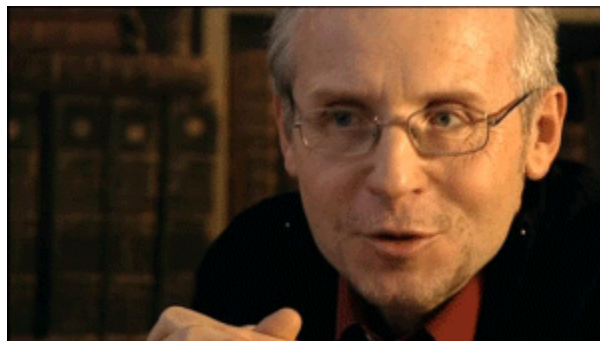
And also the origin of violence ...



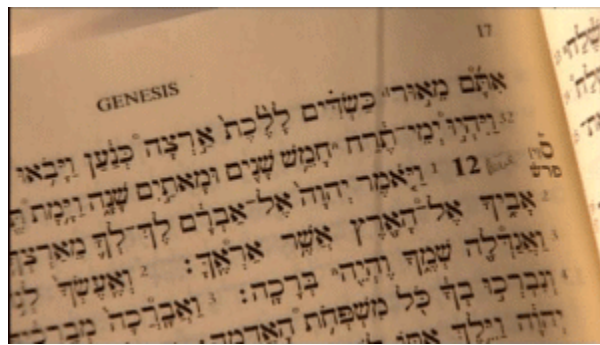
Cain and Able, and the flood ...



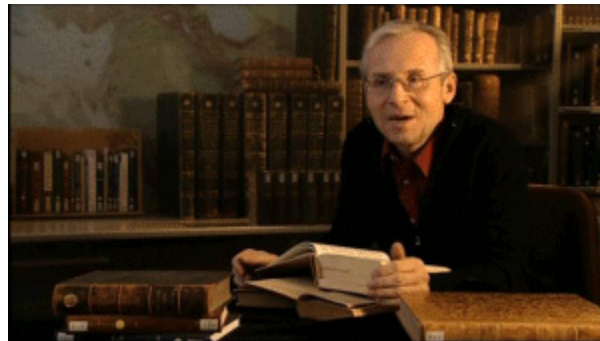
the origin of the diversity of our languages, and of humanity in the Tower of Babel.



Then suddenly, in Chapter 12, we turn to something else: the story of Abraham, and thus the origins of the Hebraic people.



With this call that Abraham receives from God,



the Lord said unto Abraham, *"Leave this land and your ancestors, the house of your father, and go to the land that I will show you."*



[Narrator] The Bible describes the Patriarch Abraham, his wife Sarah, and his nephew Lot leaving their land with their herds, and heading for the promised land, in response to a divine order.



The Biblical text describes a veritable migration over thousands of kilometres, from Mesopotamia toward Egypt, and then Canaan.



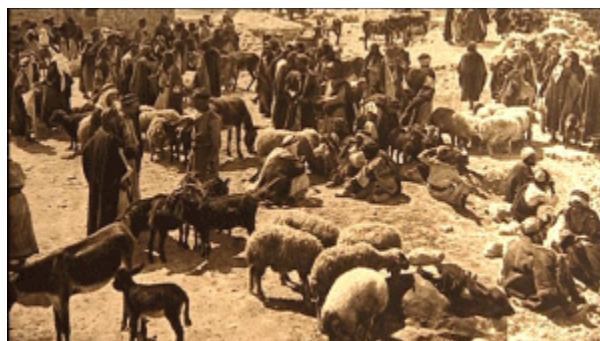
In accordance with the romantic and orientalist conceptions of the period,



20th century researchers imagined Abraham as a bedouin ...

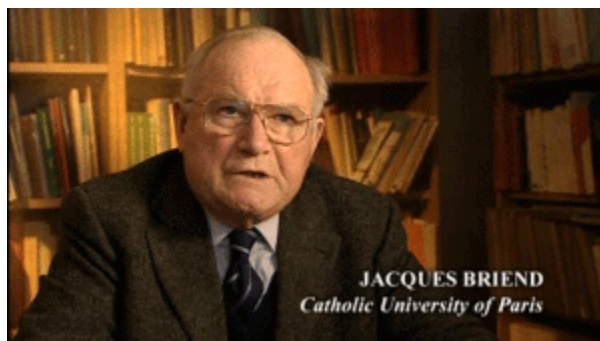


similar to those that could then be seen in the Holy [?] Land.

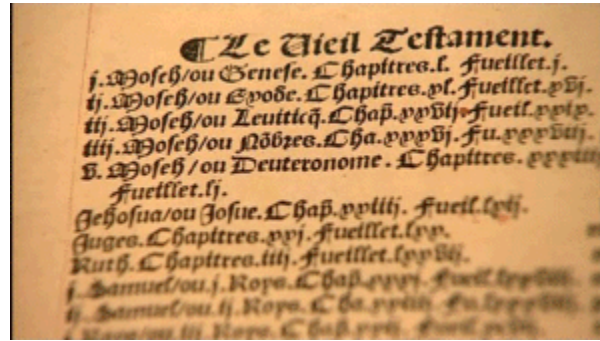




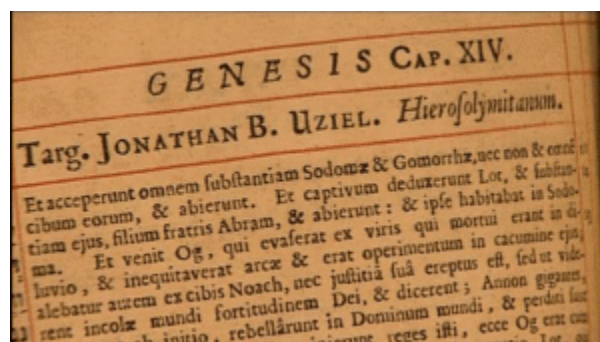
According to them, the Biblical story described a lifestyle that was typical of the region.



[Jacques Briend, Catholic University of Paris] When scholars sought a date for the Biblical Patriarchs, they basically relied on a certain number of elements contained in the text that took us back to around 1,800 B.C. This obviously means that they relied only on Biblical facts [?], and not on facts that were external to the Bible.



Even today, many people imagine that Abraham lived around 1,800 B.C.





[Narrator] 1,800 B.C. is a period referred to by archaeologists as The Middle Bronze Age. We have to go back to Megiddo.



What can the book of stone tell us about this? We will focus our investigation in the heart of the site, on the strata dating from the Middle Bronze Age.



By going down to the lower pages of Megiddo, Israel Finkelstein takes us back in time. He arrives at the ruins of the city that corresponds to the 2nd millennium.





What he finds there is surprising.



At that time, Megiddo was an important administrative, cultural and economic center with monumental buildings, fortifications, and temples.



Far from being an arid landscape suitable only for herders, the strata of the period corresponding to Abraham's migration [?] reveal a city-state of almost 2,000 inhabitants.





At that time, Canaan was an economically developed region with a very dense network of city-states.



Doubts are raised about the chronology that has been proposed by traditional interpretations of the Bible. But what of the migration itself? Canaan is a buffer zone, situated in between Egypt and Mesopotamia.



And these empires have left a number of vestiges.



Megiddo is one of the sites where such material abounds.



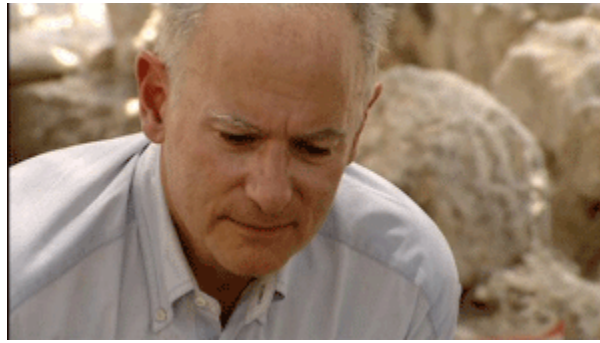
This book of stone will allow us to read the ancient pages of the history of Egypt and Mesopotamia,



pages that are indispensable to the rest of our investigation.



In Canaan, archaeology is for the large part a science of broken fragments and shattered vases.



Their decorative style, dating and use,



are elements that come together like a huge puzzle in order to reconstruct these societies.





These fragments teach us about the origin of power,



and the social groups active at that time.



They suggest both distant and near influences,



desires, fears, and daily life from the relevant time.



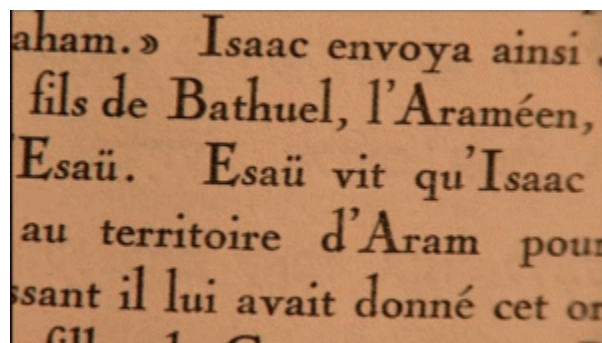
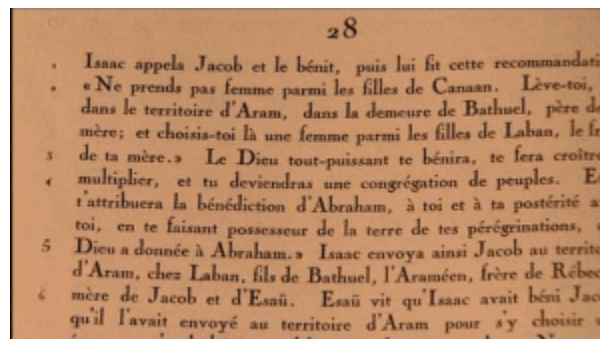
Like these small, engraved cylinders that were used as seals, or amulets,



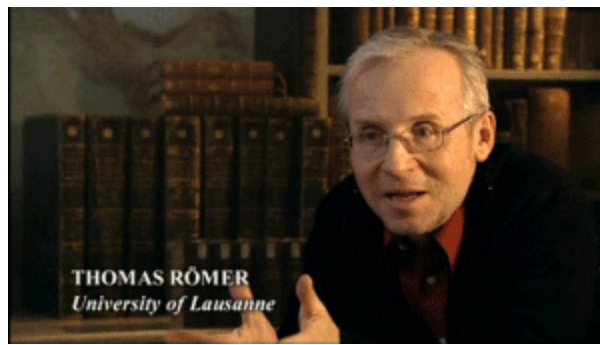
and in which we can see the rites that were then popular in Mesopotamia and the Levant unfolding before our eyes.



[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] At Megiddo, we have evidence for the influence of the Northern powers, the Northern civilizations. I mean, Mesopotamia and Assyria, throughout history, from the late 4th millennium to the 1st millennium B.C. This means they had an impact on the events in the Levant throughout, and that it is impossible to reconstruct the history of this region without taking into consideration the Northern civilizations Mesopotamia and Assyria.



[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] There are many links in the stories of the Patriarchs with the people of the North, that is the Arameans.



We have Jacob and his uncle Lavan who ended up there, and we can see that they have family ties there, as well as more complicated conflictual links. Territories had to be mapped out, and it was not always an easy task. The North is also mentioned when Abraham is about to leave as he comes from Haram, which was a very important Aramaic town.



[Narrator] The Biblical text describes the migration of Abraham as a break with his own civilization.



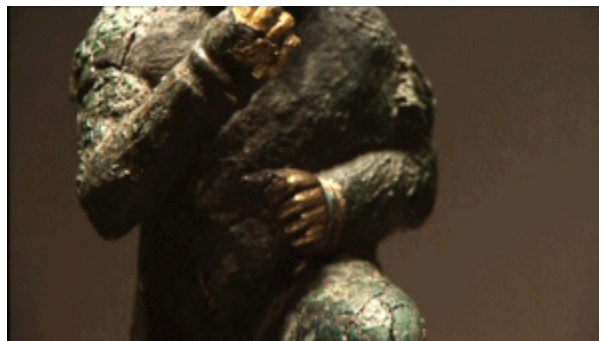
But is the hypothesis that the Patriarchs originated in Mesopotamia a plausible one?



One of the answers lies perhaps in the countless archives and testimonials of Mesopotamian civilization that are today to be found disseminated throughout the world's greatest museums.



The Louvre Museum, France



We have here a panorama of the civilizations and empires



that followed one another in Mesopotamia over the millennia.





Alongside these monuments that rise up from the sands, we find thousands of tablets covered in cuneiform symbols,



writings in clay that cover several thousands of years,



some of which date from the 2nd millennium B.C.



Will Neil Silberman be able to find traces of Abraham's story in these tablets?



The thousands of tablets dug up from the silt of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers,



form a gigantic database that has to be deciphered,



a task that is still ongoing.



In the 1920s, an English archaeologist, Leonard Woolley, began digs at Ur,



the village where Abraham originated. [?]



A number of clues appear to be quite conclusive. [?]



William Albright, a U.S. scholar,



believed that he had identified the historical framework for the Patriarch's story.



He claimed that a vast migration, that of the Ammorites,



a nomadic people from Mesopotamia,



led to the destruction of urban culture in the Levant around 2,000 B.C.





Neil Silberman is at the School of Applied Higher Studies in Paris.



[Neil Silberman] The early scholars attempted to place Abraham in a historic context of the Ammorite invasions. But do we believe this could be true today?



[Dominique Charpin, Assyriologist -- EPHE] The Ammorites are a people that are well-documented at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd millenniums, and it was very tempting to link Abraham's migration with that of the Ammorites. However, the Ammorite migrations primarily occurred in a West-East direction, whereas Abraham, in contrast, went from East to West. As a consequence, the link is not as obvious as was once thought.

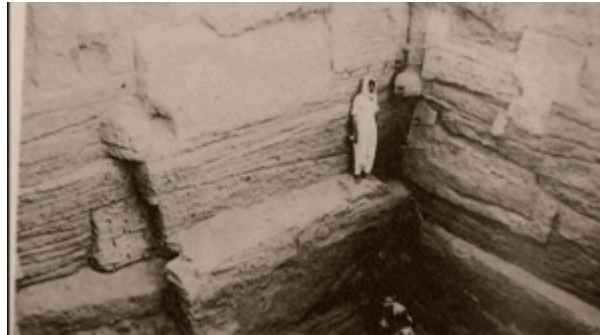


[Narrator] It now appears to be well-accepted: there was no migration in the direction of Canaan at the time the Bible situates Abraham's voyage.



But new discoveries in the ruins of Mari and Nuzi relaunched the investigation on Abraham.





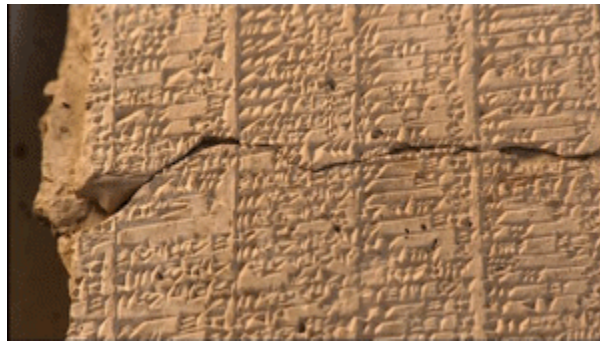
Over 20,000 cuneiform tablets have been excavated in Mari.



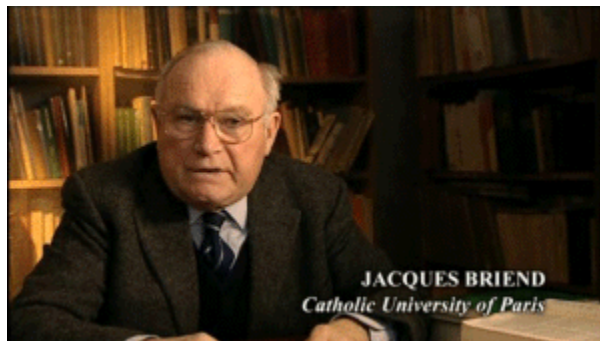
They contain certain Biblical names, such as Yesmachel, which could be Ishmael,



Yacubel, for Jacob, and most importantly, Abiram for Abraham.



[Jacques Briend, Catholic University of Paris] For a long time it was thought that the name of Abraham could be linked to the period around 1,800 ...



when the name was cited in a certain number of texts. However, the sudden increase in the number of texts available meant that there was clear evidence that the name was widely used not only around 1,800 but in the centuries that followed. So there was no real proof of the relevant time period for this Biblical Patriarch.



[Narrator] As the tablets were gradually deciphered, new theories appeared,



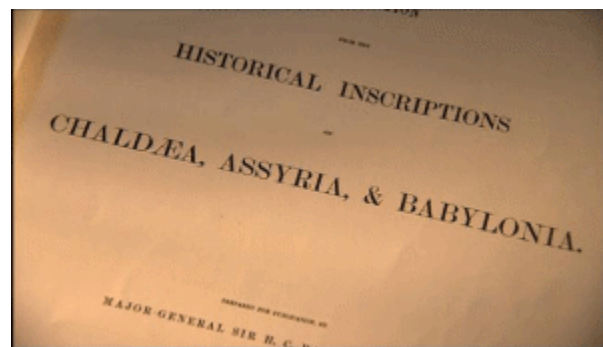
most of which tried to prove the existence of Abraham in the 2nd millennium B.C.



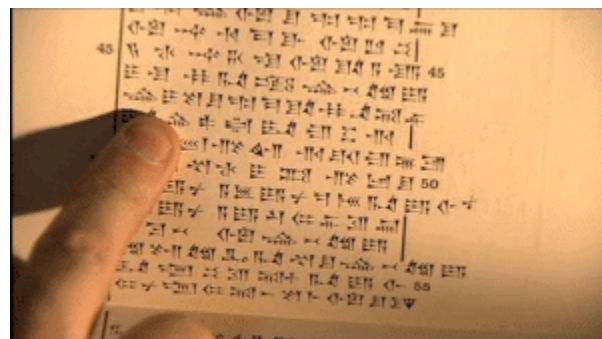
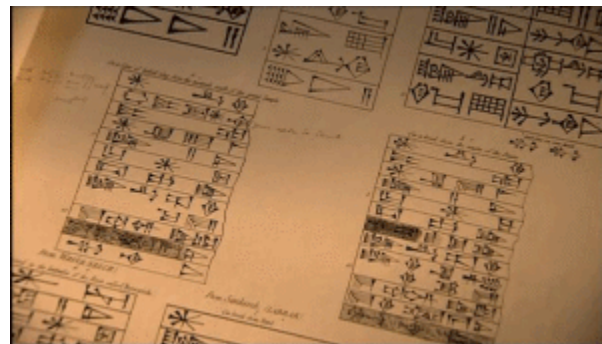
Cambridge, Great Britain

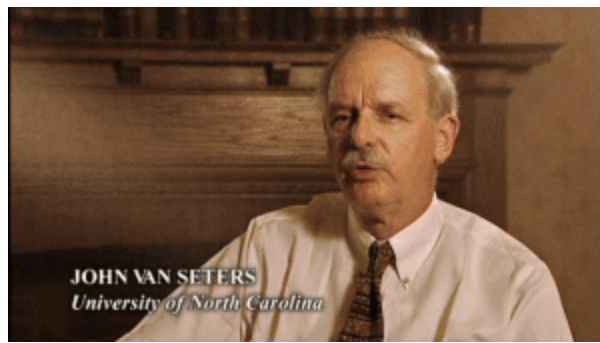


John Van Seters, an internationally recognized expert, has been working on the Nuzi tablets for a long time.



The tablets contain a story similar to that of Sarah, Abraham's barren wife in the Bible.

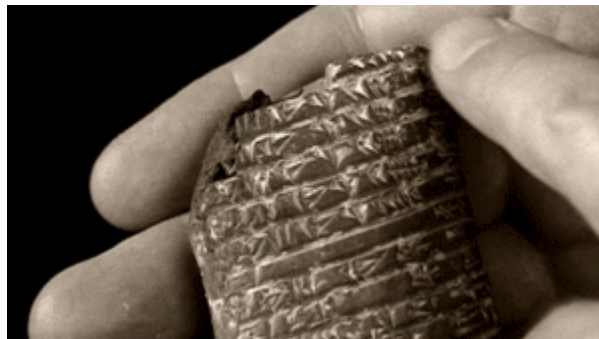




[John Van Seters, University of North Carolina] How to account for a barren woman who gives her maidservant to her husband in order to bear children for her? Something of this kind seemed to show up in the Nuzi Tablets. And so this scholar said, "Aha, here we have something."



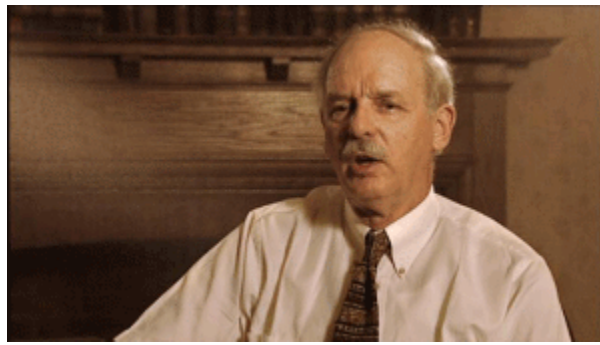
Here we have a way of linking Abraham with this particular period."



And this was very attractive,



but there were some problems.



The problems were that scholars were so concentrated on the documents of the 2nd millennium, that they forgot to look at the documents in the 1st millennium.



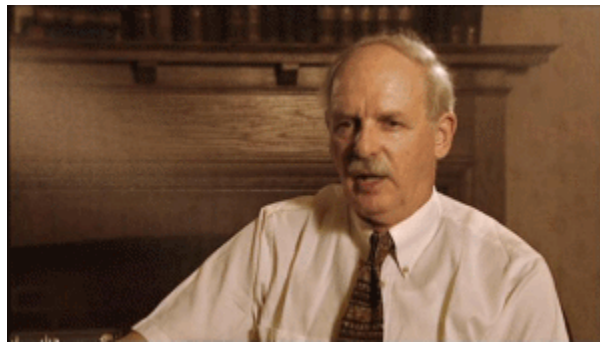
And when one looked through the same kind of literature,



the same kind of archival documents of the 1st millennium,



the same customs show up in these texts.



Taking all of these things together, they really prove absolutely nothing. There's just no firm evidence that can pin down the Patriarchs and Abraham into a particular period in the 2nd millennium.



[Narrator] In this way, traditional Biblical archaeology reached a dead end in terms of the Abraham story.





[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] So what we see is that the whole concept of roaming the land with the Bible in one hand and the spade in the other in order to look for the Patriarchs, doesn't work. In a domino effect, one theory after the next collapsed.



So the problem is not in this theory or that theory, the problem is in the way of thinking, in the concept, the idea of all traditional Biblical archaeology does not work, is wrong. And I think that now we have to go back to the text, to the Book of Genesis, in order to understand the reality [?] of the period of the Patriarchs on the background of the period of the writing.



[Narrator] Nevertheless, the Old Testament can still be used by historians. [?]



It suffices to know how to identify the clues contained in the book, [?]



the names of places or people, typical landscapes.



In the book of Genesis, reference is made to the Philistines,



a people who came to Canaan and who made life difficult for the Israelites. [?]





What do we know of the Philistines? That they are part of a group of peoples whose origin is unknown, who came to the coastal plains of the Levant, and who were given the name "The Sea Peoples."



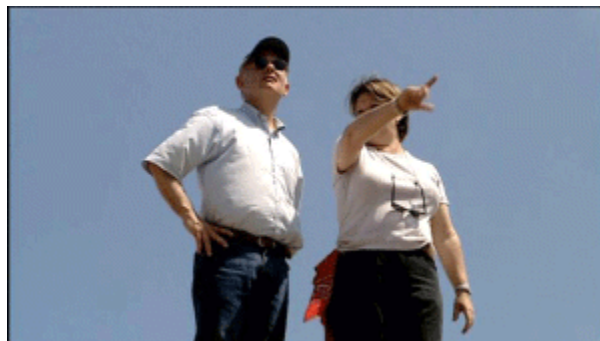
Neil Silberman met with an Israeli archaeologist in digs in Dor, not far from Megiddo,



a site that relates to these Sea Peoples.



She is trying to identify them and determine their date of arrival.





[Neil Silberman] What can we say about the date of the arrival of the Philistines and the other Sea Peoples?

[Melet Gilboa, University of Haifa] Well, other than the Bible when they are mentioned, earlier was archaeologically. And if we take into consideration the literature, they appear on the scene in the 12th century, B.C. It was roughly 1200, or 1150 B.C.

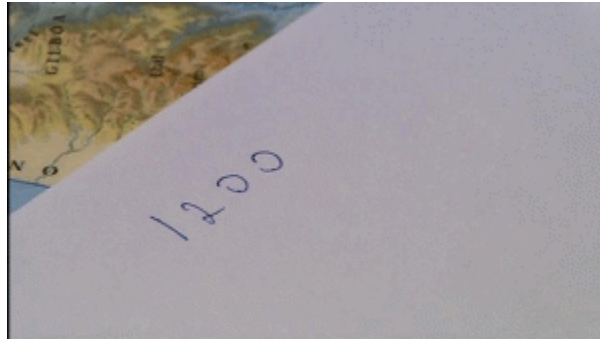
[Neil Silberman] So in the earlier periods, when it is mentioned in connection with Abraham, there's just not archaeological evidence? Everything comes later?



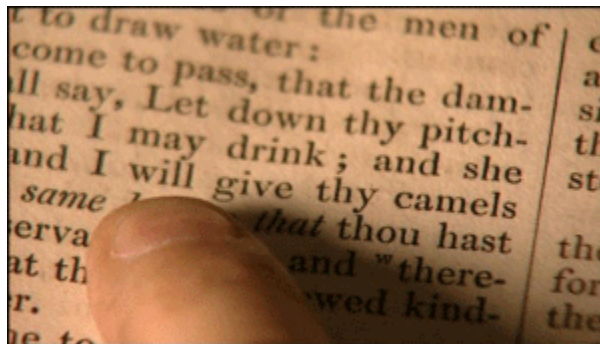
[Melet Gilboa, University of Haifa] No, none whatsoever. Archaeologically, everything starts in the 12's, some say a little bit earlier, maybe the late 13th century.



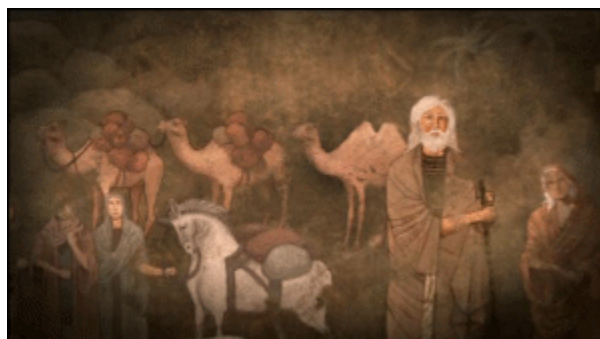
[Narrator] The Biblical verses that associate the Patriarchs with the Philistines, presuppose a world that dates after the 12th century B.C.



Let us continue with our investigation.



The stories of the Bible often refer to camels.



There are 25 references to this animal in Genesis, most of which have some connection with Abraham.



Camels were obviously a well-known animal in the Near East,



and archaeological excavations have revealed significant quantities of camel bones.



But our objective is to put a date on these events.



Zoology Museum, University of Tel Aviv



Israel Finkelstein has gone to see Lidar Sapir of the University of Tel Aviv's Archaeo-Zoological Laboratory.



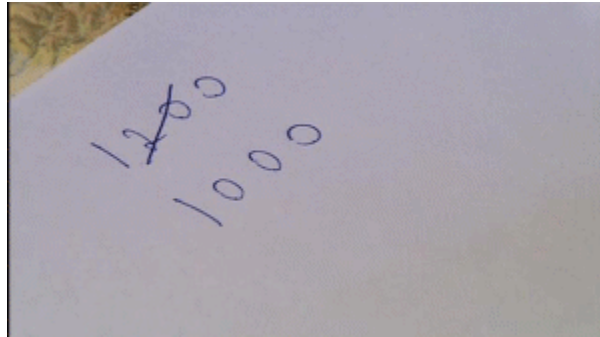
[Israel Finkelstein] What do we know about the domestication of the camel in the Levant region?



[Lidar Sapir, Archaeo-Zoologist] According to the archaeological evidence, the camel could not have been domesticated as a beast of burden before the 1st millennium B.C.



[Narrator] A second piece of evidence has therefore arisen that contradicts the Biblical texts.



The camels of the Near East were not used as working animals before 1,000 B.C.



Before this period, we can find no trace or representation of this animal on vases, ceramics, or monumental decors.



But our investigation doesn't end there.



The presence of camels is linked to the caravan trade from Arabia.



The Biblical texts state that these caravans transported gum tragacanth, ointments, and ladanum.



The Assyrian tablets and archaeology show that the caravan routes,



linking Arabia to the Levant coast, went through the Kingdom of Judah [?].



This trade, which required many camels, reached its height in the 7th Century B.C.



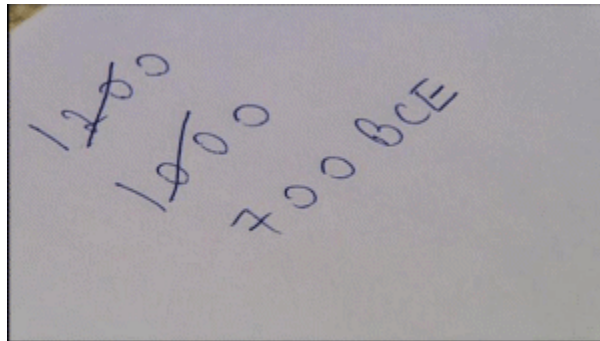
The caravans described in the STORY of Joseph, the son of the Patriarch Jacob,



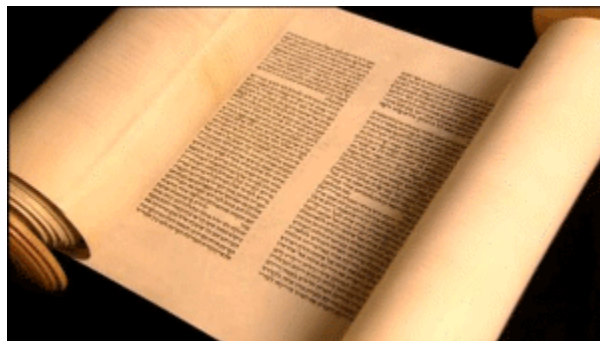
therefore refer to a reality of the 7th century,



when the Assyrian kingdom dominated the tiny kingdom of Judah.



[Israel Finkelstein] So now that we look at Genesis, we know that Genesis does NOT describe the background of the 18th century. We are NOT in the Middle Bronze Age. There are enough anachronisms there about the Philistines, about the camels, that show us that we are not in an environment of the Middle Bronze. Instead, it is clear that we are in the 7th Century B.C. All of the details, or many of the details in Genesis, fit perfectly the 7th Century B.C. So we have already answered one question: "When?" But there's still another question: "Why?" We need to look at the authors of Genesis and ask, "Why did they tell the story of Genesis in this way?"



[Narrator] The fact that the Biblical texts state that Abraham left Mesopotamia for the Holy [?] Land,



tells us nothing about the authors of the text. Our investigation will therefore now turn to the ultimate destination of his migration.



[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] According to the Biblical story, Abraham arrived from the North. He traveled through important sites in the North,



but finally came to settle in Hebron. His settlement in Hebron was in fact confirmed by Abraham's acquisition of a tomb from the inhabitants of the area.



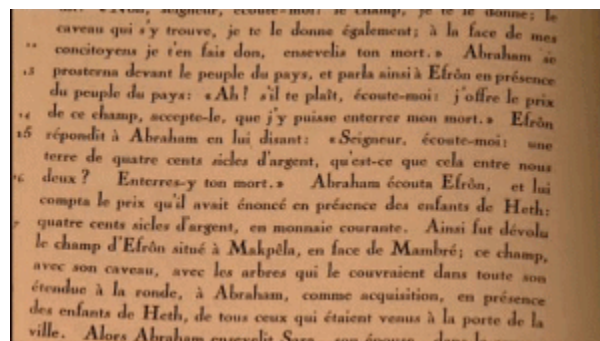
[Narrator] The names of biblical places attracted the attention of a German researcher



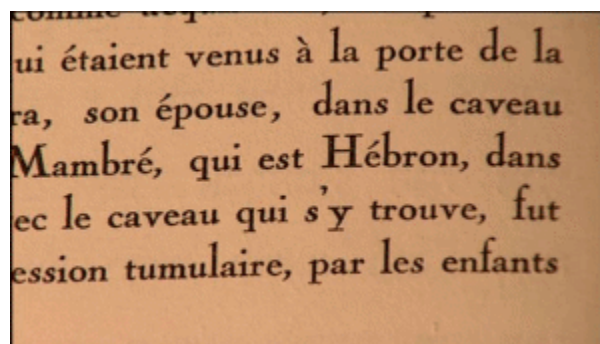
who in the 1940s made an inventory of all the places where the Patriarchs' stories took place.



His name was Martin Noth.



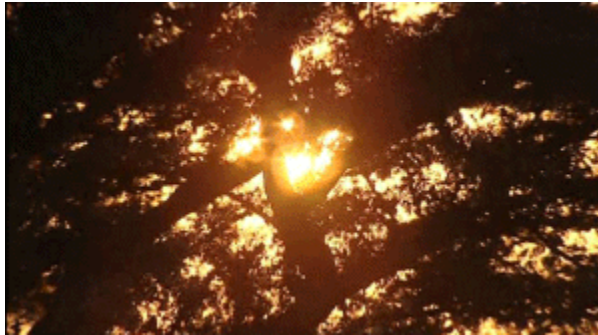
The Bible tells us that Abraham -- a nomad -- bought some land near Hebron in which to die.



But also in which to live.



The story tells of the appearance in an oak grove in Mamre of three of God's messengers



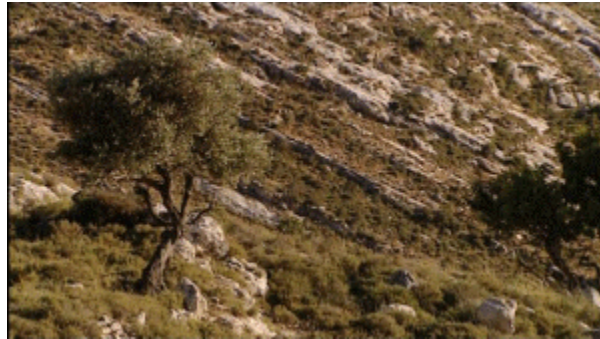
who announced to Abraham's wife, who has been barren up until then, that she was to have a child.



God appeared to Abraham under the oaks of Mamre as he sat at his tent-door at noontide. And lifting up his eyes, he
SAW,



and BEHOLD, three men stood before him.



Hebron and Mamre are located in the center of Canaan

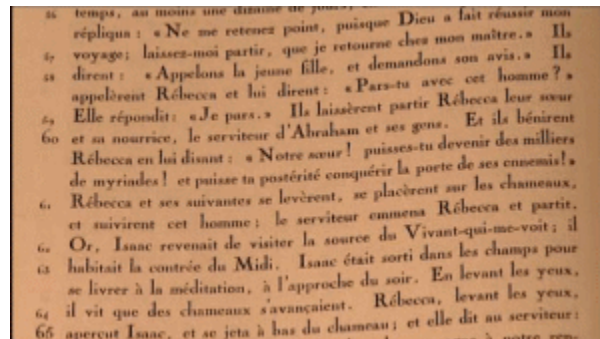


at the heart of its rocky hills.

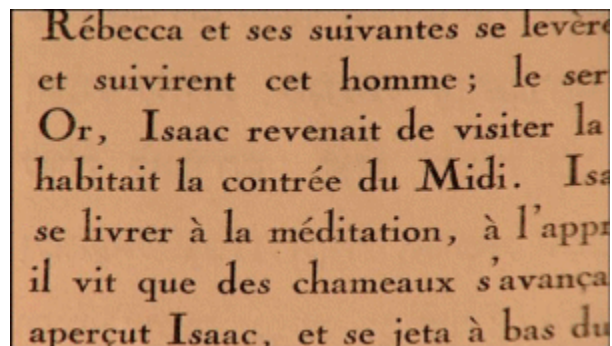




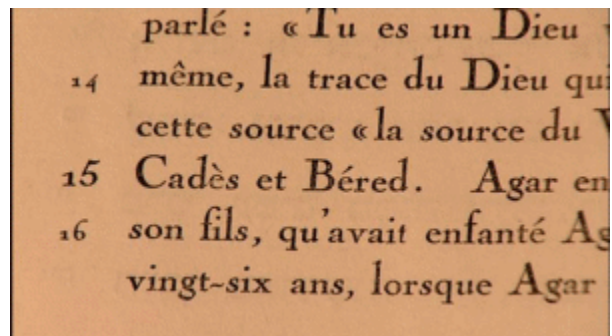
Continuing his geographical reading of the Bible,



Martin Noth became interested in the second Patriarch --



Isaac, the son of Sarah and Abraham.

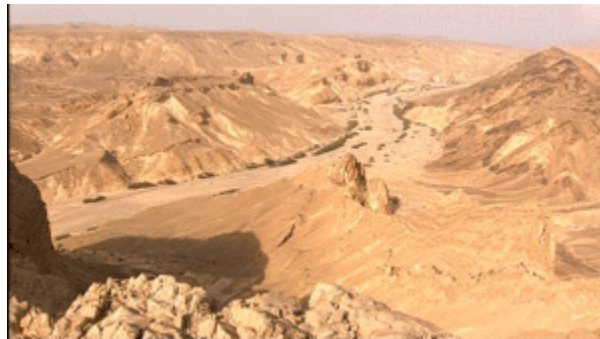


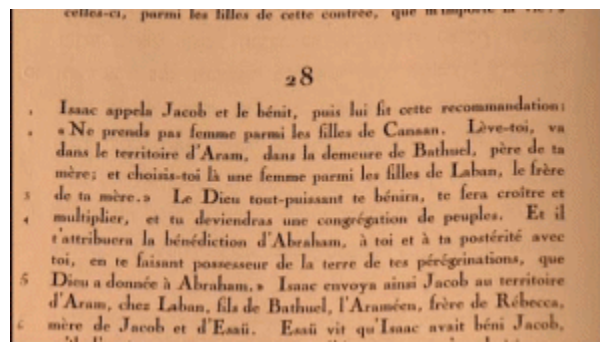


Isaac played a role in a VERY FAMOUS scene. Responding to a call from God, Abraham agreed to sacrifice Isaac, only to be replaced AT THE VERY LAST MOMENT by an animal.

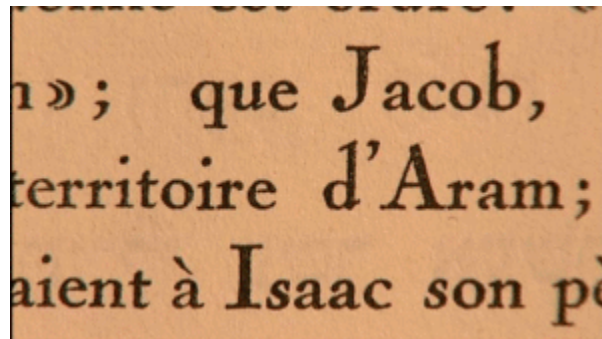


The Bible tells us that Isaac was a shepherd living in the semi-arid south of Canaan.

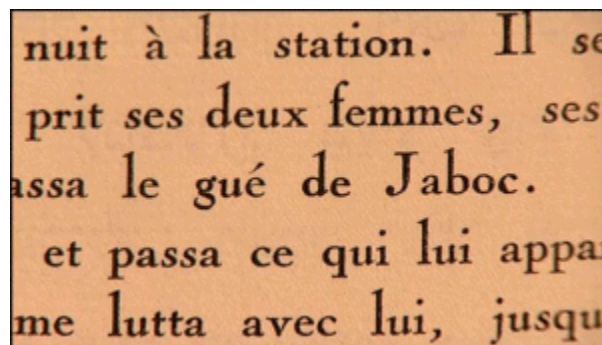




Martin Noth then turned to the 3rd Patriarch, Jacob.



The Biblical text tells us that he had to go to the North, to the site of his original family,



in order to choose a wife.



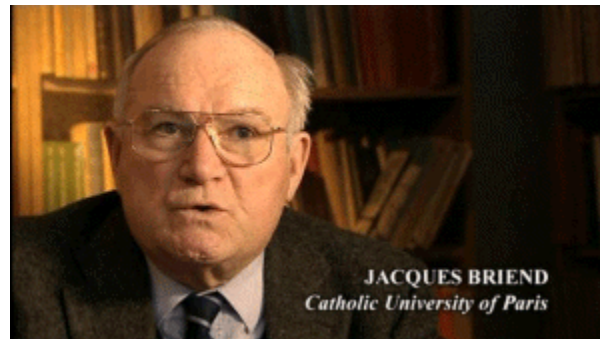
On his return journey, he entered into battle with an angel, near a river that runs in the northeast of the country. According to the Bible, it was during the combat with God's angel that he received a new name: Israel, he who battles with God.



Other texts relating to him are situated in the mountainous regions of the North of Canaan.



The geography of the three Patriarchs led Martin Noth to suggest a reading of the Bible that was different to the traditional one.



[Jacques Briend, Catholic University of Paris] On the basis of these geographical sites [Samaria, Jerusalem, Hebron, Beersheba] it is understandable that an attempt was made to link them to each other. As history developed, an understanding was sought of how these groups of humans related to each other. This led to a sort of Patriarchal genealogy with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.



[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] It was quite obvious that there were originally **THREE QUITE SEPARATE TRADITIONS**. **THE PATRIARCHS WERE, IN FACT, NOT RELATED**. In the North, the story of Jacob was told. In Hebron, the story of Abraham. And in Beersheba, the story of Isaac. **THE IDEA THAT THESE THREE PATRIARCHS WERE FROM ONE AND THE SAME FAMILY WAS, IN FACT, AN INVENTION**,

AFTER THE FACT, BY THOSE WHO WROTE THE BIBLE. They wanted to show that there was a link between these three Patriarchs, whereas in fact there was none.



[Narrator] Does this TESTIFY as to a diversity in the oral traditions, or in those of the texts? As of the 19th century, German Biblical exegesis revealed that Genesis contained a number of STORIES of various origins that were WOVEN TOGETHER. Some were linked to the kingdom in the North [?] -- Israel -- and others to the kingdom in the South [?] -- Judah.

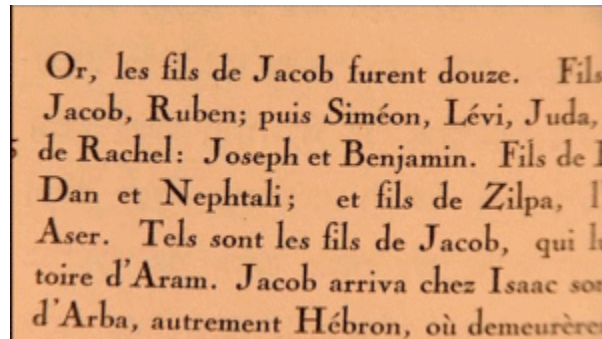


[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] So there are three different traditions set in the background of three different geographical zones. And the question is, "Why Abraham at the center?" Why Abraham is put first? The answer is clear. We are in Jerusalem, and Judah in the 7th century, in the period of the Judaic kingdom. So regardless of whether the Patriarchs are historical or mythical [???], the most important fact is the background of the STORY shows us that we are in the 7th century, in Judah, in Jerusalem. The people who wrote this decided to put Abraham

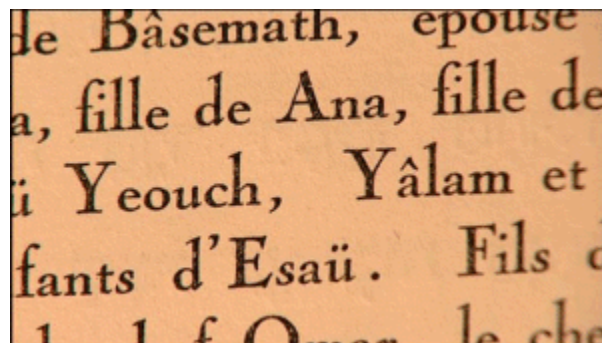
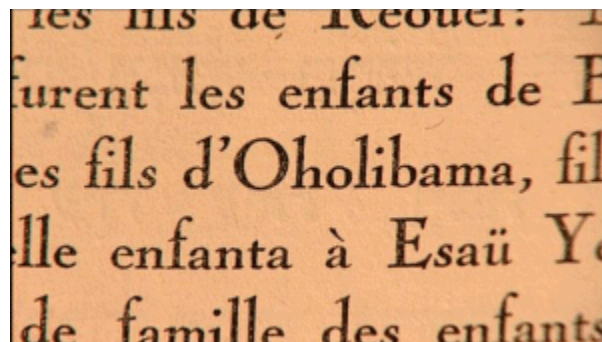
first, as the founder of the family, as the center of the STORY, and by that also, JUDAH AS THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE.

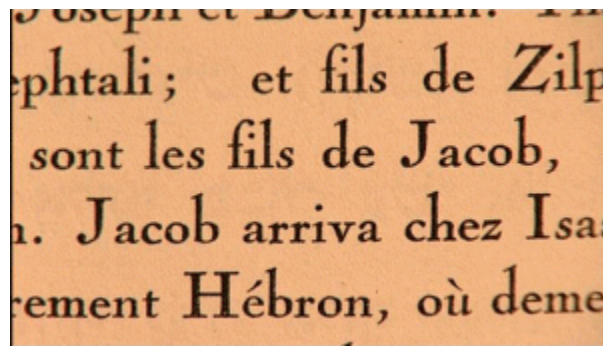


[Narrator] The Bible contains many long genealogies,



lists of generations and family alliances that define territories and structure time.





[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] The history of the Patriarchs in the Bible is also a family history.



Abraham was not only Isaac's father, he was also Ishmael's father who is at the origin of all Arab tribes. And Isaac is not only Jacob's father, he's also Esau's father. And then Abraham is also Lot's uncle. This means that all the different peoples, clans and tribes that live in Canaan, and in Cis in trans-Jordan, are linked by being descendants of Abraham.

So all these people are presented as being part of one great family, with the problems faced by all families, but also the idea of a profound link between all these different peoples.



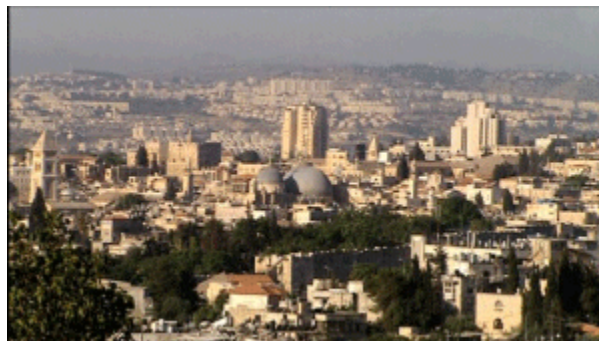
[Narrator] According to the Biblical texts, many of the peoples and neighboring kingdoms are related to Judah.



The LONG FAMILY SAGA of the Bible, as in any extended family tree, WEAVES THE LINKS that unites these peoples. But it also does more than that.

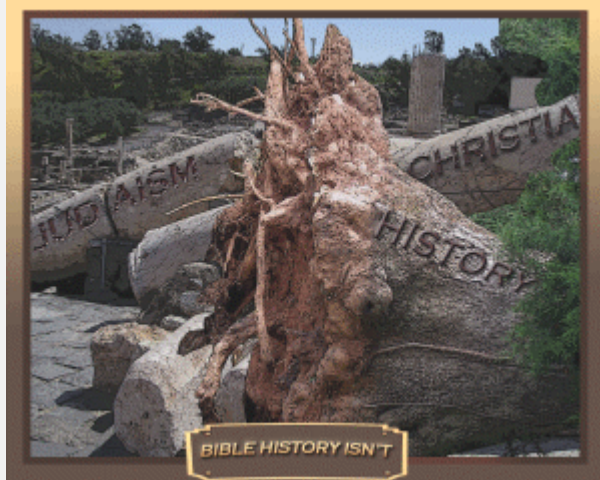


[Neil Asher Silberman, Center for Archaeological Research -- ENAME Belgium] What we see in the figure of Abraham is a **SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION** of **THE BIRTH OF THE NATION**. Because at the time of the writing of the Bible, the history [?] of the people of Israel, **WAS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE HISTORY IN THE SENSE THAT WE UNDERSTAND IT**, of years, of periods, of particular historical events. It was seen more as the history of the family, **AND OF COURSE, THE FATHER** of the family, the **FOUNDER** of the family is **A PERSON OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE**. And throughout all the **STORIES** of Abraham, we see **SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS** of the places of importance in Judah, of the kinds of relationships with other people that made Judean history [?].





[Narrator] The STORY of the Patriarchs is the FIRST PILLAR of what would later become Judaism. And that is COMMON ROOTS.



Bible History Isn't, by Tara Carreon



ACCORDING TO JEWISH TRADITION, the group known as THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL is MADE UP of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.



In their eyes, BELONGING TO A PEOPLE AND TO A RELIGION IS ONE AND THE SAME THING.



Our investigation has taken us forward a GREAT step.



The facts we have gathered allow us to establish the period [?] in which the **STORIES** of the Patriarchs were first written, [?] and provides a geographical framework for this work:



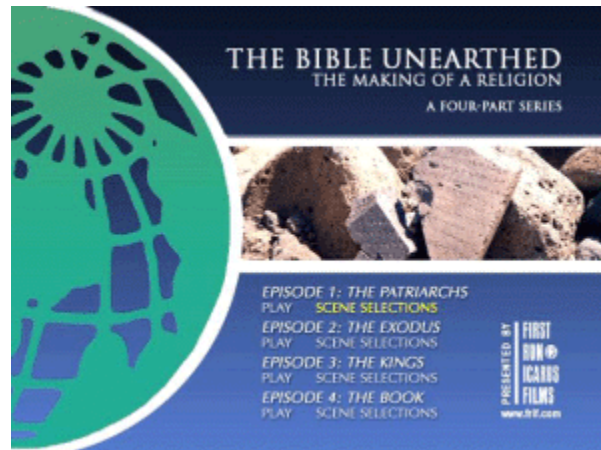
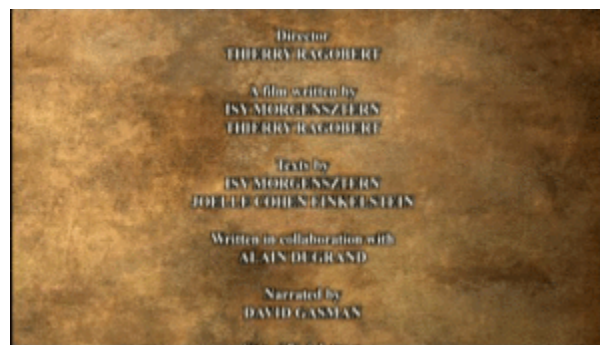
The region of Judah in the 7th Century B.C.



But these books of stone have not finished raising questions about the work of paper.



Did the Exodus, a central event in the Old Testament, **REALLY** take place? Did those who were called "The Hebrews," go to Egypt? And did they leave under the command of a certain Moses? What role has been played by **THE LAW** in this **STORY**? These questions will be the subject of our investigation in the second episode of our series.



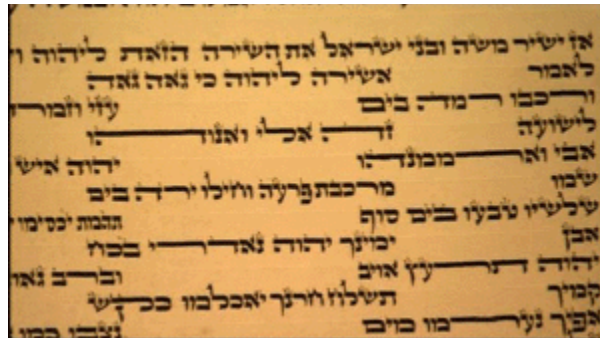
EPISODE 2: THE EXODUS



France 5 presents in association with Arte France
A Cabiria Films
Maya Rothschild
SZ Productions
Isy Morgensztern
France 5
Co-Production
With the participation of ARTE France



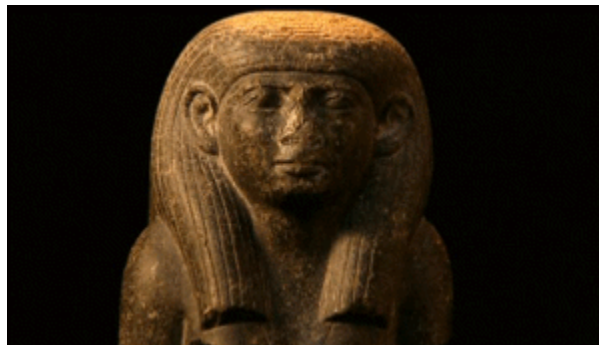
[Narrator] The Old Testament is a MYSTERIOUS and COMPLEX work. It contains a set of rules and requirements that form the basis of both a religion and a civilization[?]: Judaism.



But it is also a historical [?] work that tells the STORY of the ancient Israelites.



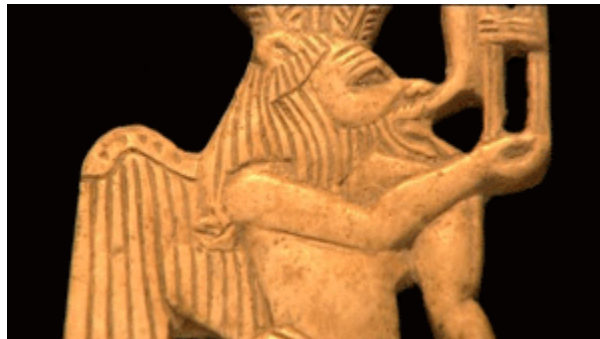
In the previous episode, we learned that the STORY of the Patriarchs -- Abraham, Isaac and Jacob -- was put into writing for the first time in the 7th Century B.C. [???], in the kingdom of Judah [???]. Two researchers, Neil Silberman and Israel Finkelstein put forward that HYPOTHESIS.



But what about the other GREAT stories of the Bible? Many of the vestiges discovered in the sites of Canaan



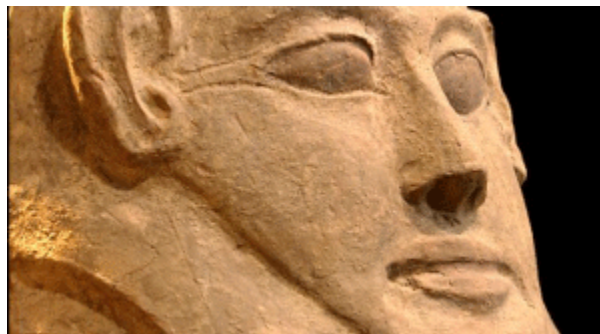
are the remains of a sophisticated civilization -- THAT OF EGYPT, an all-pervasive presence.



Do these objects bear any relation to one of the most FAMOUS stories of the Old Testament:



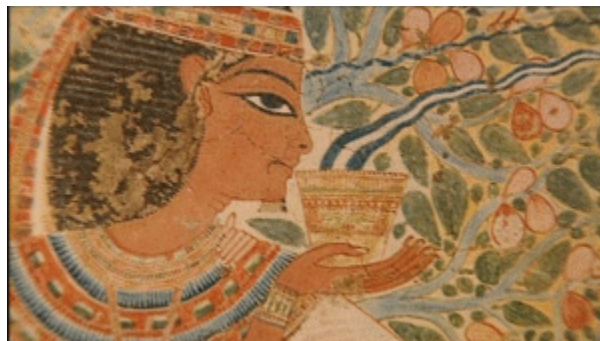
That of the conflict between Moses and the Pharaoh?



What are they able to tell us about ancient Egypt?



The Biblical text explains that the descendants of the Patriarchs came to live in Egypt



where they remained for 430 years.



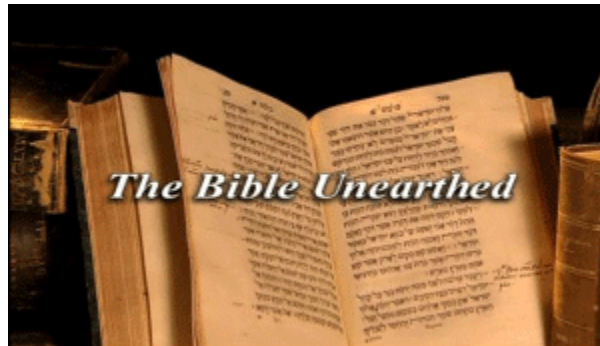
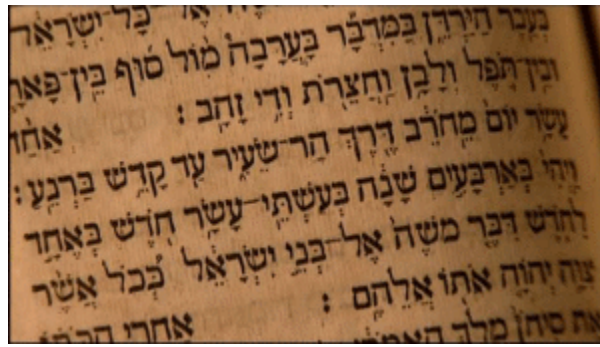
The STORY of their LIBERATION by Moses, and their journey through the WILDERNESS,



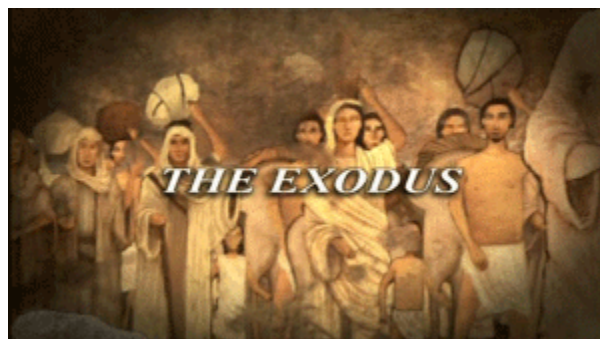
is told in the second book of the Bible: the Exodus.



But did this Exodus ACTUALLY take place?



The Bible Unearthed



THE EXODUS



The Israelites' LONG SOJOURN in Egypt, their ENSLAVEMENT, and LIBERATION, and the LAW received by Moses, represent the core of the second book of the Bible. The Bible tells us that under the leadership of this EXCEPTIONAL man -- Moses -- the Hebrew people RETURNED to the land that had been PROMISED their ancestors.



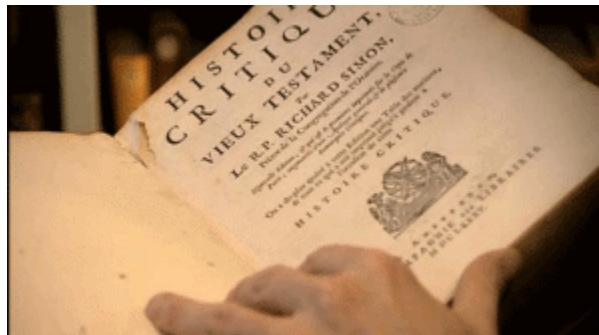
Our investigation will begin in Lausanne,



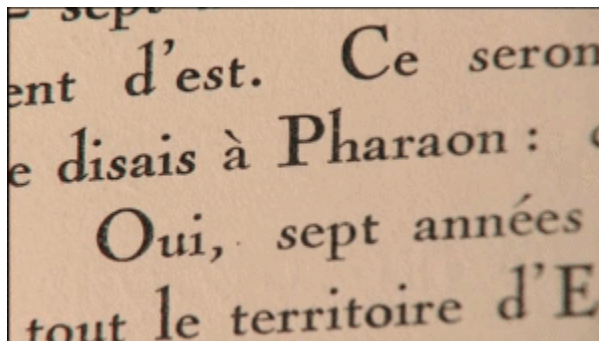
in the library of a theology department to be exact.



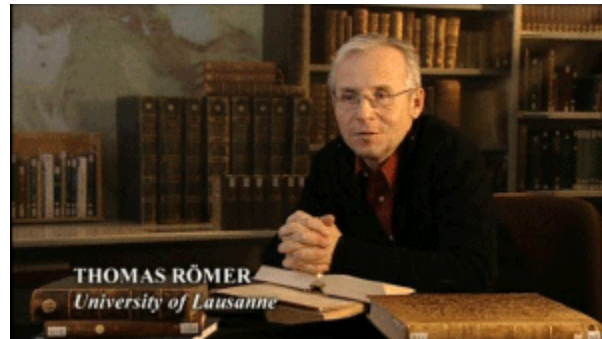
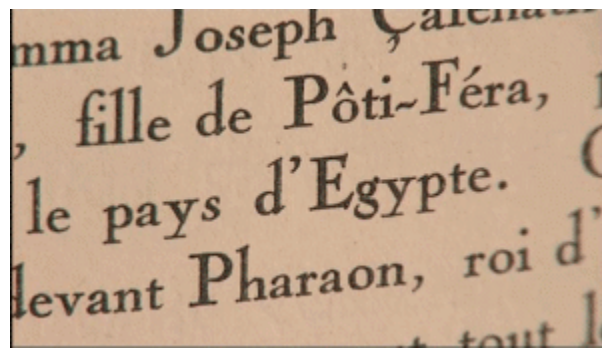
Thomas Romer is a Biblical scholar. He will be accompanying us in the investigation of these texts.



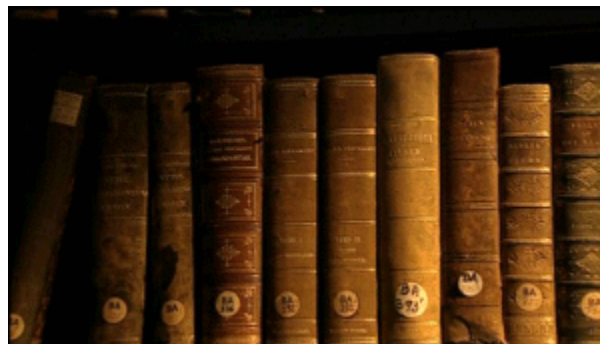
In order to understand the role played by Egypt in the Bible,



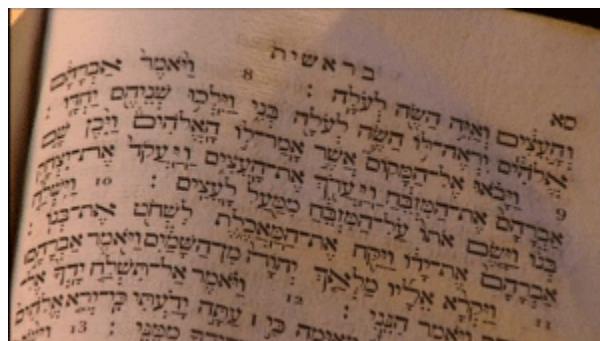
we have to go back to the circumstances surrounding the arrival of Jacob's sons in that country.



[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] Egypt is omnipresent in the Hebrew Bible. It is often a land of welcome. Abraham went there because of the famine in Canaan. as did Jacob and his son Joseph later on. It was also a land of asylum, attracting many political refugees. They always had relations with Egypt. Sometimes those relations were complicated; sometimes they were simple. But there were NO REAL IDEOLOGICAL ISSUES, because in fact, there was not much talk in the Bible of the Gods of Egypt. So what is important with Egypt is that it was constantly in the minds of all the Biblical authors.



[Narrator] Joseph's STORY in Egypt begins at the end of Genesis,



the first book of the Bible.



Sold by his brothers to caravan drivers on their way to Egypt, he was bought by an officer,



and introduced into the Pharaoh's court where he became the GRAND VIZIER!

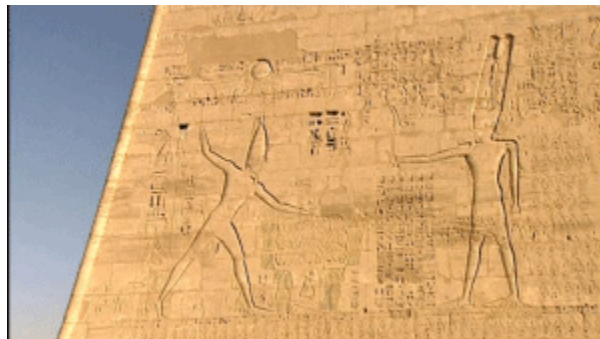


The Bible tells the STORY of his REMARKABLE FATE.





In powerful and centralized Egypt,



where ROYAL PROPAGANDA played a critical role,



nothing went unrecorded.



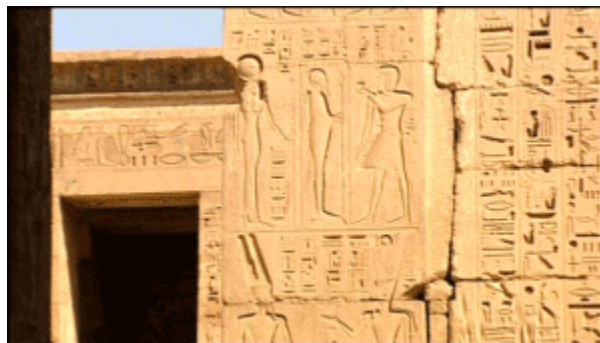
Everything relating to the administrative functioning of THE EMPIRE was noted down,



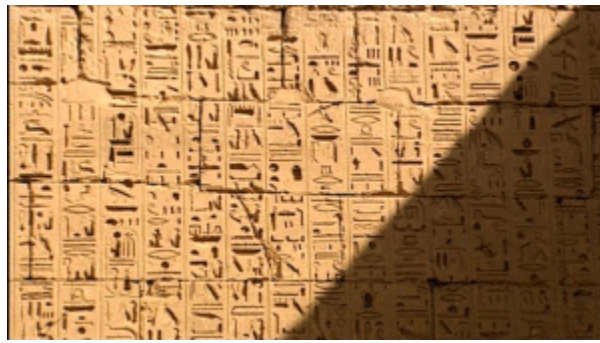
from major events to THE STATE's day-to-day running.



Does this huge collection of hieroglyphics



contain any clues as to Joseph's power, or, AT LEAST, the PRESENCE of the Israelites in Egypt?



In order to answer that question,



our investigators have to go to Egypt.



Cairo, Egypt



[Honk, honk]



[Honk, honk]



Neil Silberman is in THE COUNTRY THAT ALL ARCHAEOLOGISTS DREAM ABOUT. A millennial civilization, magnificent preserved monuments, and in the heart of Cairo, an obligatory visit for our historian.



An IMPERIAL building placed under the AUSPICES of [Jean-Francois] Champollion,



the man who unraveled the mysteries of the hieroglyphics.



He will be meeting here with Jean Pierre Cortegianni, a French Egyptologist.



[Jean-Pierre Cortegianni, Egyptologist] When you look at a map of Egypt, it's obvious that it couldn't be anywhere else.



In any case, you have the Suez Canal here, what is known as the Suez Canal today.



[Neil Silberman] The Bible tells A VERY CLEAR STORY of Jacob's family coming down to Egypt at a time of famine. Are there other important sources in Egyptian inscriptions and pictures of people from Canaan coming down to Egypt in a time of famine?



[Jean-Pierre Cortegianni, Egyptologist] Certain people built careers there, people who held important positions. So the STORY of Joseph becoming a minister in the Pharaoh's service is quite plausible. I prefer NOT to use the word PHARAOH, because we REALLY SHOULD SAY KING of Egypt. As you know, the word "Pharaoh" comes from the Bible. The Egyptians themselves NEVER CALLED THEIR KINGS PHARAOHS, except very late in the period. In any case, there were people in the King's entourage who were Semites, who had been naturalized. They took on Egyptian names, and some of them built brilliant careers there.



Paintings in the ancient necropolis of Beni Hasan show Semites who had come to Egypt, most likely for trade reasons.



These show details of women that are not at all Egyptian, with these patterns here.



The faces are quite typical of how the Egyptians saw the Semites, with long pointy beards and thicker hair.



[Narrator] The traders were not the only ones attracted to Egypt.

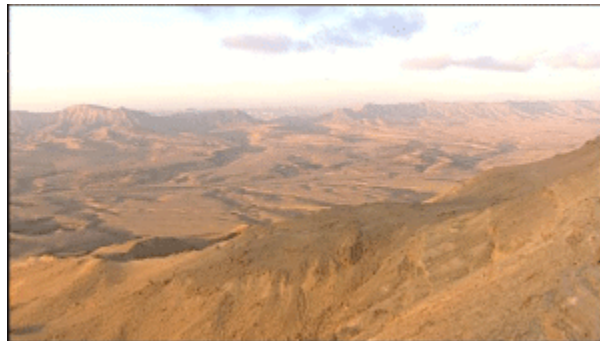




The land of Canaan was subject to very dry seasons, and irregular rainfalls, resulting in frequent famines.



Herders and farmers had no other choice but to go to Egypt to work as laborers



and take advantage of a more hospitable land.



That hospitality was a gift of the Nile,



a river that is both the soul of Egypt,



and its life source.



Throughout Biblical antiquity, Egypt acted as a magnet for those who came from arid lands,



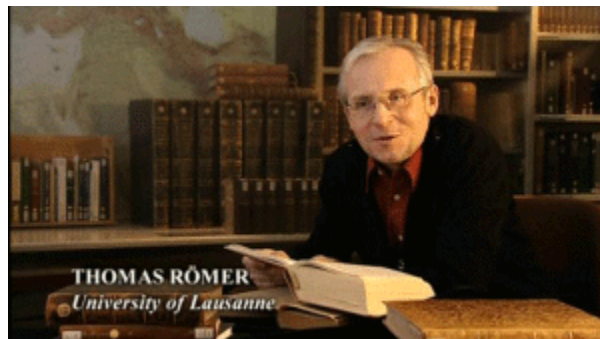
a land of refuge that was a source of fascination, as are most lands of plenty.



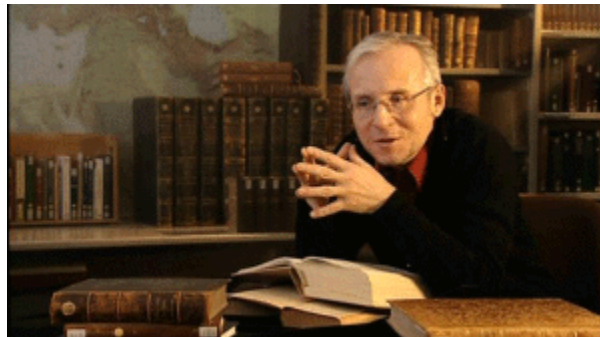
[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] So how do we go from the STORY of Joseph, who was doing SO WELL in Egypt, to the description of Egypt we find at the beginning of the book of Exodus,



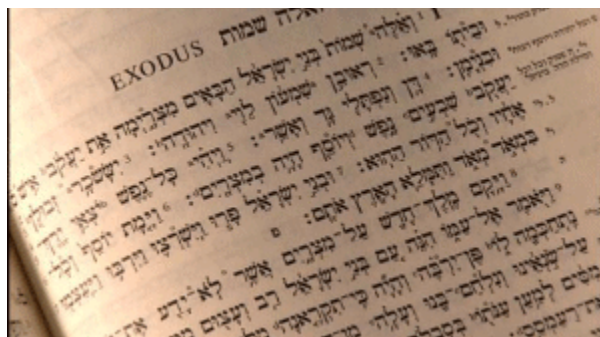
where SUDDENLY, Israel finds itself in A SITUATION OF OPPRESSION AND SLAVERY?



This transition, in fact, occurs at the end of Joseph's STORY, because Joseph sends for Jacob and all his family. And IN FACT [?], it's the Israelites who EXPANDED and GREW in number.



The Book of Exodus opens with the following finding: A new Pharaoh came to power who NO LONGER KNEW JOSEPH or what he had achieved. So, ALL OF A SUDDEN, the picture changes. And we find ourselves in A STATE OF OPPRESSION. On the one hand, the Egyptians wanted to retain their workers, but at the same time, they were AFRAID. They tried all sorts of methods TO GET RID OF THEM, as is related in the Biblical text:



"But the more we oppress them, the more they are fruitful and multiply."



[Narrator] The Bible refers to the names of two cities that the Israelites APPARENTLY built: Pithom and Ramses.



Egyptian documents CONFIRM that a city by the name of Pi-Ramses was built in the Nile Delta in the 13th century B.C. under PHARAOH Ramses II.



From the 1920s onwards, archaeological missions began looking for the remains of that city,



located east of the delta in Qantir.



The Bible SUGGESTS the existence of significant IMPERIAL MONUMENTS; however, researchers have been DISAPPOINTED by the results.



The city of Ramses does in fact APPEAR TO HAVE EXISTED, but very few vestiges have been found.





[Neil Silberman] Mohammad, who was this king?



[Mohammad] Ramesses, Ramesses II.



[Narrator] Today, the site has once again become farming land.



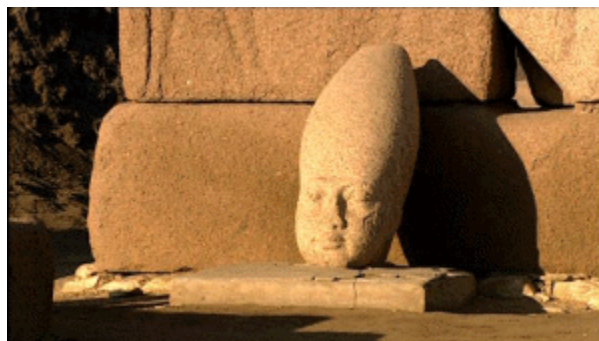
But archaeologists have succeeded in finding the solution to THE ENIGMA.



The City of Ramesses was ABANDONED, just after its construction,



when one of the branches of the Nile dried up.



A few decades later, its monuments were taken apart,



and the stones were re-used in the construction of a new capital --



Tanis -- situated a few dozen kilometres away.





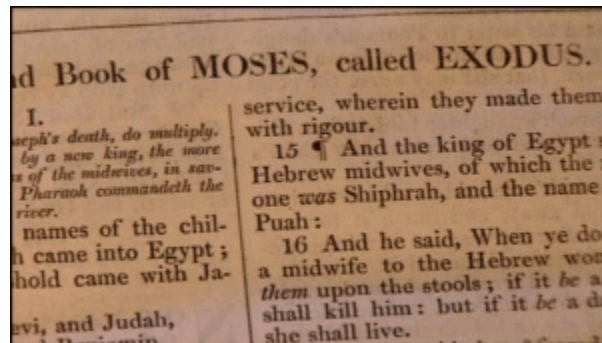
So far, nothing appears to CONTRADICT the fact that Ramesses II was the impressive builder-Pharaoh that we read about in the Bible,



the same [?] Ramesses II that Moses pleaded with in the name of God and his ancestors



to LET HIS PEOPLE GO.



In the Bible, the life of Moses begins AS IN A MYTH:



his mother set him afloat in the river Nile, in order to **ESCAPE** the authorities' **ORDER OF DEATH** of all first-born Israelites.



He was taken in by the Pharaoh's daughter, and raised as an Egyptian noble.



One day he saw an Egyptian strike an **ISRAELITE** slave.



He killed him and fled to the desert.



There, the God of ISRAEL, ordered him to FREE HIS PEOPLE, and to guide them to THE PROMISED LAND.



After HESITATING for a while, he ACCEPTED THE MISSION, and returned to the Court to IMPOSE THE WILL OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL on the Pharaoh.



[Thomas Romer, Lausanne University] Moses defied the Pharaoh. What did that defiance SYMBOLIZE? It showed that Yahweh, the God that sent Moses to the Pharaoh, was MORE POWERFUL than all that the King of Egypt symbolized. When Moses came to see the Pharaoh, the Pharaoh asked who this god Yahweh was? HE HAD NEVER HEARD OF HIM, and considered him as THE MINOR GOD of an Oriental people that was of NO CONSEQUENCE. But, little by little, he realized that this Yahweh was IN FACT more powerful than the whole of the Egyptian pantheon.



[Narrator] But the Pharaoh continued in his refusal.



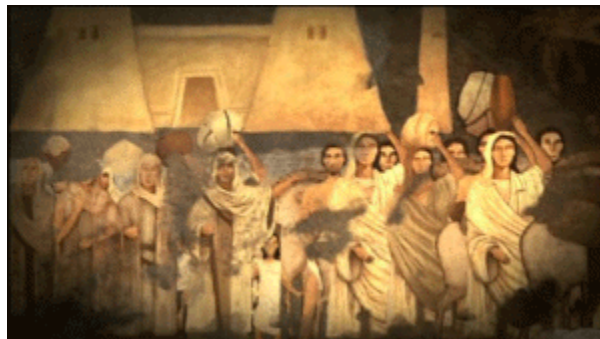
As a result, Egypt was **STRUCK** by the **TEN PLAGUES**.



These plagues **FORCED** the Pharaoh to **CHANGE HIS MIND**, and **LET THE ISRAELITES GO**.



[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] According to the Biblical **STORY**, the **CHILDREN OF ISRAEL** journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about 600,000 on foot that were men, not counting children.



[Narrator] [According to the Bible], the **ISRAELITES** left Egypt in the middle of the night and crossed the Red Sea. The Egyptian army was **SWALLOWED UP** in its waters. Moses **LIBERATED** an **ENSLAVED** people, from under the **YOKE** of a **GREAT EMPIRE**.



So much for THE STORY!



But what are the HISTORICAL FACTS?



Museum of Egyptian Antiquities, Cairo



According to the text, the exodus occurred 480 years before the construction of Solomon's temple. That is, in the 15th century, B.C.



But the reference in the Bible to a city by the name of Pi-Ramses led researchers to place the exodus



in the 13th century at the earliest,



a period where we find the first pharaohs bearing the name of Ramses.



An archaeological vestige held by the Museum of Cairo



makes it possible [?] to determine a chronology



for the Exodus on the basis of historical data. [?]



It was discovered in 1896 in the funerary temple of Ramesses II's son, Pharaoh Merneptah.



The stele describes a military campaign led by Merneptah against Canaan. It provides a list of the cities and people that were fought and conquered.





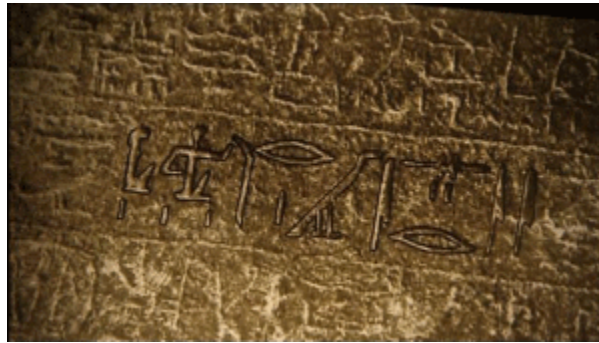
[Jean-Pierre Cortegianni, Egyptologist] At line 27, at the very bottom of the stele, we find a word that corresponds EXACTLY with that of ISRAEL.



"ISRAEL IS DESTROYED, AND ITS SEED IS NO MORE."



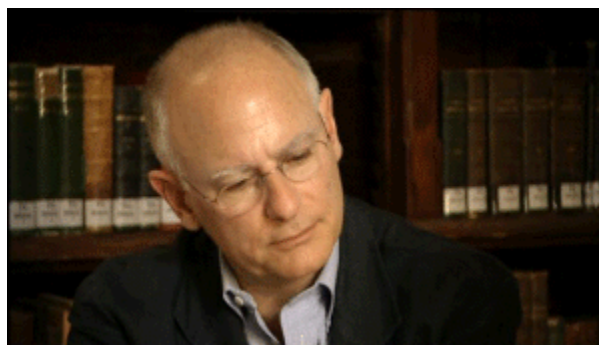
It is this idea of a community of people that is rendered in the hieroglyph of the man and the woman --



the determinative with the plural, which is therefore Israel. IT IS THE ONLY REFERENCE TO ISRAEL IN THE WHOLE OF EGYPTIAN LITERATURE: historical, religious, or literary that we are aware of.

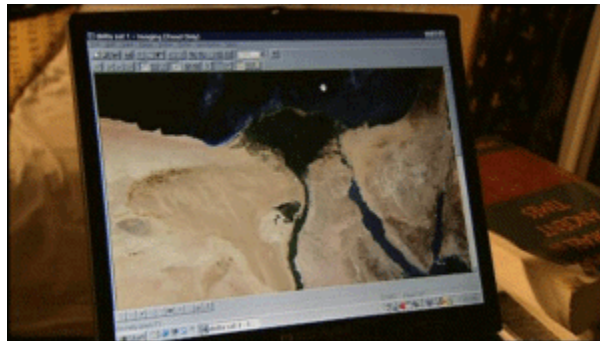


ONLY ONCE is Israel mentioned in all the Egyptian texts, whereas the Bible refers to Mizraim, or Egypt, about 700 times.





The exodus therefore COULD HAVE occurred. [?]



What was the itinerary that was taken?



The Bible tells us that in order to flee, the children of Israel had the choice of two routes: one in the north, which was direct, and one in the south which crossed a mountainous desert.



Which one did they choose? In order to find out, Neil Silberman is going to meet with Donald Redford,



an Egyptologist who has specialized in the Bible, at his excavation in Mendes in the delta.





[Neil Silberman] Hi, Don.

[Donald Redford] Hi, Neil.



[Neil Silberman] Great to see you!

[Donald Redford] Good to see you. How was the trip?

[Neil Silberman] Terrific.

[Donald Redford] Oh, great. We expected you a bit earlier, but the best laid plans, I guess ...



[Neil Silberman] I guess! I hear you're having a great season here.

[Donald Redford] Oh, yes. This is one of the best. I'd like to show you the site. Shall we go and see it?

[Neil Silberman] I'd love to.



Just in the places where the Bible describes the exodus of the Israelites, as they left Egypt, were there fortifications?
Was there a military presence there that would have encountered these fleeing Israelites?



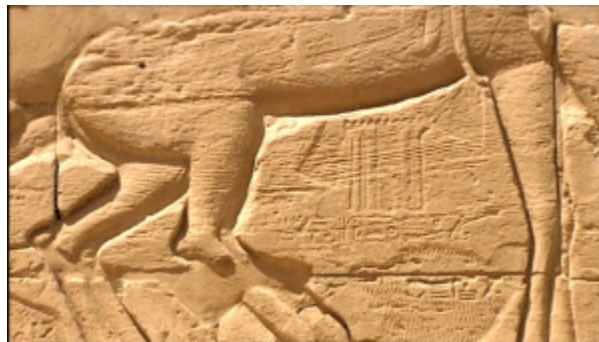
[Donald Redford, University of Pennsylvania] Oh, yes, um. All over the eastern delta, and in the Sinai, and up in the Negev, and further north, there were permanent Egyptian garrisons and garrison points. Checkpoints.



In fact, the Bedou were constantly under watch by the Egyptian paramilitary police along the borders.



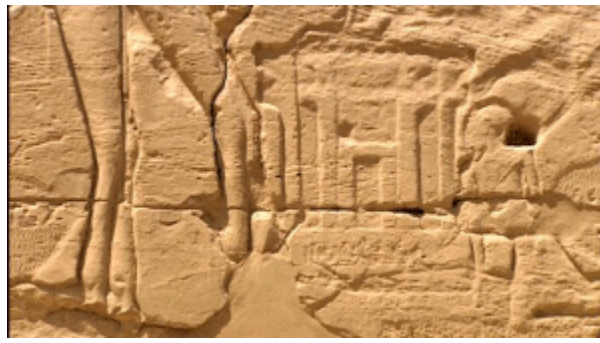
[Narrator] A carving at the Karnak Temple attests to the existence of a sophisticated system of garrisons



that ensured the logistics of a route that followed the north coast of Sinai.



It was a strategic route for the Egyptians that led into Mesopotamia and Anatolia.



A fleeing multitude could not have taken it



without being spotted and stopped by one of its garrisons.



This left them with the southern and more arid route, the one that is most in keeping with the Biblical STORY.



The Bible tells how, after having camped in the desert for almost three months,



the ISRAELITES RECEIVED THE TEN COMMANDMENTS at Mt. Sinai.



They then headed off towards the northeast to the land of Canaan.



At that point, the Biblical text tells us they reached the oasis of Kadesh-Barnea, located between the Sinai and Negev deserts.



It is here that they spent many years AFTER REFUSING TO ENTER THE HOLY LAND.



The oasis was thoroughly excavated during the 1950s and 1970s.



No remains from the 13th century --



which is believed to be the period of the exodus --



were found at the site.



Modern archaeological techniques enable us to pinpoint the tiniest remains



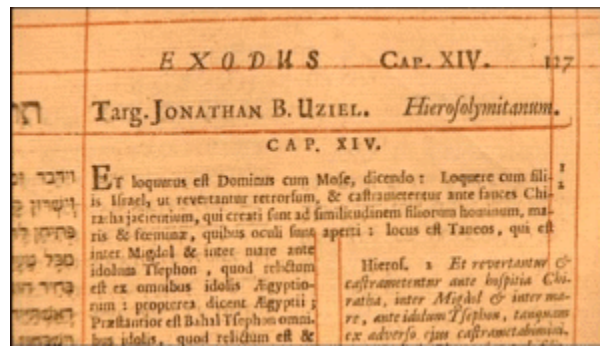
left behind by simple herdsmen.



And yet, NO TRACE of the Israelites' LONG STAY in the area is to be found.



The ABSENCE OF ANY EVIDENCE of their journey through the wilderness, in either this oasis, OR ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE SINAI PENINSULA,



is ONE OF THE ENIGMAS of the Exodus STORY.



[Neil Silberman] How can you explain the possibility of such a large group, as described in the Exodus STORY,



actually going out of Egypt? Is that possible?

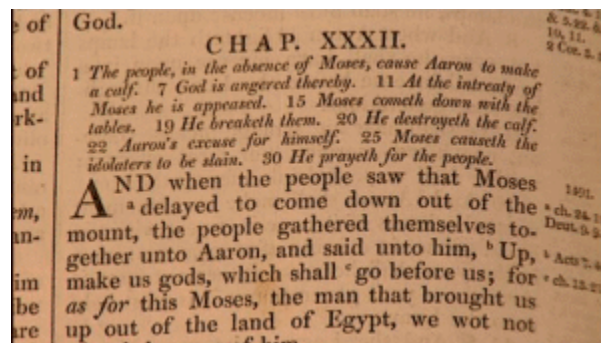


[Donald Redford, University of Pennsylvania] WELL, I COULDN'T EXPLAIN IT! [Laughter] NOTHING OF THAT shows up in the archaeological record or textual record. And one might argue, that's an argument from silence, admittedly, but nonetheless, WE KNOW SO MUCH about that period that NOT TO FIND EVEN A SINGLE BLIP on the radar screen, as it were, WOULD BE FATAL TO THAT THEORY. Moreover, the Biblical account has 600,000 weapon-bearing males leaving Egypt in the Exodus. That would probably translate into 2 million souls. CAN YOU IMAGINE 2 million people leaving a country of the size of Egypt, which had only a population of 3-1/2 million at the time? That would have made A HUGE HOLE in the social and economic system that CERTAINLY WOULD

HAVE SHOWED UP IN THE RECORDS! It would have resulted, almost immediately, in a downsizing, economically, and socially, that would CERTAINLY HAVE DISRUPTED the Empire irreparably.



Nothing of that sort is found in the record. NOT A THING! I couldn't see the exodus, as described in the Bible, as occurring in the 13th century.



[Neil Silberman] So we're talking about SOMETHING THAT ISN'T QUITE HISTORY, but there are a number of specific geographical terms.



Can they give us any clue to when this was written?

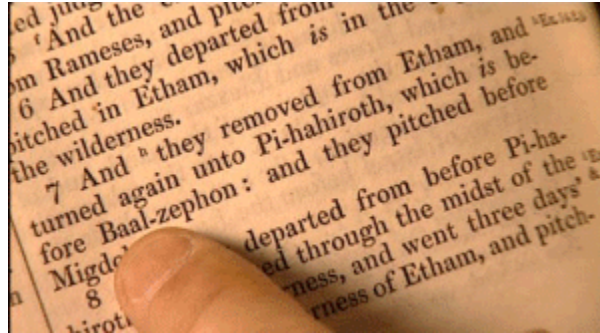


[Donald Redford, University of Pennsylvania] The geographical clues can, in fact, help to date the person who put this down. That's true. When one does that, one comes up with A FAIRLY GOOD IMPRESSION of what the writer

knew, and the geography that he was familiar with. And that would help to plug him in in terms of chronology.
"When did he live?"

[Neil Silberman] When was that time?

[Donald Redford, University of Pennsylvania] Well, Pithom, as I say, has been identified as the city called Per-Etham, the House of Etham. This was built by Pharaoh Necho II around 600 B.C. Certainly not before 605 B.C. That's one item.



Going out of Egypt you have such names as Etham, Pi-hahiroth, Baal-zephon -- all of these are known from the later geography of Egypt.



They weren't around -- many of them -- in the new kingdom WHEN THE STORY IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE. I would see the Saite Period, what we call the Saite -- that's the 26th dynasty, from 664-525 B.C., as a period, kind of an OPTIMAL PERIOD, for the general background of the STORY as we have it in Exodus. At any rate, we've limited it to 7th, 6th centuries before Christ.



[Narrator] So, as in our investigation of the Patriarchs, both the clues gathered in the field, and the texts point in the same direction: CERTAIN STORIES, INCLUDING THE EXODUS, started to be written down in the 7th century B.C. [??]



Neil Silberman has returned to Megiddo.



He is discussing these new elements with Israel Finkelstein.



Whatever the possible sources that inspired the Exodus SAGA,



the STORY DOES NOT DESCRIBE the Egypt of the 13th century B.C. The investigation of this Biblical STORY once again leads us to the 7th century. What were the reasons for writing down this text at that time? [?]



We have to BROADEN our historical perspective. In the 9th century, and most of the 8th century, Canaan was divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. [?]



These kingdoms were located between two of the greatest empires of the near east. In the south, Egypt, whose power and might we have seen evidence of.



Canaan was obviously a strategic area for this IMMEMORIAL kingdom, which had significant REGIONAL AMBITIONS.



And in the northeast, Assyria, the great Mesopotamian empire of the time.



In its desire for REGIONAL HEGEMONY,



it was obviously and aggressively one of Egypt's rivals.



Israel and Judah: these TWIN [?] kingdoms would ultimately be caught up in that rivalry. But they would not share the same DESTINY.



[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] In the late 8th century B.C., the Assyrians show on the scene.



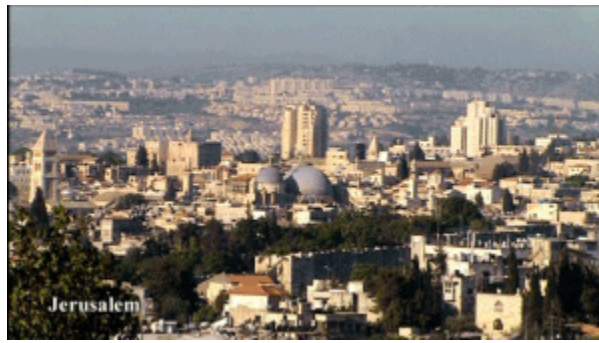
They wipe out the northern kingdom. [?] Take over it's territory. A torrent of refugees come to the south, to Jerusalem, to Judah. And that puts a heavy burden on the people of Judah and Jerusalem, because now they are THE ONLY ISRAELITE NATION LEFT. [?]



[Narrator] Our investigation will now move to Jerusalem,



the capital of the kingdom of Judah. IT IS HERE [?] that the Biblical STORIES of Egypt, Moses, and the Exodus into the desert would be WOVEN during the 7th century. [?]



Unraveling those STORIES is no mean feat,



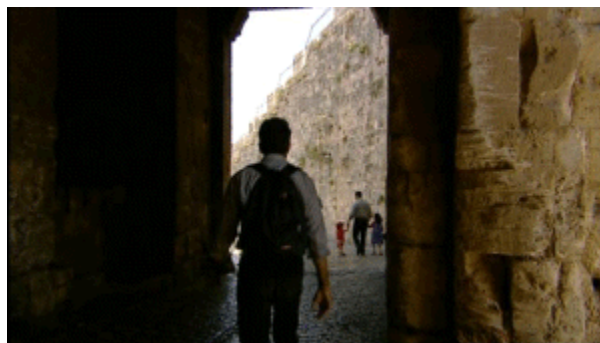
and requires CAREFUL ANALYSIS.



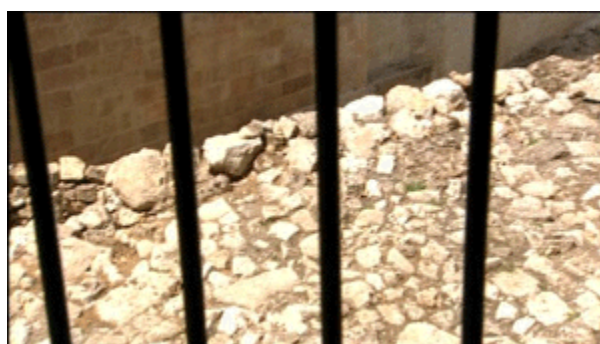
Jerusalem is a city of hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. Each man and woman,

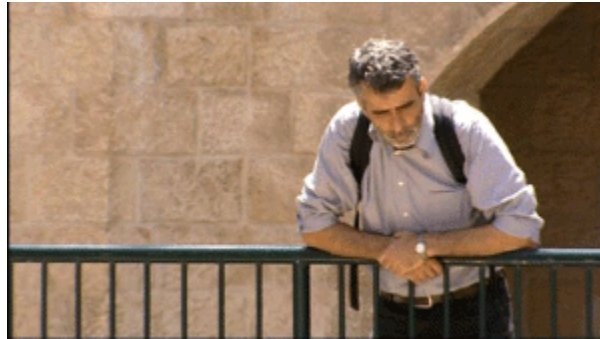


and also each stone, CARRIES THE WEIGHT OF A SACRED STORY.



Nevertheless, surprising discoveries have been made thanks to the determination of archaeologists.





[Israel Finkelstein] This wall was built in the late 8th century B.C. in the time of King Hezekiah.



At that time Jerusalem grew dramatically in population and in size.



Ten times bigger than before in a matter of 25, 30 years, 40, something like that. And that was because of the torrent of refugees who came from the north, after the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians, came to Judah and settled here.



And this area, which was outside the old city of the Bronze and Iron Age, became populated. And then, because of the Assyrian threat, Hezekiah decided to fortify it. And he built this huge fortification -- huge wall - to surround the new quarter in the western hill of Jerusalem.



[Narrator] During the reign of this king, Hezekiah, Jerusalem underwent a METAMORPHOSIS. From a modest town of 6 hectares, [14 acres]



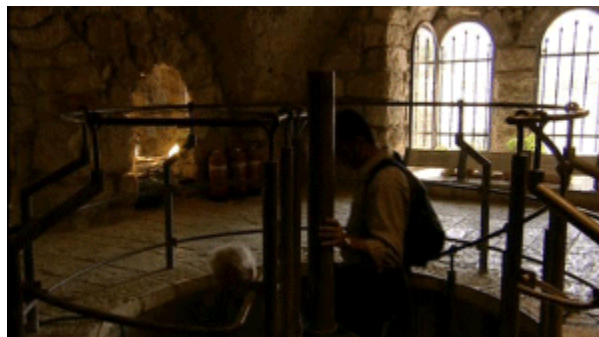
the city was transformed into an urbanized zone of about 60 hectares, [148 acres] protected by an impressive wall.



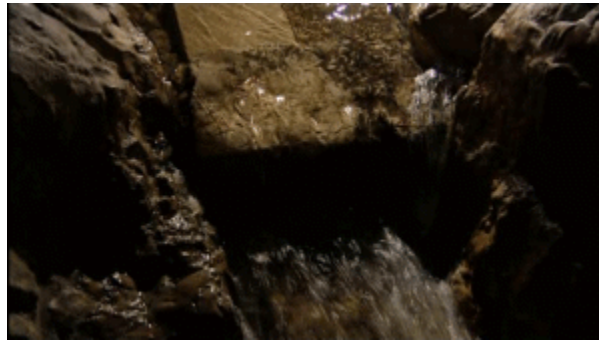
The city appeared to be preparing for a battle, undoubtedly with the Assyrian empire.



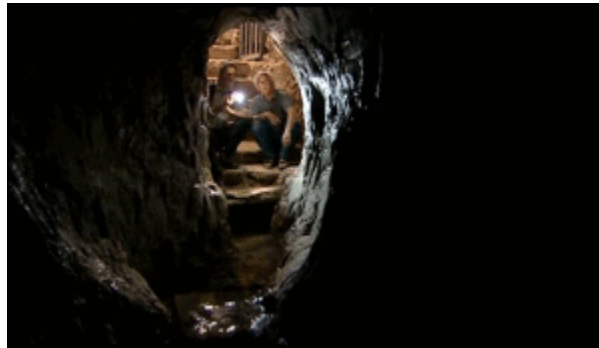
The archaeologist Ronny Reich has been involved in excavations here for many years. He's a specialist on the city of Jerusalem. In order to appreciate how seriously the Assyrian threat was taken by the small kingdom of Judah, we have to enter into the bowels of the city.



Jerusalem's only permanent source of water flowed outside the city walls, and could not be accessed if the city was under siege.



To maintain supplies to Jerusalem, King Hezekiah launched an extraordinary project, for a tunnel that would bring water to reservoirs situated inside the ramparts.



[Israel Finkelstein] And the tunnel goes from here for over 500 metres, cut from both sides, they met in the middle, all in the rock.



[Ronny Reich, University of Haifa] This is really an engineering achievement, because two groups which were cutting in a tunnel which is not straight,



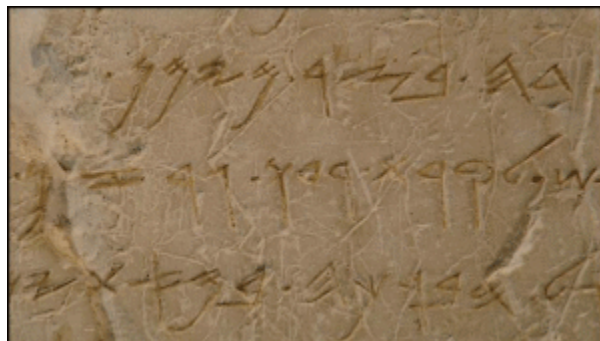
but has an "S" shape outline,



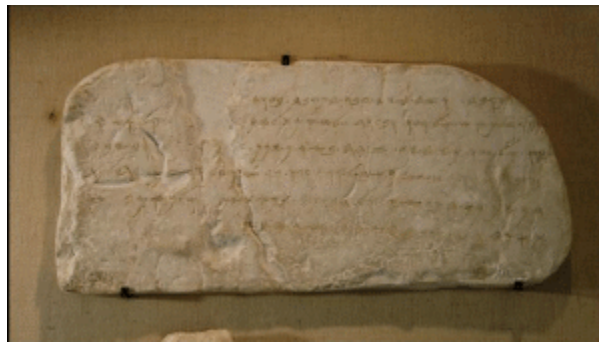
they went like this, and met here. They could have cut one next to the other, and one above the other -- two types of errors -- and they avoided both of them. And we still don't have an adequate explanation of how this was done.



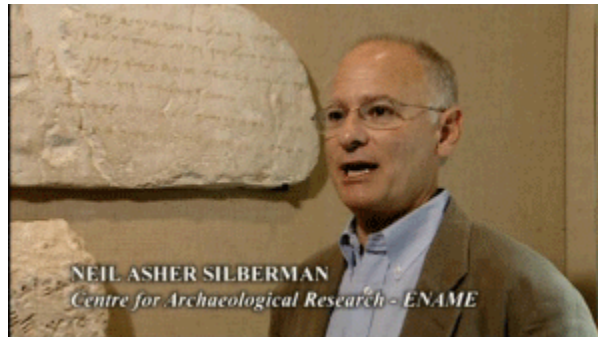
[Israel Finkelstein] But we have the inscription of the two groups working with the axes and hewing the rock, and then they meet, and the great moment when they hear each other.



[Narrator] Carved into the rock, this inscription, in ancient Hebrew, commemorates the meeting of the two teams.



The Bible, IT SEEMS, also refers to this event in the Book of Kings.



[Neil Asher Silberman, Centre for Archaeological Research -- ENAME] This ancient Hebrew inscription is really one of the most important pieces of evidence we have for the rise of Judah as a kingdom.



So it represents both the engineering that was possible by the kingdom, and also the attempt by the kingdom to record that act in an official way, in an official inscription. And so this really brings us to a time when the kingdom was centralized, when Jerusalem was a city, was administered by royal officials that had the power and the level of literacy to record their achievements in their history.



[Narrator] In this way, a tiny kingdom lost in the hills of Judah, became A GENUINE STATE IN A VERY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.



It probably hoped to play an important role in the region, but its fate was already sealed.



[Dominique Charpin, Assyriologist -- EPHE] After the fall of the kingdom in the north, only one buffer state remained between Assyria and Egypt: the TINY STATE of Judah. The people of Judah wavered between the idea that they should submit to the Assyrians, and the idea that they could remain independent with the support of Egypt.



At some point they went too far, and Sennacherib, Sargon's son, decided to put an end to the situation.





[Narrator] It was 701 B.C. The new Assyrian king, Sennacherib, marched on Judah at the head of a huge army.



When they reached Lachish, the second largest city of the kingdom, they laid siege to it.



Today, Lachish is an artificial tel, or mound. In the 8th Century B.C., it was one of Judah's administrative capitals, and the site of A MEMORABLE BATTLE.



David Ussishkin, who heads the excavations,



is a professor of archaeology at the Tel Aviv University.



[David Ussishkin, Tel Aviv University] The Assyrians, when they came to Judah,



Sennacherib came to Lachish.



He didn't go to Jerusalem.



Now why did he come to Lachish and not straight to Jerusalem? In my view, he wanted to show an exemplary conquest. He wanted to show the people of the country what he can do, and what he can do to Jerusalem. And in my view, he decided to destroy this fortress of King Hezekiah, and then he send army to Jerusalem to negotiate with him, and to come to some agreement with him.



[Narrator] Despite its powerful fortifications, Lachish was defeated.



To avoid the same result in Jerusalem,



Judah paid a levy and became one of Assyria's vassal states.





But as is shown by the archaeological evidence,



THIS SUBMISSION to its powerful neighbor in the north LED -- PARADOXICALLY -- to an unprecedented ECONOMIC BOOM!



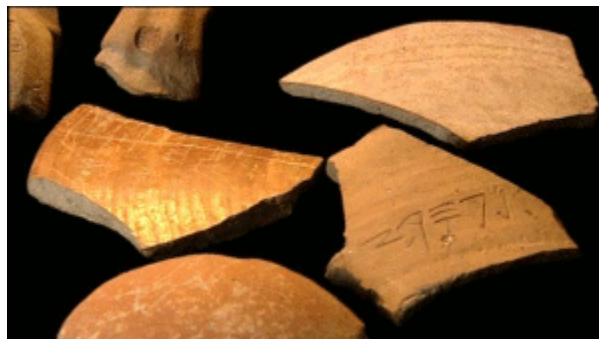
Excavations corresponding to this period in all the sites tell the same story, and describe the same phenomenon.



Judah, CONTROLLED BY the Assyrian authorities, PARTICIPATED in Arabian trade and in the production of oil on a very large scale.



At the same time, A GENUINE [VASSAL] GOVERNMENT was set up.



Our books of stone have shed LIGHT ON THE BIRTH OF A [VASSAL] STATE.





[Israel Finkelstein] *"Belonging to the King, the City of Hebron."*



"Belonging to the King, the City of Soho in the Shephelah."



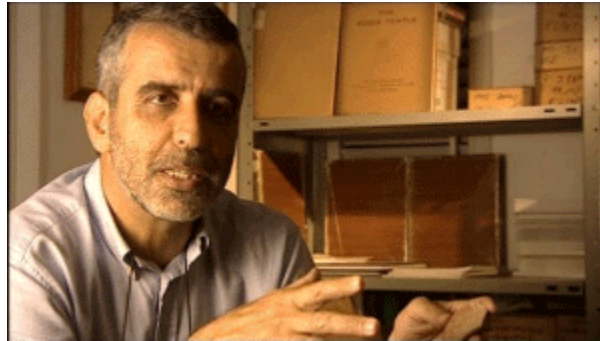
It represents developed administration.



First of all, because the storages of about the same volume, the same quantity -- they are standardized.



And secondly, the seal impressions too are standardized.

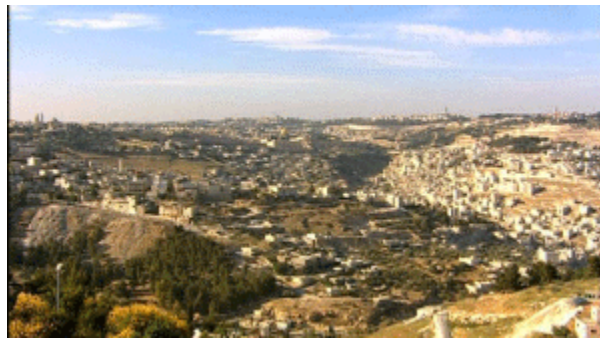


So what you have here is evidence of some sort of [Assyrian] state administration. A person, you know, a family, just somebody out there in the village, doesn't do things like that.



So all the evidence fall together to the same conclusion: FULL-BLOWN [VASSAL] STATE IN JUDAH FOR THE FIRST TIME in the late 8th Century.





[Narrator] This new state of affairs would modify the geopolitical landscape of the region.



The Assyrians, overcome by internal problems, left the Levant around 630 B.C.



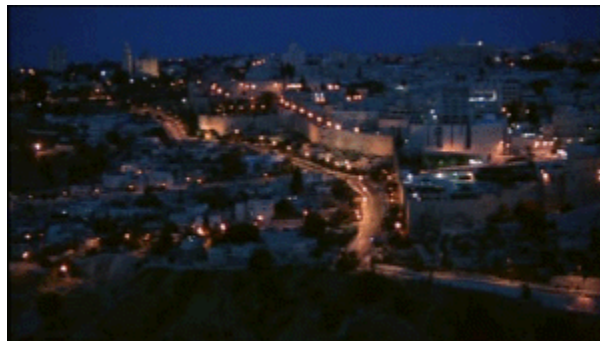
[Dominique Charpin, Assyriologist -- EPHE] The end of the neo-Assyrian empire was characterized by serious problems, particularly in Babylonia. The majority of Assyria's military forces were therefore focused on this territory. As a result, the Assyrians were perceived as being much less present, much less available in the surrounding areas, which obviously made this an attractive time for liberation movements.



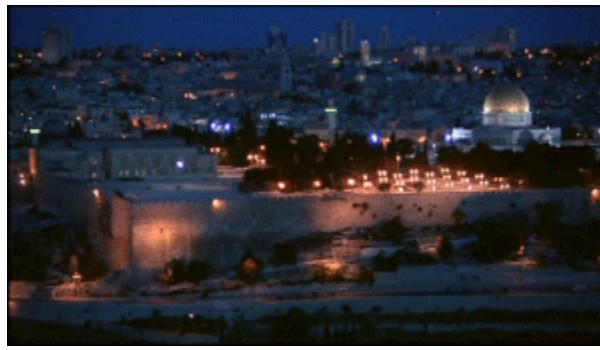
[Narrator] With the Assyrians weakened, an AUDACIOUS PROJECT BEGAN TO TAKE ROOT IN JUDAH TO CONQUER THE TERRITORY OF THE ANCIENT KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.



It is in this context that the confrontation between Egypt and the Exodus,



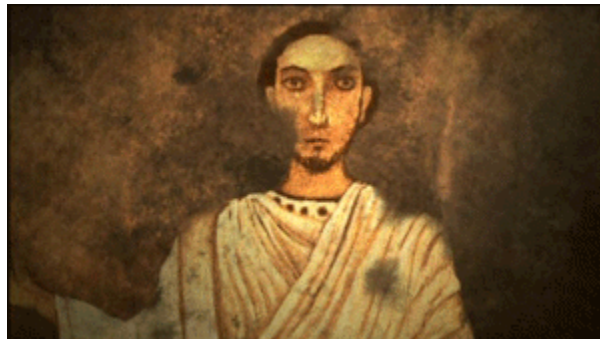
as it is described in the Bible, begins to make sense. [??]



A king by the name of Josiah REIGNED IN JERUSALEM. [?]



He was the great-grandson of Hezekiah, AND DREAMED OF A GREAT PAN-ISRAELITE KINGDOM.



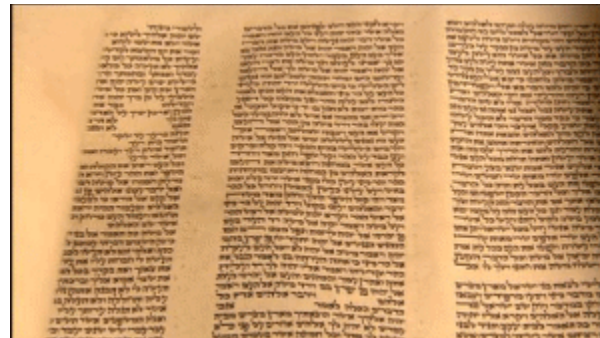
A TRULY UNIFIED KINGDOM! THE BIBLE is exceedingly generous in its praise of this king.



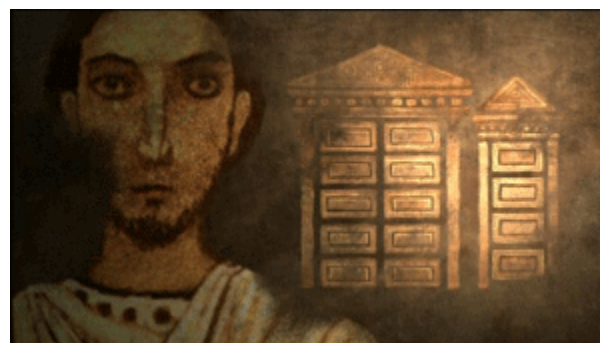
[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] *"NEVER BEFORE had there been a king like Josiah, who TURNED TO YAHWEH with ALL HIS HEART AND SOUL AND LIGHT, OBEYING all the LAWS of Moses."*



That is what the Hebrew Bible had to say about Josiah. He is perhaps not a very well-known king, but he was quite extraordinary according to the Bible.



[Narrator] THE AUTHORS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT TELL how Josiah ORDERED WORK to be carried out in the Temple of Jerusalem.



THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT POINT in terms of our investigation.



[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] [Reading the Bible] *"During these works, THE GREAT PRIEST DISCOVERED A BOOK. He ANNOUNCED that the BOOK OF THE LAW has been discovered!"*



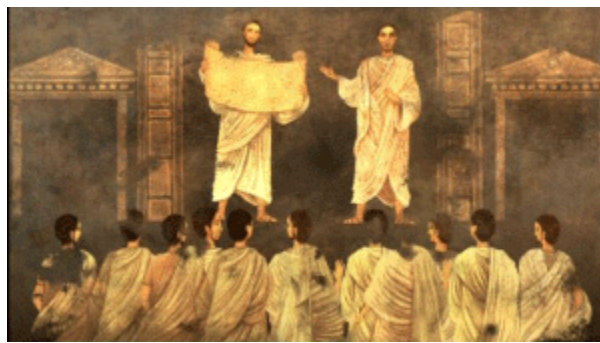
The book was given to the king who, on reading it, TORE OFF ALL HIS CLOTHES as a sign of MOURNING or consternation. He then undertook a MAJOR REFORM, which included the PROHIBITION OF ALL OTHER PLACES OF WORSHIP, thereby making Jerusalem the ONLY LEGITIMATE PLACE OF WORSHIP.



[Narrator] Was a book REALLY discovered, or was this just a pretext to launch a project that had been ENVISAGED for some time? NO ONE KNOWS!



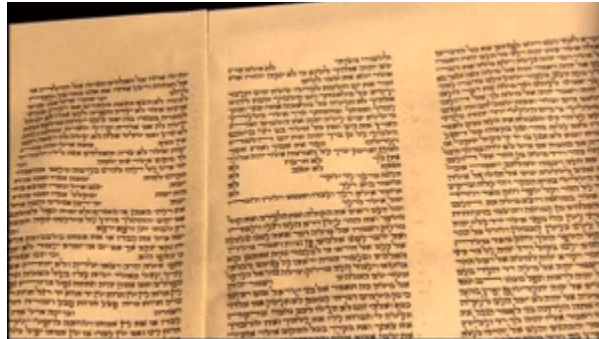
But as a result of this DISCOVERY [?],



Josiah [?] launched THE MOST RADICAL REFORM in the kingdom's history.



EXPERTS BELIEVE that this book, which has been given the name "The Book of the Covenant," was in fact the Book of Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Pentateuch.



The REFORM gave PRIORITY TO THE LAWS that were given to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and CENTRALIZED THE REGION IN JERUSALEM.



But was this Josiah's only objective?



[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] Josiah [?] NEEDED centralization of power, strong administration, COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE STATE.



One way to do that was to CENTRALIZE CULT, to do this REFORM OF CULT, which would lead BACK TO THE IDEA, to the pan-Israelite idea, that ALL ISRAELITES MUST WORSHIP ONE GOD IN ONE PLACE -- in Jerusalem. If you do this, and you DEMOLISH THE CULT PLACES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, definitely you CONTROL better the economy, you control better THE STATE, and you can achieve your goals in A BETTER AND FASTER WAY.



[Narrator] Josiah [?] therefore had a political objective:



the creation of a GREAT UNIFIED KINGDOM.



But the WINDS OF HISTORY would once again turn. After a long period of DORMANCY, Egypt renewed with its IMPERIAL AMBITIONS.



Pharaoh Semeticus I ALSO HAD A DREAM,



to return Egypt to the GLORY OF ITS FORMER PHARAOHS, such as Ramesses II.





Did Josiah [?] intend to USE THE TEXT to convey a message of hope? A STORY that could show that a SMALL PEOPLE COULD TRIUMPH OVER THE GREATEST OF EMPIRES, as Israel had triumphed [?] over Egypt when its people were led by a GREAT MAN with the BACKING OF GOD AND THE LAW?



[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] The STORY of Exodus is the STORY of a LIBERATION



that goes beyond the FLIGHT from Egypt.



In order FOR THE LIBERATION TO BE COMPLETE,



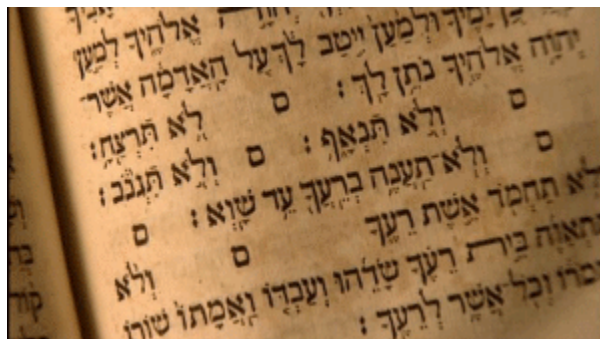
it was NECESSARY TO RECEIVE THE LAW. In the Pentateuch, this law is received OUTSIDE OF ANY POLITICAL INSTITUTION, [?] whether it be royalty or The State. It is thus a law that is GIVEN [?] TO THE PEOPLE by Moses.



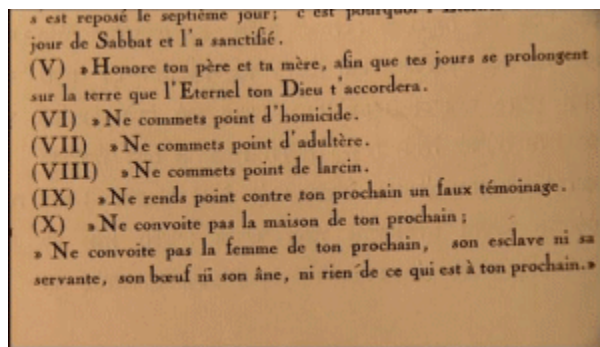
[Narrator] Implicitly compared to Moses in the Biblical STORY, a MAN would take on the role of BOTH LIBERATOR AND OF LAWMAKER:



KING JOSIAH! [?]



For THE LAW would play a CENTRAL ROLE in UNITING the Israelites,



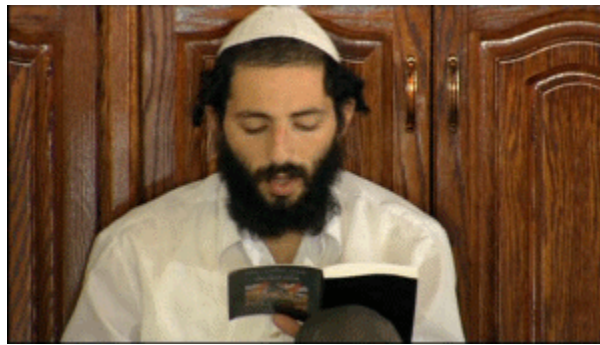
AND LATER WOULD UNITE ALL THOSE WHO MADE A CLAIM TO JUDAISM. The law that WAS GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE, as it appeared in THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, and in Deuteronomy, would put into writing the BOND that EXISTED between Jews and their God -- The LAW, SEEN AS A COVENANT, a HOLY covenant.



Since that time, this LAW, and ITS TRANSMISSION and study,



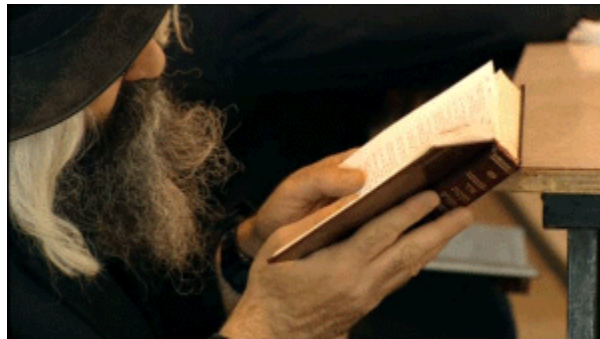
constitutes the second pillar of Judaism: a religion unites a people



and its God, as in the time of Josiah, [?]



by a covenant that is read and interpreted for ALL TIME.





Our investigation has shown us the role of the Patriarchs in the Biblical STORY. [?]

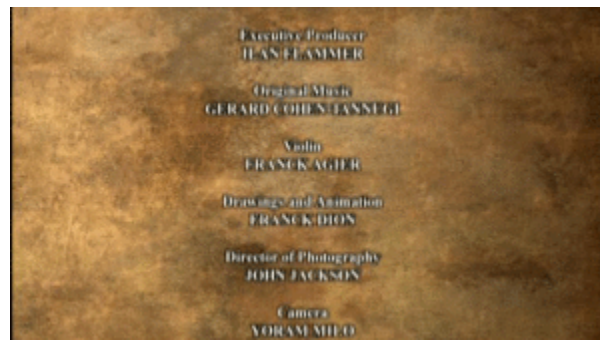


This time it has established the second PILLAR of what was to become Judaism,

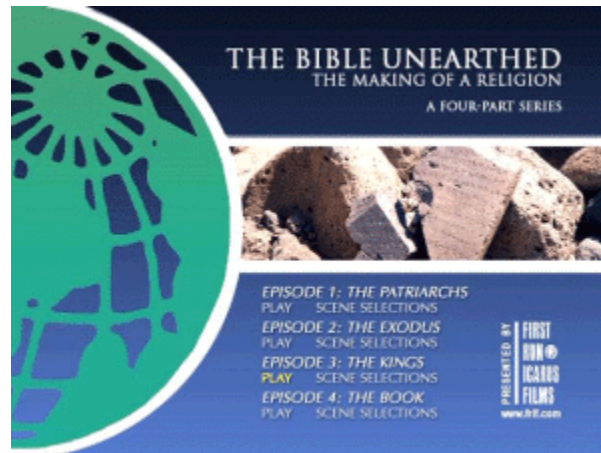


a society UNITED BY ITS LAWS, with the concepts of OPPRESSION and LIBERATION as its background.





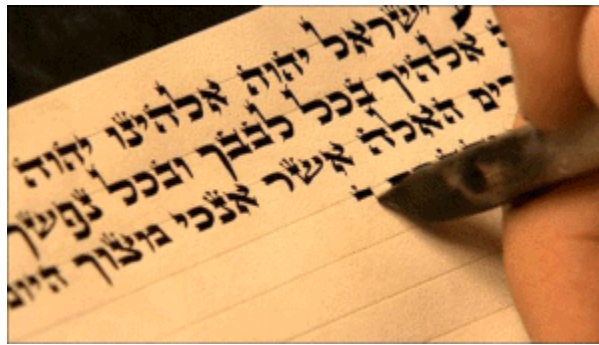
In the next episode, our INVESTIGATION will lead us to a re-reading of the STORY of the conquest of Canaan, and will see us following in the footsteps of THE BIBLE'S GREAT KINGS: David and Solomon.



EPISODE 3: THE KINGS



*France 5 presents in association with Arte France
A Cabiria Films
Maya Rothschild
SZ Productions
Isy Morgensztern
France 5
Co-Production
With the participation of ARTE France*



[Narrator] The Old Testament is at the origin of a religion: Judaism. But the well-known STORIES contained in this book, which is also called The Hebrew Bible, also recount a history [?], that of THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.



How much of this Biblical text is HISTORY, and how much is LEGEND?



Israel Finkelstein and Neil Silberman continue their investigations into the society [?] that wrote the Old Testament.
[?]



We meet up with them again in Megiddo.



In previous episodes, we showed that the Bible's most famous **STORIES**, those of Abraham, the Patriarchs, or the Exodus when the ancient Israelites [?] left Egypt, were first put into writing in the 7th Century, B.C. [?] in the heart of the Judahede hills. [?] It was here that most of the **STORIES** contained in the Bible were written down. [?]



They bring to life a complex antique world, full of noise and passion, of conflicts and alliances, of heroes and conquests.



A STORY similar to that of ALL peoples, but one that in this case GAVE BIRTH TO A UNIQUE BOOK.



In this episode, we are going to explore the origins of the nation [?] that first put the text of the Bible into writing. [?]

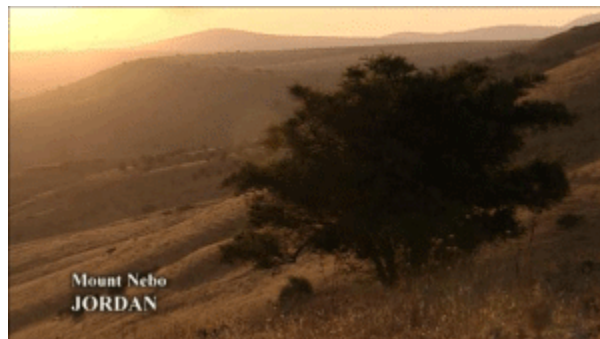




The Bible Unearthed



[Narrator] ACCORDING TO THE BIBLICAL TEXT, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt to the land of Canaan, the Holy [?] Land.



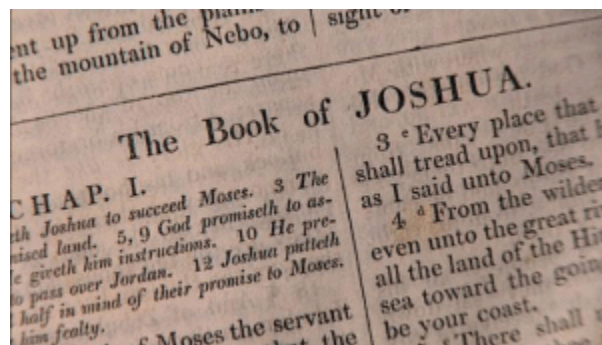
Mount Nebo, Jordan



We see them re-conquer the lands of their ancestors,



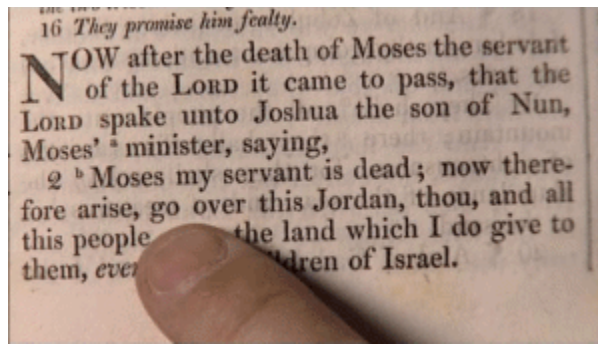
and gradually become a SOVEREIGN PEOPLE IN THEIR LAND.



[Israel Finkelstein] The first verses of the Book of Joshua say the following:



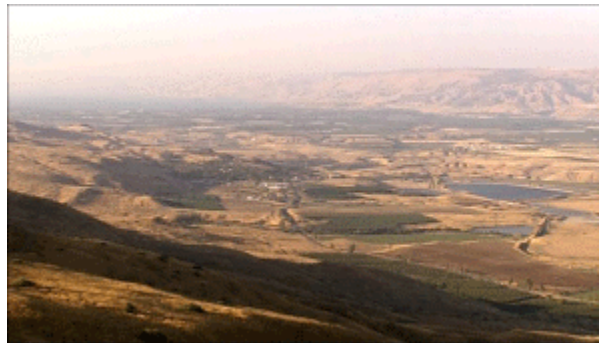
"After the death of Moses, the SERVANT of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' minister,



'Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you, and all this people, unto the land which I am giving to them, to the people of Israel, every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given to you, as I promised to Moses.'



This is the beginning of THE GREAT SAGA, THE GREAT EPIC, of THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN, in the Book of Joshua. And the Bible tells the STORY, step-by-step: from here to Jericho, from Jericho to Ai, from Ai to the war with the kings of the south, and then to Hazor and the kings of the north. AND IT'S A WONDERFUL STORY, A GREAT SAGA OF WAR AND CONQUEST, AND BRAVERY.



And the question is, "Did it happen? Did it REALLY happen the way that it is described in the text of the Bible, of the Book of Joshua?"



[Narrator] THE BIBLE describes Joshua primarily as a military leader who was given a mission by God TO CONQUER THE LAND THAT WAS PROMISED to the Patriarchs, and then to Moses.



Joshua invaded the territory of Canaan at the head of an enormous army of confederated Israelite tribes.



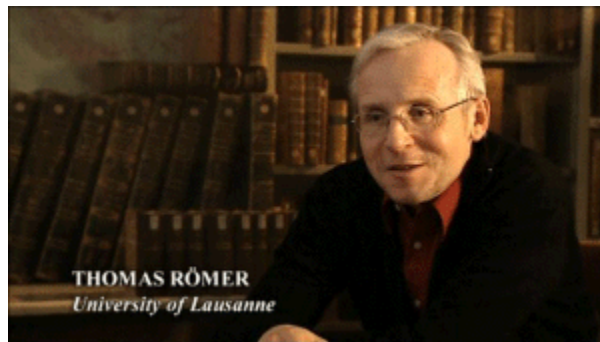
He crossed the Jordan River and attacked and conquered the region cities,



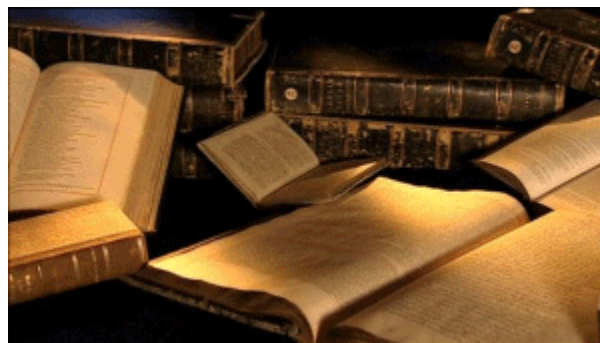
one after the other, IN A LIGHTNING WAR.



THESE CONQUERED CITIES FORMED THE OUTLINES OF A COUNTRY.



[Thomas Römer] The Biblical version presents this conquest as a sort of BLITZKRIEG. In all, it took two weeks, and practically the **WHOLE OF THE POPULATION WAS EXTERMINATED. NO MERCY WAS SHOWN** for the people of Canaan. But **WE'RE NOT TOLD WHY**. We're not told that it was because they worshipped false gods, or because they were particularly evil. On the contrary, **NO REASONS ARE GIVEN. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT THEY WERE ALL DEVOTED TO DESTRUCTION** according to the Biblical text. The word used is "Hem," which means that everything must be destroyed in order to be given back to Yahweh. The idea is that God grants them victory, so everything therefore belongs to God.



[Narrator] The conquest, followed by the dividing up of Canaan, are at **THE HEART** of **THE BIBLICAL BOOK** of Joshua. **ACCORDING TO BIBLICAL** chronology, this incident occurred in the 2nd half of the 13th century, B.C.



Hazor, Israel



Archaeologists have located and excavated most of the cities referred to in the STORY. It is therefore necessary to take a closer look at these excavations.



The most important site for this part of our investigation is Hazor in Galilee.



THE BIBLE describes this as a high-ranking city, the head of all those kingdoms.



The archaeological site is being examined by Amnon Ben Tor of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



He is continuing a task that was begun in the 1950s by the FAMOUS archaeologist Yigael Yadin.



Some of the remains discovered here are **CONSIDERED TO BE** those of a palace and a temple destroyed in the 13th century B.C. by a **VIOLENT CONFLAGRATION!**



[Amnon Ben Tor, Hebrew University of Jerusalem] Look at the destruction. We are in the entrance to the Hazor Palace of the late Bronze Age, or Canaanite Hazor.



Look at the signs of the destruction, which are to be found everywhere. Look at the melted mudbrick. It takes 1300 degrees centigrade to melt mudbrick.



Look at the intense heat marked all over the bricks



Look at the white here, which is also an effect of the fire.



Look at the wood, the timber. All these signs of the violent destruction of the Palace of Hazor.



Look at the cracked basalt stones. Look at this. Normal heat doesn't do this. Only a very, very intense fire.



Look at what is happening on the walls. See the ashes? See the wood? Size of the timber? Here. On the walls. Wherever you look, wherever you go, same signs of destruction.



[Narrator] These layers of destruction **APPEAR TO PROVIDE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE** of the conquest of Canaan by the armies of Joshua.

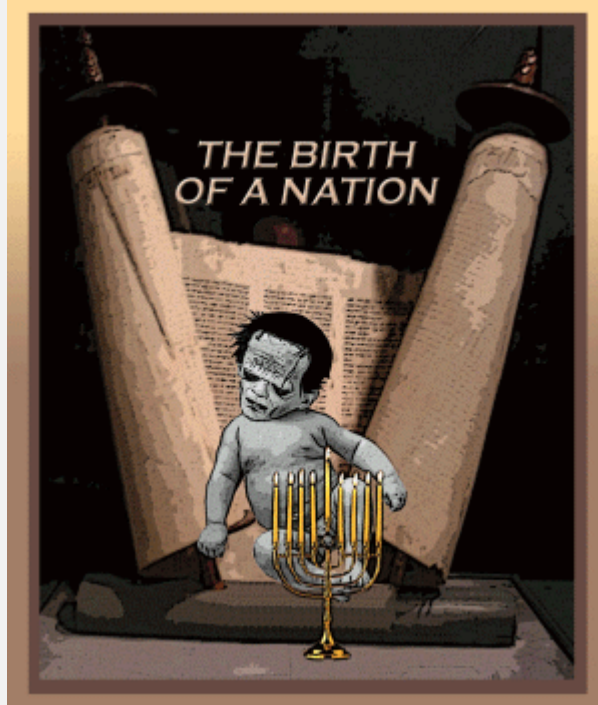




Given THE MOOD of 1950s Israel, just after the country's independence,



this HYPOTHESIS supported the idea that THE BIRTH OF A NATION HAD TO BE PRECEDED BY A MILITARY CONQUEST.



The Birth of a Nation, by Tara Carreon



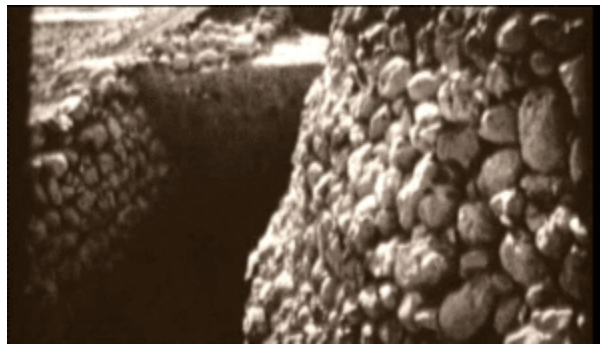
[Israeli Government Propagandist] "Joshua's destruction of Hazor,



the great city of north Canaan referred to in the Bible,



was a key step in the conquest of Galilee by the Israelites.



Dr. Yadin and his colleagues are hoping to reach the layer where we find the destroyed city.



In three seasons of excavations,



they've already found the remains of a number of Israelite cities



that were successively built on the ruins of previous cities.



They have discovered precious relics that add to our knowledge of the STORY,



and of the way people lived in those times.



The Hazor expedition, which will be completed next summer,



adds AN IMPRESSIVE NEW CHAPTER TO BIBLICAL RESEARCH,



and to universal knowledge of ancient history, [?]



of THE LINK BETWEEN THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND THE LAND OF ISRAEL."



[Narrator] There was a great enthusiasm for archaeology during this period,



by A COUNTRY IN SEARCH OF HISTORY.



Its leaders, David Ben Gurion, who was at that time prime minister, and former military leaders such as Yigael Yadin or Moshe Dayan.



The FACTS SEEMED to speak for themselves.



Megiddo, Israel



Similar remains of destruction were to be found in many of the country's archaeological sites. However, the accumulation of conflicting data over the past 50 years, sowed the first seeds of doubt.



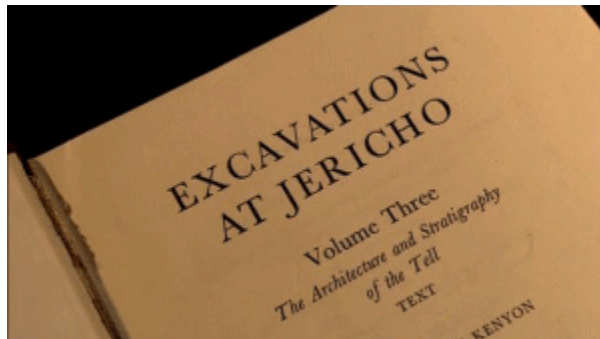
We therefore have to go back to the beginning, and re-examine -- site by site --



the foundations of the hypothesis of the conquest of the country by Joshua and his armies.



IT IS NECESSARY TO REFER TO THE TEXT and the STORY of the conquest, as it is related IN THE BIBLE. In particular, its most famous battle, that of Jericho.



An IMPRESSIVE amount of information is available



in relation to Jericho.



It is one of the most excavated sites of the Levant.



Several expeditions have succeeded each other there



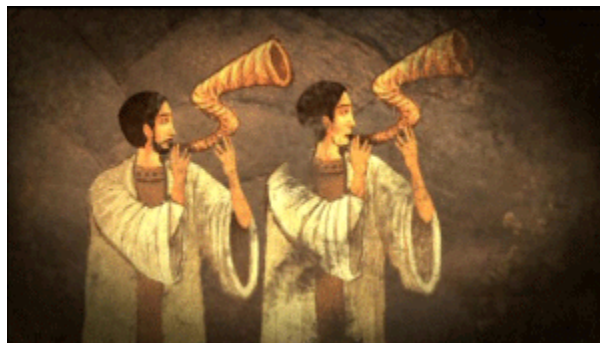
since the beginning of the 20th century.



How does THE BIBLE tell the STORY of the capture of Jericho?



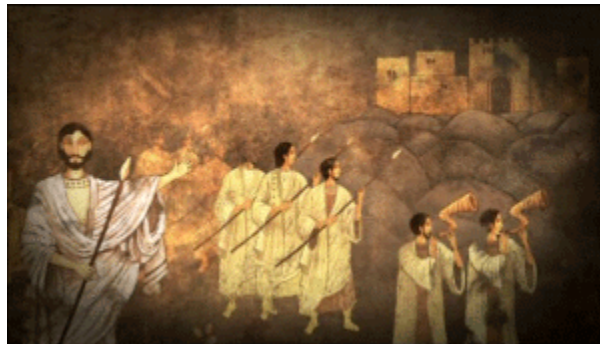
Everyone is familiar with the method that was used to cause the walls of the city to come tumbling down:



the famous trumpets of Jericho. *"Go 'round the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets."*



When you hear the sound of the trumpet,



all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the walls of the city shall fall flat down."



Tell es-Sultan, Jericho



Basing themselves on THE BIBLE, the first researchers believed that some of the remains that were discovered here



were those of the city destroyed during the attack by the Israelite armies.



But these ruins pre-date the 13th century B.C.



The archaeologist, Kathleen Kenyon, was the first to conclude that at the time SUGGESTED BY THE BIBLE,



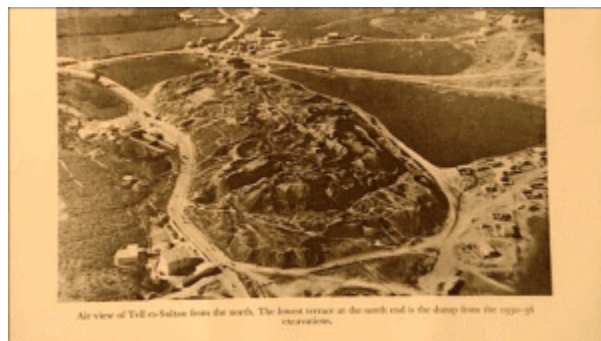
there were NO WALLS IN JERICHO that needed tumbling down.



At the time of the conquest of Canaan,



Jericho was unoccupied.



We therefore have to reconsider all of these elements from another perspective.



[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] SO THIS IS NOT HISTORY IN THE SIMPLE SENSE in the case of Jericho. It applies also for other places mentioned in the tradition of the conquest in the book of Joshua. MANY OF THE CITIES MENTIONED WERE NOT INHABITED AT ALL in the late Bronze Age. There was nothing there.



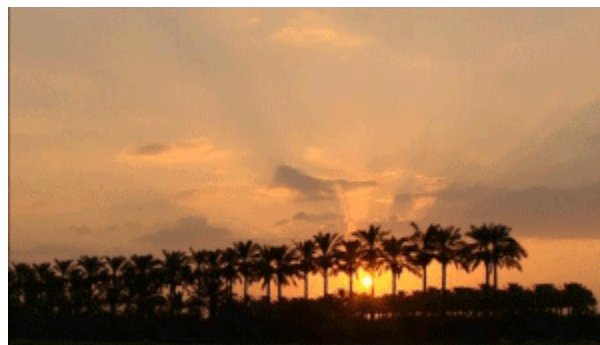
[Narrator] There is another inconsistency. Archaeologists' examination of all the different sites that have been excavated,



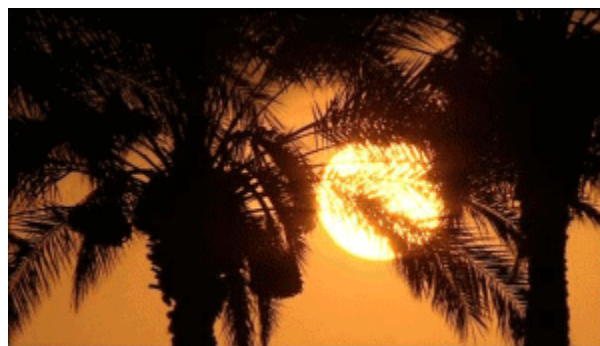
show that the process of destruction was spread over almost a century. In contrast, THE BIBLE refers to a very short-lived operation.



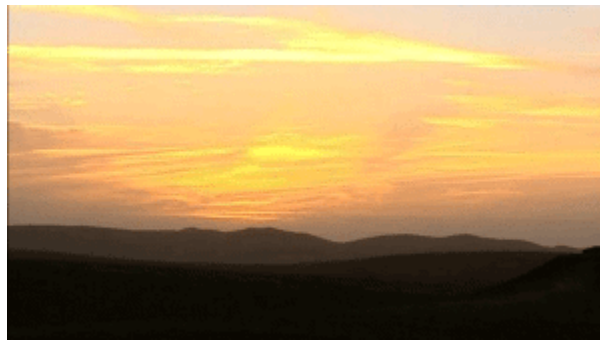
While certain cities were indeed destroyed, they were not all destroyed at the same time.



What to do now?



We have to **WIDEN OUR POINTS OF VIEW** and **TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION** of the Levant



during the same 13th century,



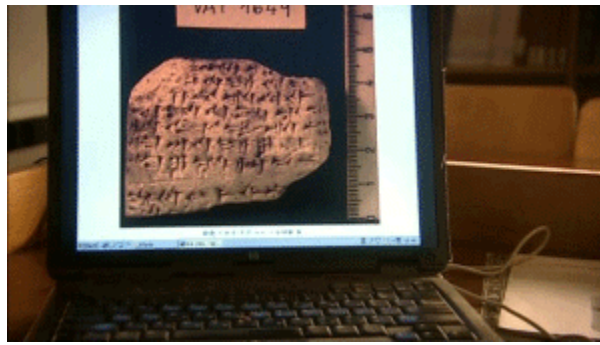
and focus on the main player of the period: Egypt.



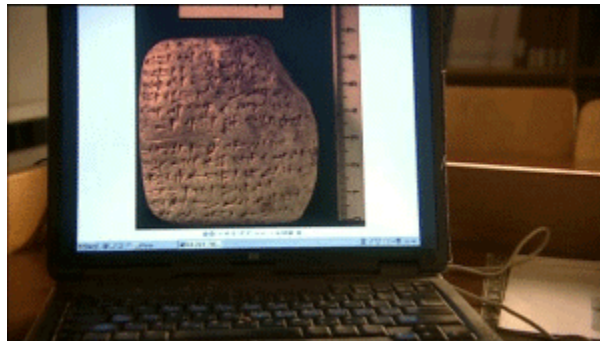
Almost 400 cuneiform tablets dating from the 14th century B.C.,



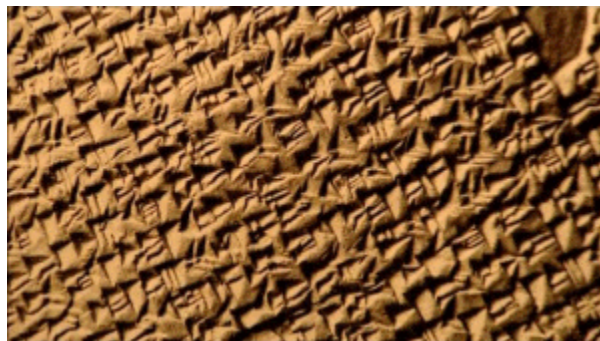
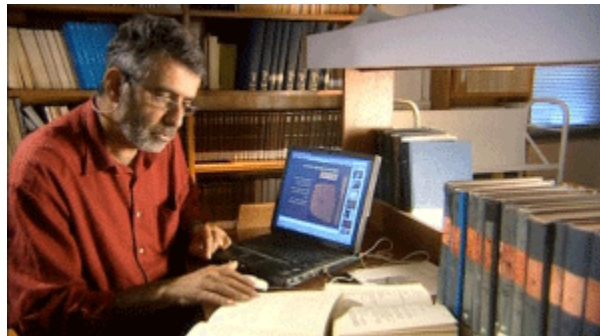
have been discovered in Tel El-Amarna in middle Egypt. They include certain information about the region that we are concerned with.



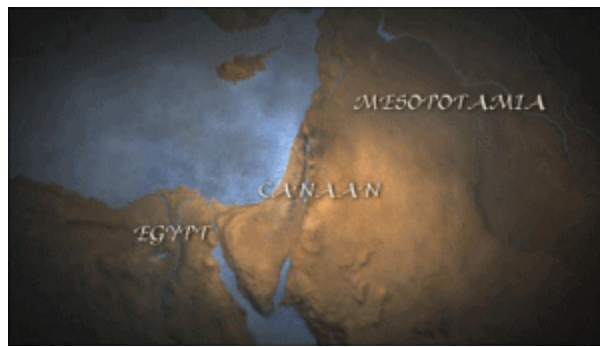
They consist of diplomatic correspondence sent to the pharaohs



by the kings of the SMALL CITY-STATES OF CANAAN.



A reading of the correspondence shows that THE CITY STATES WERE VASSALS OF EGYPT during the relevant period. In fact, FROM THE 15TH CENTURY TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 12TH CENTURY, B.C., THE LAND OF CANAAN WAS AN EGYPTIAN PROVINCE.



Egypt occupied the country where it set up a network of strongholds.



This has been CONFIRMED BY THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL excavations.



Tell Beth-Shean



One of those strongholds was excavated in the 1920s at Beth-Shean, south of the Sea of Galilee.



The el-Amarna letters, and the archaeological excavations, clearly show that Beth-Shean, whose BIBLICAL MOUND dominates the Roman and Byzantine ruins,



was an important Egyptian bastion between the 14th and mid-12th centuries.



[Israel Finkelstein] If you want to understand the way the Egyptians



dominated completely the country and the countryside,



you have to come here to a residency like this.



There was a stone garrison. There were scribes here. There were soldiers here. There were administrators here. And everything was under the control of the Egyptians.



Which means that 20 kilometres from here, 30 kilometres from here, if somebody wanted to take some sort of major economic decision,



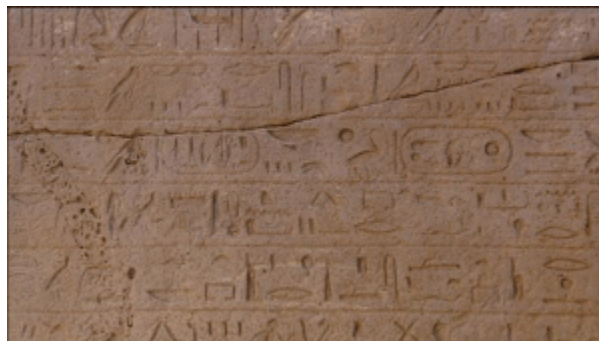
or a major political decision, he needed to come to Beth-Shean to get the approval of the Egyptians.



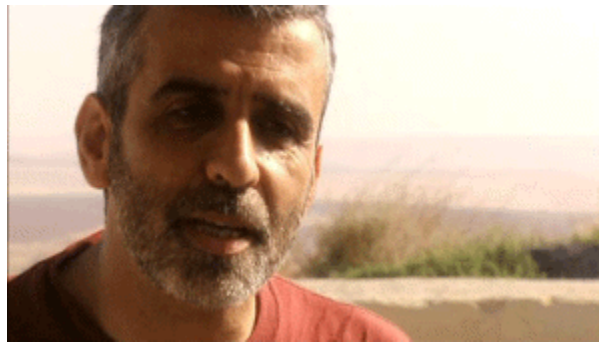
They were the masters of the countryside.



According to the traditional Biblical archaeology,



the conquest took place in the late 13th century in the time of Ramesses II.



AND WE HAVE TWO PROBLEMS HERE: THE FIRST ONE IS THAT AT THAT TIME, BETH-SHEAN WAS A VERY STRONG EGYPTIAN STRONGHOLD,



WITH SOLDIERS, WITH PEOPLE THAT COULD HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED FROM HERE



TO BLOCK AN INVASION OF CANAAN.



AND THE SECOND PROBLEM IS THAT THE EGYPTIANS ARE STILL HERE ABOUT A CENTURY AFTER THE TRADITIONAL DATE OF THE CONQUEST. HOW CAN IT BE?



[Narrator] So the archaeological excavations tell us that **THE CONQUEST DID NOT TAKE PLACE.**



However, two questions remain unanswered. How can we explain the evidence of destruction that has been found in many of the sites? And what meaning can we give to the list of **SUPPOSEDLY CONQUERED CITIES**



that are cited in **THE BIBLICAL TEXT**? Our investigation will shortly provide the answers.



[Israel Finkelstein] So the Book of Joshua is **NOT HISTORY. IT'S A MYTHICAL DESCRIPTION.** And like the case of the Patriarchs, and the case of Exodus, it tells the **STORY** of the formative stage in THE LIFE OF THE NATION. And as such, it is **FULL OF DIVINE INTERVENTIONS, BRAVERY AND MIRACLES.**



[Narrator] THE BIBLICAL TEXT tells how, at the request of Joshua,



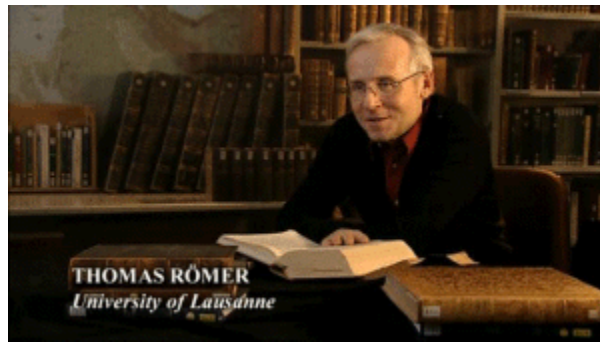
God would help the Israelites win their battle in an entirely miraculous way.



"He extended the day during the battle by ordering the sun to stand still on Gibeon, and the moon to stop in the valley of Ajalon."



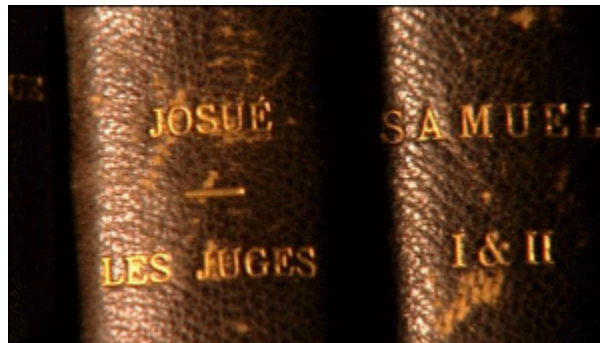
And the Biblical text goes on to say that there was no day like that before it, or after it, and YAHWEH LISTENED TO THE VOICE OF A MAN.



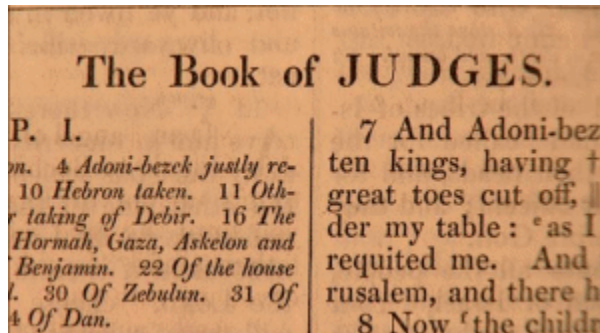
[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] The Joshua EPIC is the start of A GREAT STORY that ENDS UP IN A STORY OF KINGSHIP. The Book of Joshua is in fact the Bible's FIRST INSTALLMENT of a STORY that would ultimately show WHY ISRAEL CHOSE A KING in the same way that other peoples had done. But it didn't happen overnight.



Joshua already prefigures in the Bible as being slightly royal, as he is treated somewhat like a king. But after the STORY of Joshua, we find a book called The Book of Judges.

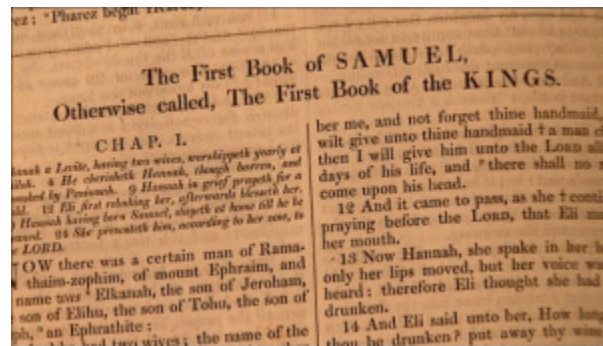


They were charismatic leaders who arose during a period that was chaotic and anarchical, a period in which NOTHING WAS DETERMINED.



There was NO CENTRAL POWER, and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," according to the formula used in the book. SO THE BOOK OF JUDGES IS USED TO SHOW IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO

ORGANIZE A NATION IN THE ABSENCE OF A KING or a central power. The Book of Judges ends on that final note.



It is followed by the story of Samuel, which is the introduction to the history of kingship. Samuel will be the one to choose first Saul, and then David as the king of Israel.



Immediately on entering Bones the neophyte's name is changed. He is no longer known by his name as it appears in the college catalogue but like a monk or Knight of Malta or St. John, becomes Knight so and so. The old Knights are then known as Patriarch so and so. The outside world are known as Gentiles and vandals.

-- America's Secret Establishment -- An Introduction to the Order of Skull and Bones, by Anthony Sutton



[Narrator] David. THE BIBLICAL TEXT presents David as a herder who was anointed by God. Hence the word moshiah, or messiah in Hebrew: the anointed one.



Dan, Israel.



But did David really exist? Many doubt it.



An inscription discovered at Tel Dan provides the answer. [?]



It refers to a king of Damascus [?] whose defeated enemies included Ahaziah, king of the house of David. [?]



[Israel Finkelstein] So this is one of the strongest proofs for the historicity of David. [?]



There was a David. [?] The question is NOT whether there was a David or there was not a David. [?] The question is whether the kingdom of David was a great empire.



[Narrator] THE BIBLE CLEARLY REFERS to an empire, which it describes as a huge territory with Jerusalem at its center.



With much ceremony, King David transferred the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and thereby made it the capital of the kingdom. Therefore, King David really did exist. [??] There is no doubt about it. [??] He reigned in the 10th century B.C.



But was his kingdom the vast empire described in the Bible?



Our investigation will continue in Jerusalem, the city of David, as it is referred to in THE BIBLICAL TEXT.



Jerusalem is an unusual city which has been destroyed and rebuilt many times.



IT IS A LIVING CITY, a difficult terrain for archaeologists.



Is it still possible to find signs of David's capital?



Given the difficulties, archaeologists have to proceed by going back in time that begins with the latest remains -- those that had been reliably dated --



and go back to the older ones whose chronology is still uncertain.



This time our investigation will take us to cemeteries



from the end of the monarchial period,



which were built outside the city.



Israel Finkelstein is going to try to find the remains of the Jerusalem of the 7th century, B.C.



[Israel Finkelstein] I haven't been here for 20 years. I don't remember how to pass anymore. It's somewhere over there. It should be. That's okay.





During the Iron Age -- the time of this cemetery --



the dead were buried outside of the limits of the city.



So by plotting the layout of the cemeteries in Jerusalem, what you get in fact is some sort of a circle around an empty area with no tombs. And that empty area, the negative print with no tombs in the center, is in fact the area of the city in the Iron Age.



[Narrator] Localizing these necropoli



allows a map to be drawn up of the contours



of Jerusalem at the end of the 8th,



and during the 7th centuries, the time of kings Hezekiah and Josiah. [?]



But this large city is the late Jerusalem from the time WHEN JUDAH WAS A PROSPEROUS STATE. What about David's city, [?] which is two centuries older?



The city that we are looking for has to be somewhere within these contours.



Our investigation will focus on the ridge called Ir David



to the south of Temple Mount. It is here that archaeologists have been looking for King David's capital since the 19th century.



[Ronny Reich, University of Haifa] We are standing on the upper slope, on the upper part of the slope down to the valley of Kidron.



IN THE LOWER PART, WE SEE 2 OR 2-1/2 HOUSES from the late Iron Age.



And above the houses is this very strange thing, what we call the Step Structure.



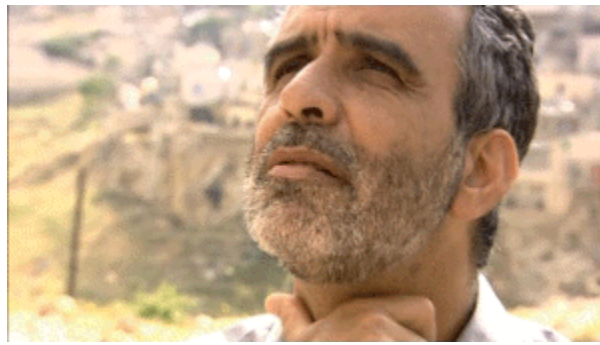
These are not steps to climb up a slope.



This is just a revetment, cover of a slope which is very loose, which is made of debris,



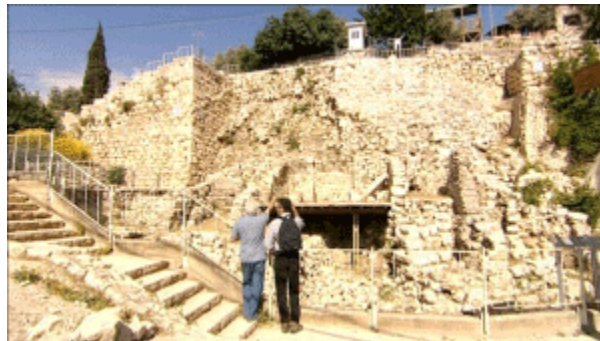
which might in a little earthquake or so collapse down the slope



and take with them whatever is standing above them.



In the late Bronze Age and in the early Iron Age, THERE IS HUMAN ACTIVITY HERE;



there's human occupation here, ON A VERY SMALL SCALE.



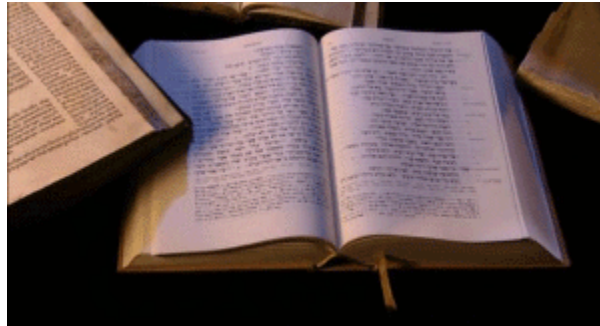
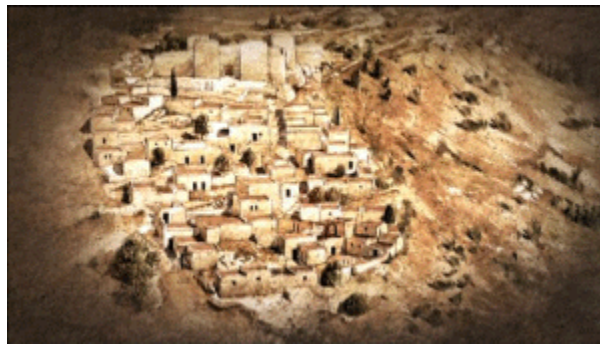
[Israel Finkelstein] The way I see it, there was a village here in the 10th century, but it was a small one, MAINLY ON THIS PART OF THE RIDGE of the city of David [?], NOT ALL ALONG THE RIDGE, and with a very limited population, NOT FORTIFIED AND WITH NO MONUMENTS.



[Ronny Reich, University of Haifa] Well, I agree that it was a very small place. Iron Age Jerusalem was a very small place. And this does not agree -- **ARCHAEOLOGY AND TEXT DESCRIBE TWO DIFFERENT NATURES OF SITES.** Not the existence, but the natures of sites.



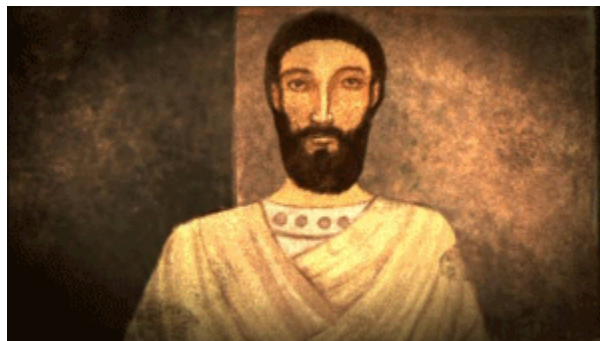
[Narrator] Unlike the GREAT CITY of the 7th Century, David's [?] Jerusalem was a simple mountain village covering 3-4 hectares.



We can agree that DAVID DID NOT BUILD A PRESTIGIOUS CAPITAL.



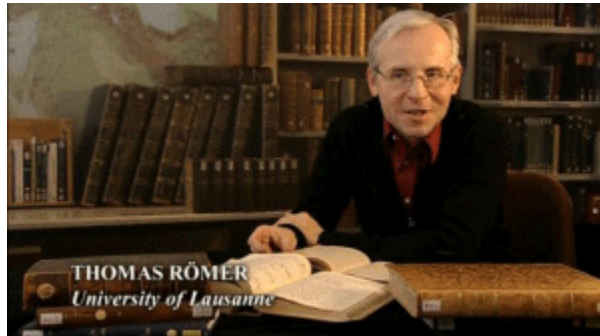
IN THE BIBLE, he's above-all described as a conqueror.



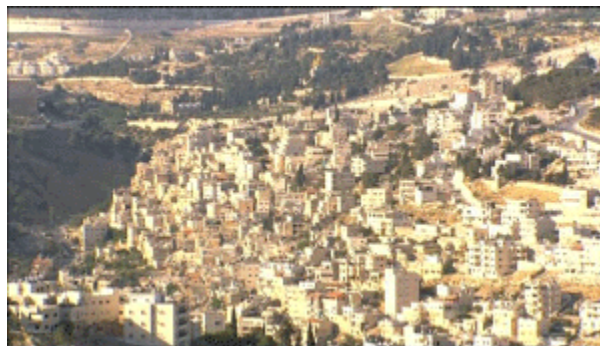
But what about his son -- THE ILLUSTRIOUS SOLOMON -- whom THE BIBLE tells us is a GREAT BUILDER?



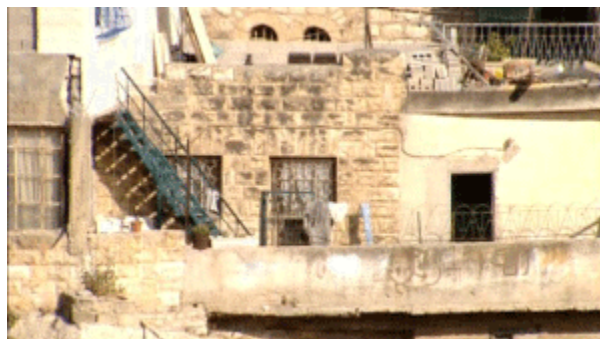
[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] The Biblical STORY of Solomon reads a bit like a STORY from THE ARABIAN NIGHTS. Solomon is THE WISE KING PAR EXCELLENCE.



He of the famous judgment of Solomon. But he is also someone who is SO FAMOUS THAT EVEN THE QUEEN OF SHEBA CAME TO VISIT HIM, to meet with the man whose wisdom was talked about even in far-flung Africa. Solomon's empire was said to have been SO ENORMOUS THAT NO OTHER EMPIRE COULD COMPETE! And Solomon was also the builder of the temple which allowed the God of Israel to find a resting place within Israel.



[Narrator] Discovering the temple of Solomon? An impossible task today. Religious sensitivities, in particular with respect to the temple mount, preclude the investigation of certain areas. We therefore have to look for clues in the bowels of the city of David. [?]





[Ronny Reich, University of Haifa] You see we are standing inside what is left of the Middle Bronze Age fortifications, and you can see how high they still stand, 3700 years.



Part is destroyed, but part survived, and the lower parts are even better preserved.



[Israel Finkelstein] What's amazing is the size of the stones. Some of them are a few tons in weight, right?



[Ronny Reich, University of Haifa] These two stones for example reach -- let's say --

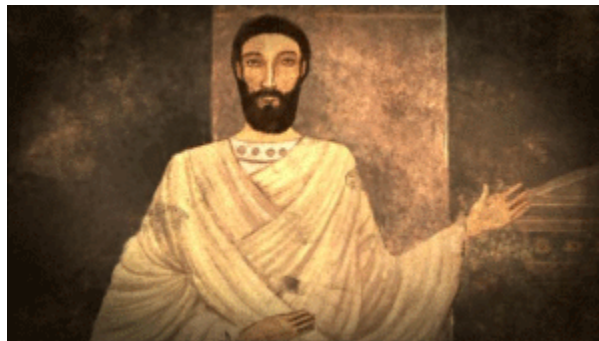




[Israel Finkelstein] And what's interesting here, all these talks that, you know -- because we are in Jerusalem, monuments could have been simply eradicated by later builders, robbed, and sold, and so forth -- here we see that it is impossible. When you have a monument like this, something remains.



[Ronny Reich, University of Haifa] Any big building from any period of time, whether destroyed by nature or destroyed by men, in one way or another [you'll find] parts standing and parts in a state of collapse. You must find something.



[Narrator] LIKE DAVID'S JERUSALEM, SOLOMON'S CAPITAL WAS AN INSIGNIFICANT VILLAGE. But what about the rest of the KINGDOM?



In the 1960's, the archaeologist Yigael Yadin



undertook excavations in Megiddo,



one of our books of stone



Megiddo, Israel



Before him, in the 1920s and 30s, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago had already carried out a
THOROUGH CAMPAIGN of excavations,



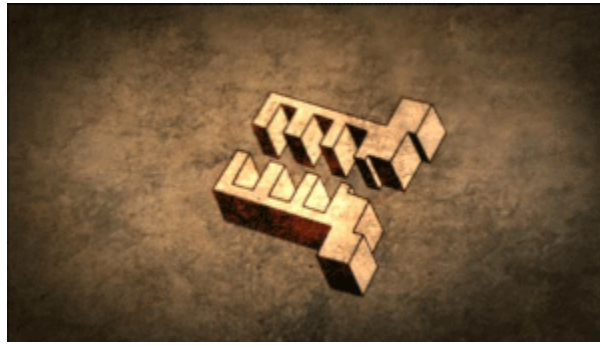
during which the remains of a gate to the city were discovered.



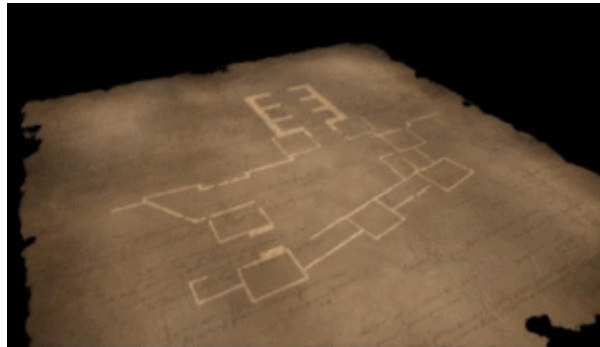
This gate, of which only one side remains,



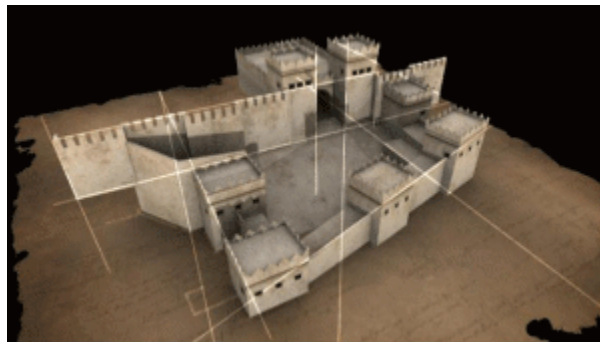
has an unusual design.



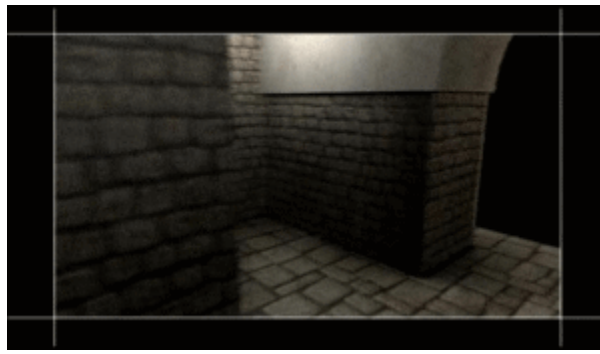
It is a pathway that is framed on each side by three chambers.



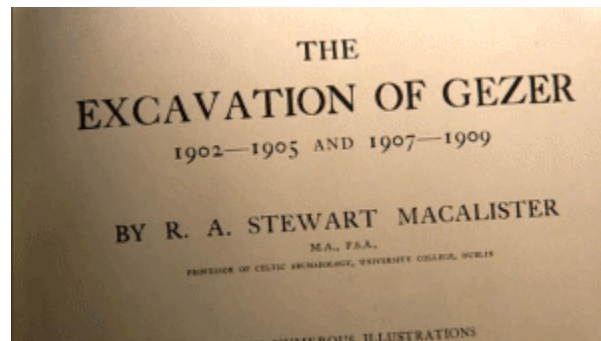
It is therefore known as a six-chambered gate.



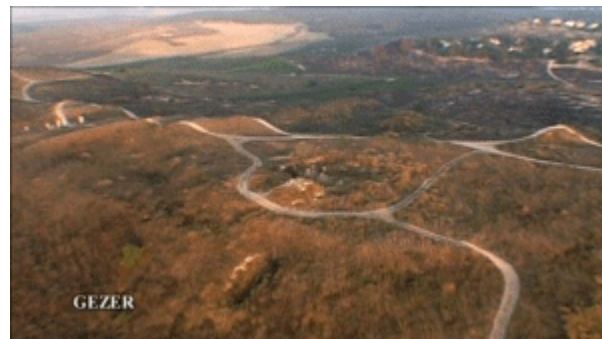
Yigael Yadin did not choose Megiddo by chance.



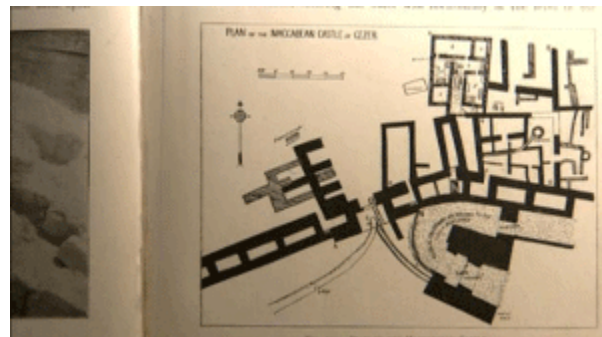
His previous excavations of the Hazor site resulted in the discovery of a similar gate.



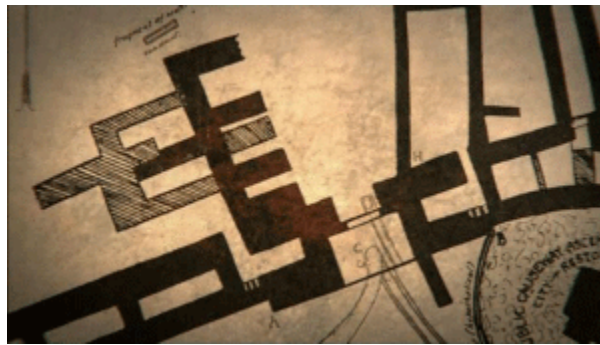
Yadin then turned to another site -- that of Gezer.



This time he only went so far as to consult the report of an archaeologist who explored the site at the beginning of the 20th century.



Yadin discovered a similar gate in the design for a later small fort,



a gate that was similar in design and size to those of Megiddo and Hazor.



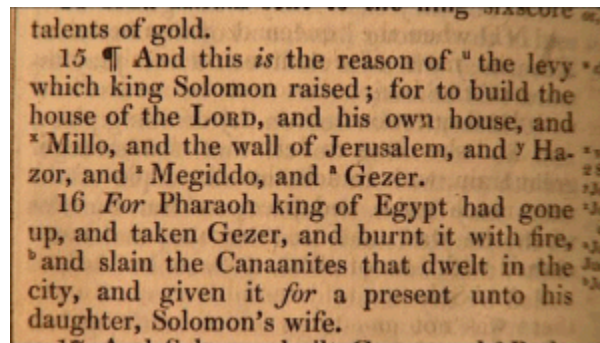
FOR YIGAEEL YADIN, THE CONCLUSION WAS OBVIOUS:



Megiddo, Gezer and Hazor all carried the signs of the same architect: King Solomon.



Yigael Yadin was GUIDED IN HIS INVESTIGATION [?] BY A BIBLICAL VERSE.



The verse tells us that Solomon raised a levy to build the house of Yahweh, and his own house, and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer.



So, [thought Yigael Yadin], Solomon was a builder king at the head of an empire.



When writing about David and Solomon, THE BIBLE serves as a history book.



But once again, REALITY PROVES TO BE SLIGHTLY MORE COMPLICATED.



Recent stratigraphic investigation has shown that the Megiddo gate was built after the Hazor one.



It has also been shown that this type of gate was already in existence



in the 8th century.



Israel Finkelstein is troubled by these inconsistencies.



Everything has to be reconsidered.



A new chronology based on scientific procedures will have to be determined for the strata and monumental vestiges.



Archaeological methods have evolved since the excavations led by Yigael Yadin.



Carbon 14 dating techniques are more and more accurate.



The margin of error has been reduced to 30-50 years.



Helen and Martin Kimmel Center for Archaeological Science



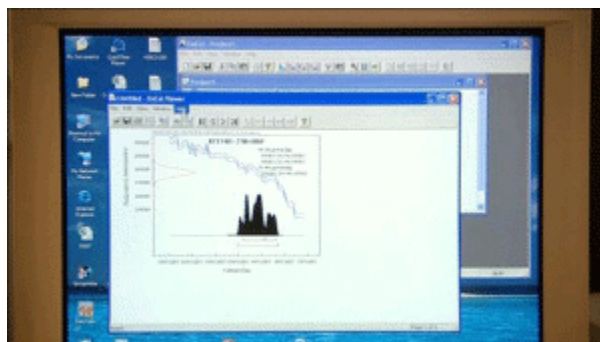
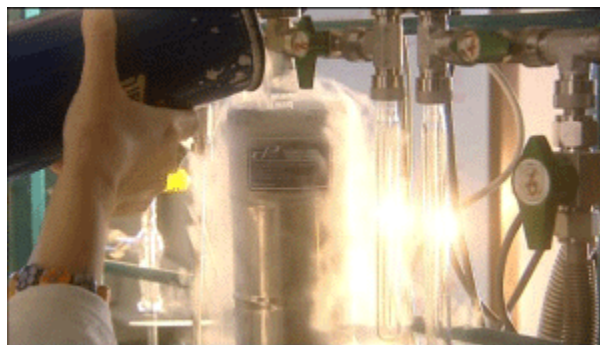
Organic samples are therefore taken from the LAYERS OF DESTRUCTION in many sites, including Megiddo. They include seeds and olive stones,



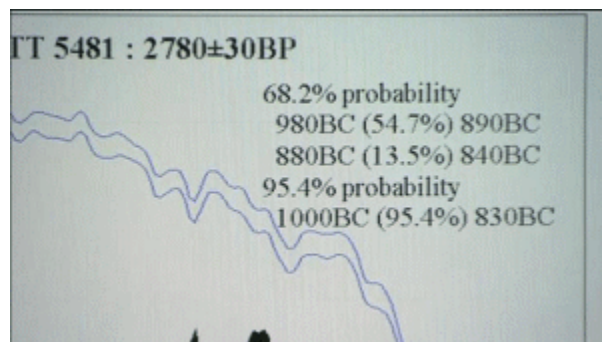
which allow for a more reliable dating due to their more limited life-cycles.



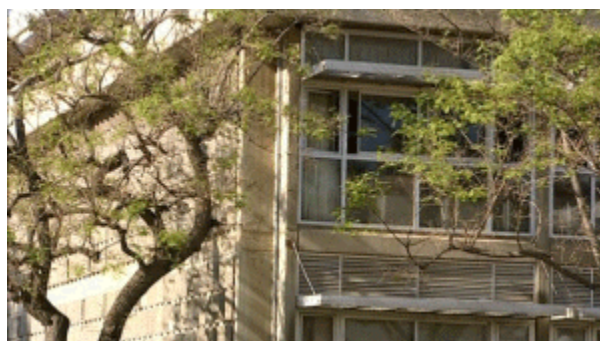
The exact sciences -- physics, chemistry, statistics -- are brought into play.

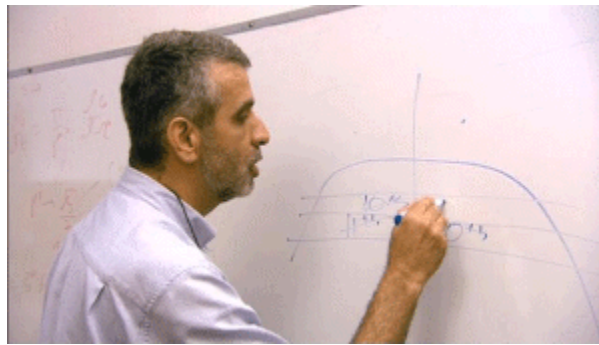


The results provide A DRASTIC REVERSAL OF EVERYTHING WE EVER KNEW about David [?] and Solomon [?] and their times.



Tel Aviv University





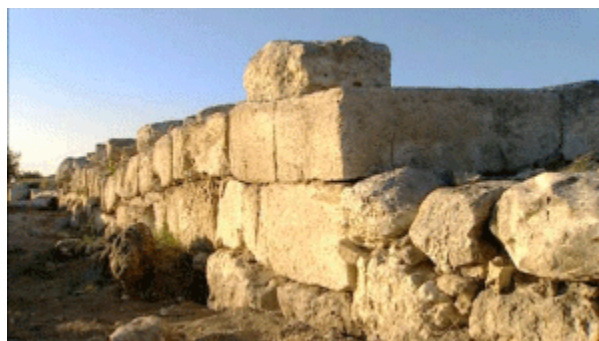
[Israel Finkelstein] So here's the situation: If we have the mound of Megiddo, and we partition it into [inaudible], okay -- the two strata -- this one was supposed to be in the 11th century B.C., and now according to the hydrocarbon results we definitely see that this is impossible. That it falls into the 10th century. And the meaning is, that the strata which had been dated to the 10th century, cannot be 10th century, it goes to the 9th century B.C.



[Neil Silberman] Yep!



[Narrator] That is a whole century after Solomon. A set of certitudes based on deductions have COLLAPSED. The pieces of the puzzle no longer fit together.



After our reconsideration of David's empire [?], it is now Solomon's turn.



[Neil Silberman] What is the situation with the 10th century now?



[Israel Finkelstein] It's confusing. In Jerusalem, it's a small village. Nothing monumental. No REAL evidence for a big capital.



[Neil Silberman] DESPITE THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE!! [?] ?

[Israel Finkelstein] Of course. There's no evidence for a great Solomonic capital, ruling over a great state, rich state and so on. And here at Megiddo, the buildings, the monumental buildings which had been described as the symbol of Solomonic greatness, in fact date a bit later. They don't date to the time of Solomon. They don't date to the 10th century. SO WE ARE IN A SITUATION OF COMPLETE NEGATIVE PICTURE, NEGATIVE EVIDENCE FROM COAST TO COAST.

[Neil Silberman] And yet there are magnificent buildings here, and the question is: "What kingdom were they related to?"

[Israel Finkelstein] Yeah, they are dated a bit later, I think. But the question again is what's going on in the 10th century?

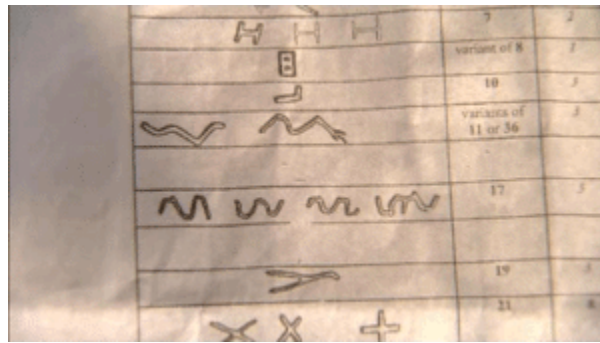


[Neil Silberman] We have a real historical problem here. We'll have to come up with another explanation.



[Narrator] As often happens in such cases, **JUST AS UNCERTAINTIES REACH THEIR CLIMAX, A NEW CLUE WAS DISCOVERED!** Norma Franklin has been part of the Megiddo expedition for years. She noticed that the stonework of a palace that Yadin attributed to Solomon displayed very unusual masons marks.





She looked through the records and reports of old excavations



to find out if similar masons marks were to be found elsewhere.



She found that such masons marks were only recorded in one other building.



Only one building in the whole country.



The building is to be found in Samaria,



a city located in a mountainous region.



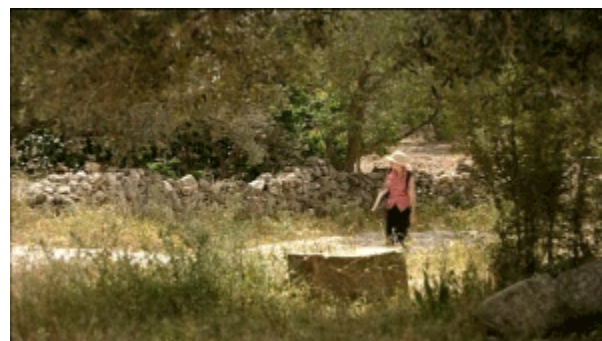
Like Megiddo, this site is ONE OF THE WONDERS OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.



Samaria



THE SOLUTION TO OUR ENIGMAS LIES HERE amongst these verdant hills.



Samaria was excavated on two occasions last century.



MANY REMNANTS FROM THE ROMAN ERA WERE FOUND from a time when the city was called Sebastia.



It was built by a king named Omri [?] in the 9th century B.C. and was the capital of THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL [?]



Vast monuments that were built by this king [?] and his descendants, have been found here.



THE BIBLE CONSIDERS THE OMRI DYNASTY as debauched and renegade kings, the infamous "cursed" kings.



But sources outside the Bible provide another image altogether.



Omri's son Ahab is seen as being a great monarch. [?]



THE MISSING PIECE OF THE PUZZLE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN FOUND. [?]



[Norma Franklin, *The Megiddo Expedition*] When we come to Samaria, and we see the monumental building, palace,



built by Omri, [?] it's so out of keeping with what we have been told [in the Bible], that the Omri kingdom was the breakaway kingdom, it was a small kingdom -- in fact it's quite different. We can visibly see that we're dealing with a monumental building, a building that needed a strong and powerful king in order to establish it. So it's telling us that we cannot just follow the Biblical account. We have to look around us and see what else we have from the same time period.



Everything is telling us that we're dealing with a strong and powerful king,



a king who had at his fingertips the resources to build an incredible palace.



So we're looking at a very powerful kingdom,



a very strong king.



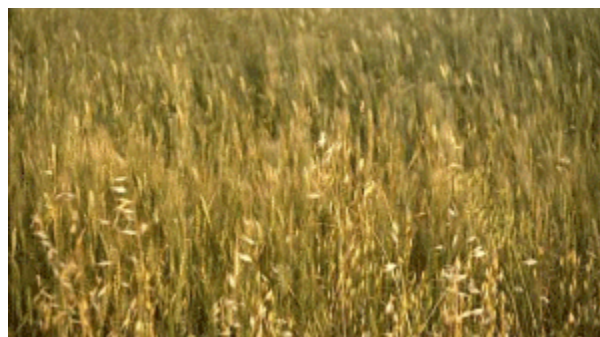
[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] What places like Samaria and Megiddo tell us when we look at the palaces at those places is very clear.



The kingdom that was the richest and the strongest, and the *BEST* [?] connected internationally, was the northern kingdom, Israel. [?]



While Judah, to the south, was small, poor and marginal.





[Narrator] THESE CONCLUSIONS ARE QUITE SURPRISING! The SISTER KINGDOM to the north -- Israel --



with its rich soils and its temperate climate, was prosperous and developed.



Whereas the kingdom to the south -- Judah -- with its rocky hills and its TINY POPULATION,



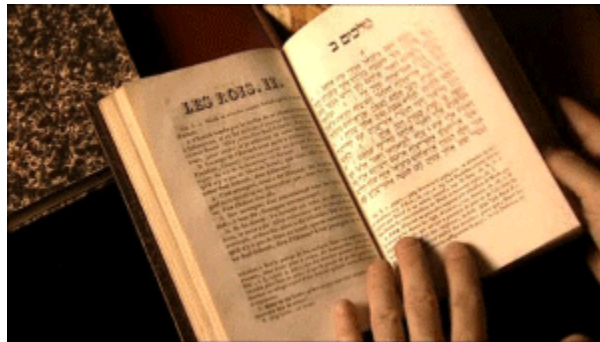
only developed as far as a subsistence economy.



They both SHARE THE LAND OF CANAAN.



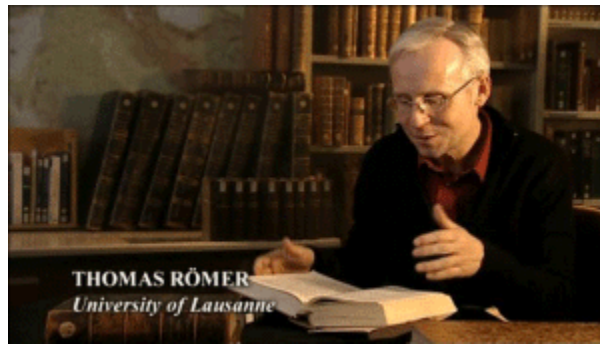
One was strong, the other was weak. And yet it was the weak KINGDOM [?] THE YOUNGER SIBLING [?] Judah, that would write THE FAMILY [?] HISTORY,



and would credit itself with the successes of the GREAT KINGS OF THE NORTH. [?]



[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] When you read the history of these two kingdoms -- ISRAEL AND JUDAH -- IN THE BIBLE,



you soon realize that the kings of the north lag way behind in the stakes. Each king's evaluated, and regardless of what the northern kings do, they always obtain a very poor rating. Quite simply because THE STORY IS WRITTEN FROM A SOUTHERN PERSPECTIVE.



That is, the kings are always judged from the perspective that Jerusalem is the only legitimate sanctuary. The kings of the north therefore have no chance of obtaining a good rating in the Book of Kings.



[Narrator] HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN SUCH A PARADOXICAL SITUATION? HISTORY provides the ANSWER.





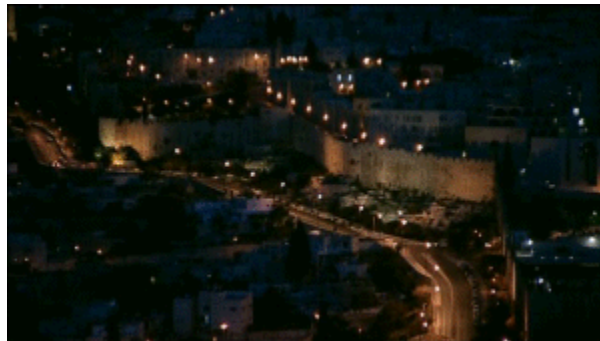
In the 8th century, Assyrian ambitions destroyed THE DREAMS of the KINGDOM of the north.

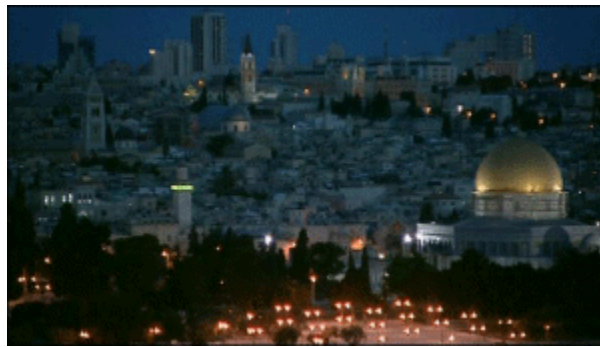


The KINGDOM OF ISRAEL was SWEPT from the map,



and JUDAH REMAINED ALONE to defend the ISRAELITE HERITAGE [?] Jerusalem became the city where all of this would be played out.





We are now at the end of the 7th century, B.C.



A young KING, JOSIAH [?], that we have learnt by now [?] REIGNS in Judah. [?] He has the mission of conquering the territories of THE LOST KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. He BELIEVES he has both the means to succeed, and the duty.

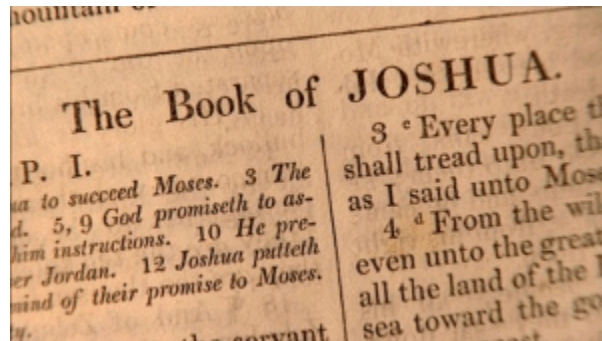


The Assyrian empire was in decline. All of its efforts were focused on problems that had arisen in the northeast.





[Israel Finkelstein] THE DREAM of a UNITED ISRAEL was not possible to fulfill as long as the Assyrian empire was there. But when the Assyrians pull out, things become possible. And [according to the Bible] JOSIAH, KING OF JUDAH, embarks on this GREAT IDEA, GREAT ADVENTURE. He PLANS to take over the territories of the now-destroyed NORTHERN KINGDOM, and by doing that he plans to reunify THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL -- all of them - under one king of THE LINEAGE OF DAVID in Jerusalem. AND HERE THE STORY OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA, THE CONQUEST OF JOSHUA, AND THE STORY OF THE GREAT EMPIRE OF DAVID AND SOLOMON, PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE, BECAUSE THE CONQUEST OF JOSHUA DELINEATES THE TERRITORIES THAT JOSIAH [?] WISHES TO TAKE OVER. AND THE GREAT EMPIRE OF DAVID AND SOLOMON GIVES THE MODEL FOR THE GREAT ISRAELITE EMPIRE TO COME.



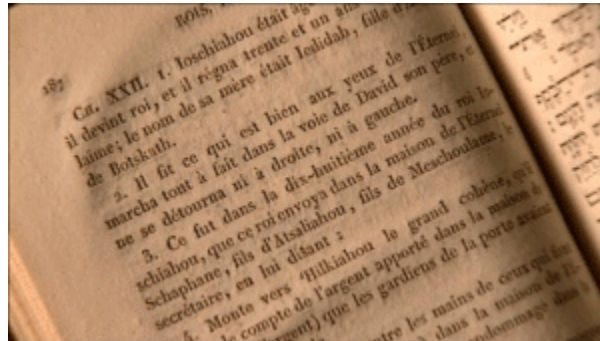
[Narrator] We are almost at the end of THIS STORY. THE BIBLICAL SAGA OF THE CONQUEST, WRITTEN IN THE PAST TENSE, PROVIDES A PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE. An Ideal.



Joshua's conquest is in fact the conquest that Josiah [?] hoped to achieve.



[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] So while Josiah's STORY in the Bible is quite brief, there is no doubt at all that the narrator wants to present him as THE NEW DAVID.



From the very beginning of the STORY we read that Josiah did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. And later, that he walked in the ways of David -- his father -- and didn't turn aside to the right hand or to the left.



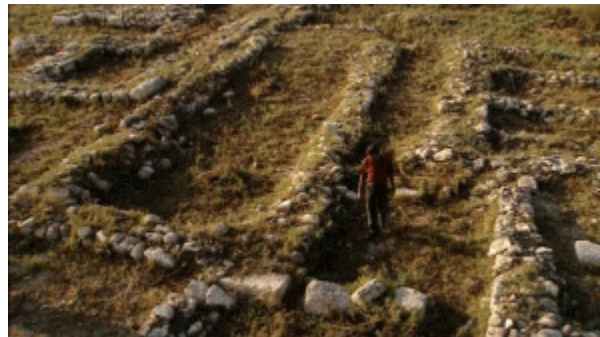
It will be shown, in fact, that in all that he did he was the worthy successor to THE FOUNDER OF THE DYNASTY, leaving the reader with no conclusion other than we are dealing with a new David.



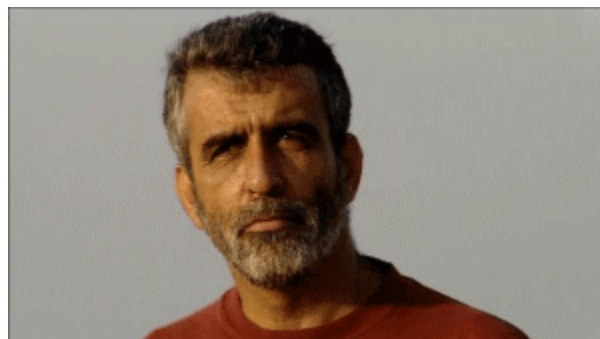
[Narrator] ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, the divine commitment to the dynasty of David was an unconditional one. That promise, recorded in the Biblical text, makes the mission of his descendant Josiah an inescapable one.



Megiddo, Israel



Its PLAN is the REALIZATION of that PROMISE.



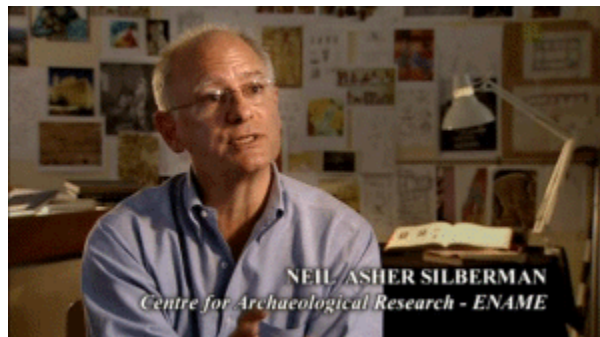
But once again [according to the Bible] THE TIDES OF FATE decided otherwise.



A TRAGEDY WAS IN THE MAKING at Megiddo.



EGYPT, WHICH HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN ABOUT, CAME BACK ON THE SCENE WITH A VENGEANCE.
Pharaoh Necho II summoned Josiah and killed him.



[Neil Asher Silberman] The death of Josiah [as recounted by the Bible] completely changed the concept of the Messiah. Up until the time of Josiah, all the successors to David were known as the Mashiyach, the anointed one. And this was REALLY A SYMBOL of their legitimate succession to the throne of Judah. But with the death of Josiah, everything changed. All the PROMISES that had been BELIEVED to be embodied in Josiah WERE SUDDENLY DISPROVED BY EVENTS. The death of Josiah caused a huge change in THE IDEA OF A TRANSFORMATION from royal succession to a future hope.





[Narrator] For the peoples of antiquity, THE IDEA THAT THE TIME TO COME could be better than what they lived on a daily basis, that HISTORY HAS A MEANING and an end, was a new concept.



Today, this FAITH IN MESSIANIC TIMES is at the core of the Jewish liturgy.



A king of the house of David will one day come to realize Josiah's dream: an earthly kingdom that will carry out the divine mission.





[Children singing] *"David, King of Israel, lives forever."*



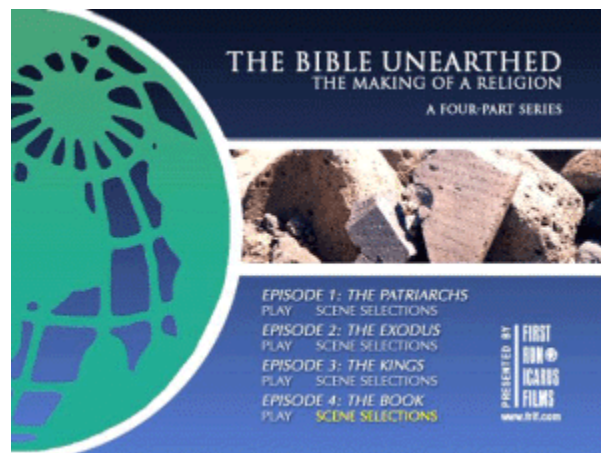
This creed has generated an UNBREAKABLE FORM of HOPE.



It is the third pillar of Judaism.



In the next and last episode, we will explore the origins of the Israelites, and TRY TO UNDERSTAND HOW A COLLECTION OF DIFFERENT STORIES WERE TRANSFORMED INTO A SINGLE BOOK: The Bible.



EPISODE 4: THE BOOK

*France 5 presents in association with Arte France
A Cabiria Films
Maya Rothschild*

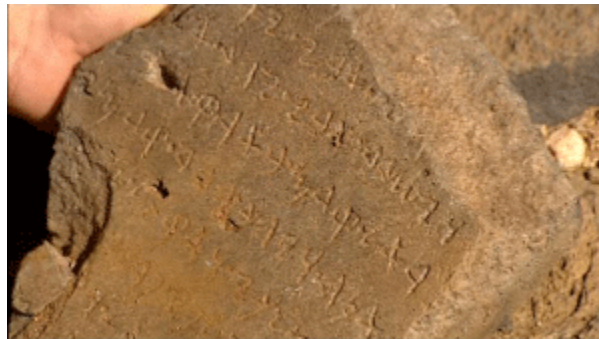
SZ Productions
Isy Morgensztern
France 5



[Narrator] Over the centuries, the Bible's **REMARKABLE STORIES** have formed the basis of monotheism. In previous episodes, we saw **THE ROLE** played by the Patriarchs, and by the Exodus and The Law.

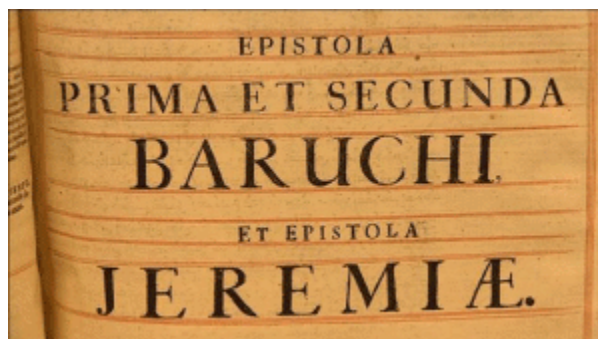


Questions were raised about Joshua's conquest of Canaan, and **THE IMPORTANCE** of King David [?] and King Solomon [?] was **RECONSIDERED**.

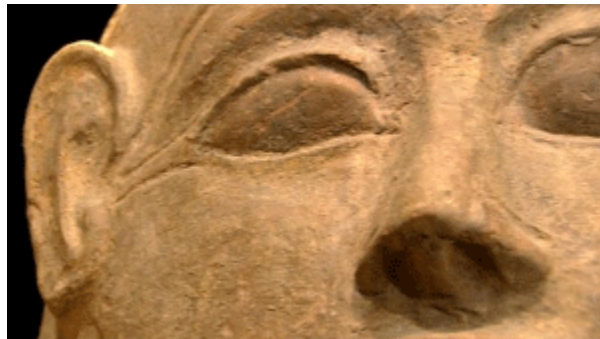




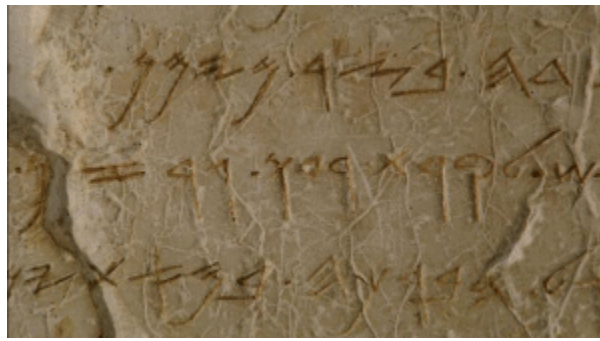
This time, our archaeological quest is aimed at establishing the ORIGINS OF A PEOPLE.



Who is THIS PEOPLE THAT THE BIBLE CALLS "The Children of Israel"?



Where do they [?] come from?



Our archaeological investigation is going to take us on the path of another Genesis: that of the authors of a book that form the basis of one religion -- Judaism -- and then went on to inspire two others -- Christianity and Islam:



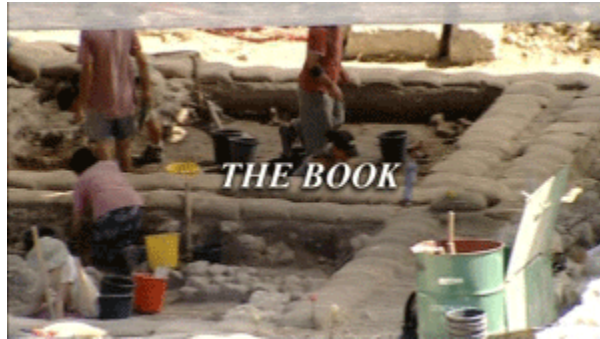
the three religions devoted to a single God.



The Bible Unearthed



Tel Megiddo. This archaeological site will once again provide some keys to the authors of the Bible.



THE BOOK



The 25 strata found at the site cover 7,000 years of the history of Canaan. Will it allow us to find clues to the origins of the Israelites?





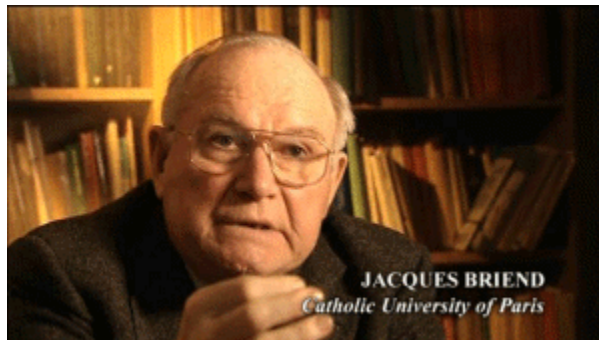
Our two investigators -- Israel Finkelstein and Neil Silberman -- are writing a book that uses **ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOOLS** to re-examine the Bible's **STORIES**. **THE ISSUE OF THE ORIGIN** of the Israelites is **AT THE HEART** of their investigation.



In previous episodes, it was shown that the Exodus -- the flight from Egypt -- had left **NO TRACE**, and that the land of Canaan was **NEVER CONQUERED IN MILITARY TERMS**. So where do **THE ISRAELITES** [?] come from? What approach should we take to our investigation.

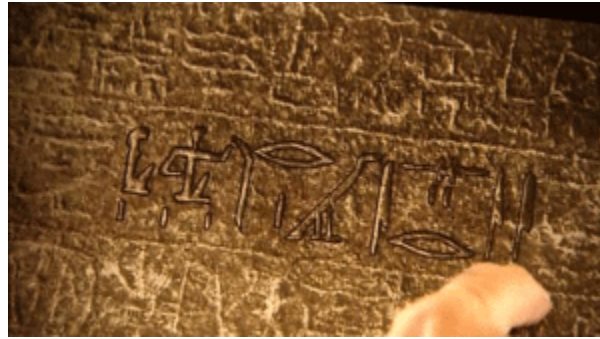


The Museum of Cairo contains a stele that describes a military campaign led by Pharaoh Merneptah against Canaan. It contains a crucial piece of information.

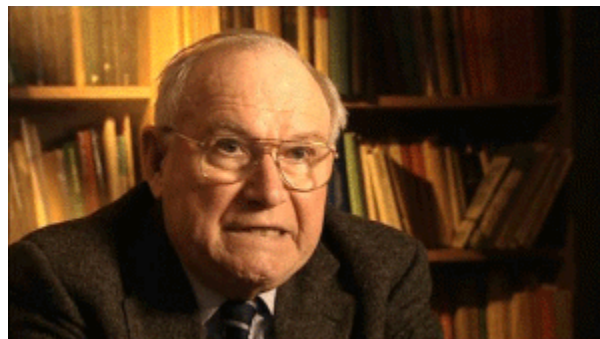


[Jacques Briend, Catholic University of Paris] "The princes are prostrate, saying 'mercy.' Plundered is Canaan with every evil, carried off is Ashkelon, seized upon is Gezer, Yeno 'am is made as that which does not exist. Israel is destroyed and its seed is no more. All lands together -- they are pacified."

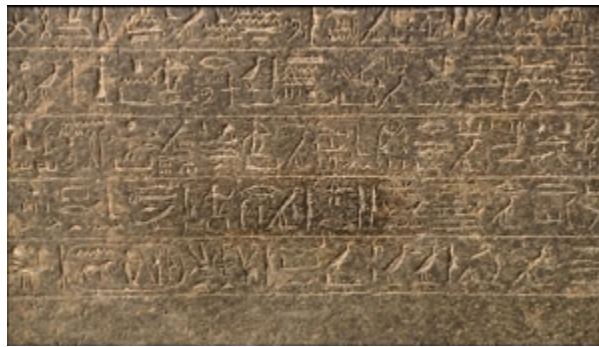
The princes are prostrate, saying: "Mercy!"
Not one raises his head among the Nine Bows.
Desolation is for Tehenu;
Hatti is pacified;
Plundered is the Canaan with every evil;
Carried off is Ashkelon;
seized upon is Gezer;
Yeno`am is made as that which does not exist;
Israel is laid waste, his seed is not;
Hurru is become a widow for Egypt!
All lands together, they are pacified;
everyone who was restless has been bound
by the king of Upper and Lower Egypt;
Be-en Re Meri-Amon; the Son of Re;
mer-ne-Ptah Hotep-hir-Maat, given life
like Re every day.



The only indication that the Merneptah stele provides as to the nature of this population named "Israel," is that the hieroglyphics contain the symbols for "man" and "woman," and the three lines indicating a plural. In other words, IT REFERS TO A SEMI-NOMADIC GROUP that is not settled down, THAT DOES NOT LIVE IN A CITY.



It's a group that moves around WITHOUT A PARTICULAR TERRITORY. AND THAT IS ALL WE KNOW.



[Narrator] The stele dates from the very end of the 13th century: 1207 B.C. A CONCRETE STARTING POINT IN OUR QUEST FOR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.



Historians tell us that at the time the stele was erected, Canaan was organized around CITY-STATES UNDER THE DOMINATION OF EGYPT.



Megiddo, Israel



In the strata of the Megiddo site corresponding to this period, the remains of a flourishing city have been found. During the whole of the 13th and 14th centuries, Megiddo was apparently a prosperous Canaan city, but suddenly, around 1130 B.C., it was destroyed.



A layer of carbonized debris that is clearly visible in many areas of the site,



attests to the violence of the event that caused this destruction.



[Israel Finkelstein, Tel Aviv University] Megiddo is only one piece of evidence in a much bigger picture of the destruction of Canaanite culture. Other places were also put to the torch: Hazor, Lachish, Bethel and Megiddo. **HOWEVER, NOT IN THE SAME TIME.** Some of them came down in the 13th century. Others survived a little bit. Some of them were destroyed in the 12th century B.C. It took about a century until all of them were put to the torch.



Who did it, then? And why?



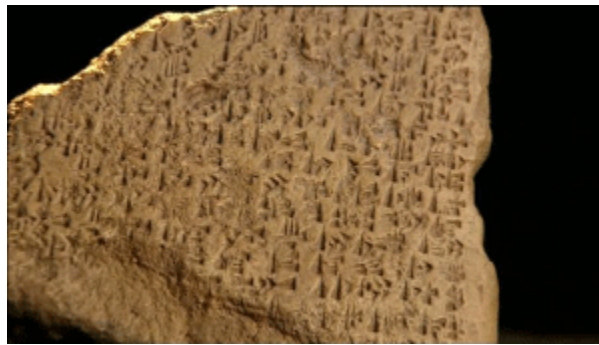
[Narrator] If we broaden our perspective, we can see that the entire Levant region underwent an intensely troubled period at the time. Egypt was no longer the power of bygone days, and had lost its far-off colonies one-by-one. The Hittites who controlled Asia Minor at the north of Syria, disappeared, as did the Mycenaean civilization and its monuments. As for the Levant city-states, they were swept away.



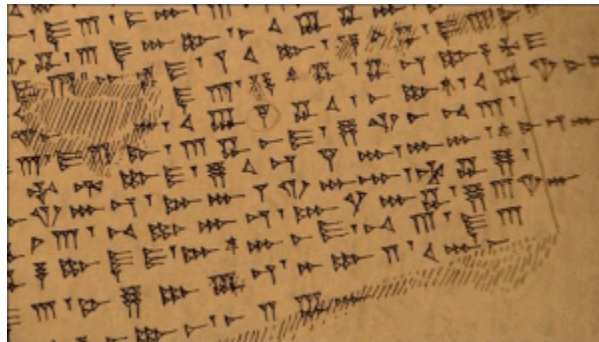
The Canaan landscape was radically transformed. How did this happen?



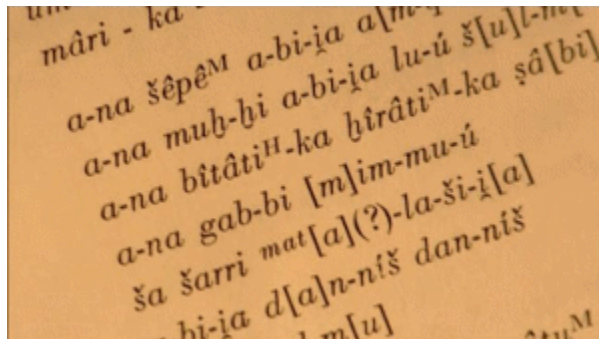
Cuneiform tablets discovered in the port city of Ugarit in Syria -- which was itself destroyed at the time --



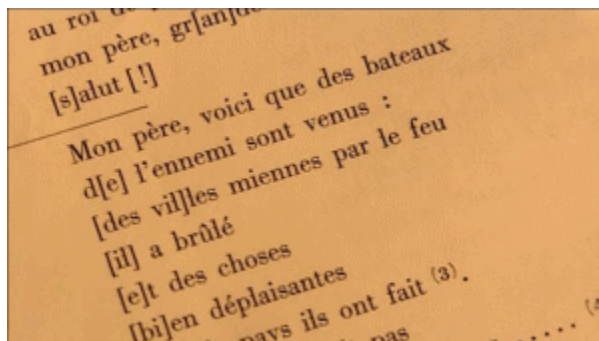
provide the first elements of an explanation. These texts attest to a climate of fear and confusion.



When deciphered, they provide evidence of the causes of this upheaval.



Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit, wrote to the king of Alashiya -- today's Cyprus:



"Father, the enemy's ships have come, burning our cities and sowing destruction everywhere."



Which formidable enemy was capable of overturning the ancient world in this way? Who were these invaders who came from the sea? The archaeologist, Ayelet Gilboa,



is excavating a site on the north coast of Tel Aviv. She puts forward the explanation that is most widely accepted by the experts.



Tel Dor



[Ayelet Gilboa, University of Haifa] One of the main [inaudible] outcomes are what we call the movements of the Sea Peoples which are still, after 100 years of research, a very mysterious group of people. Most people think that they came from somewhere in the West -- maybe Greece, maybe Anatolia -- which is West to us -- possibly Cyprus -- and settled in our region on the coast of the Levant. Now among these people, the most celebrated, the most famous ones are the Philistines. We all know the Philistines from the Bible. But there were many groups of Sea People. We know

them, name by name, from the Egyptian records -- mainly from the Egyptian records -- and from some Canaanite records, too. Among them -- again there were many -- but were such people as Sikila, Shardana, Lukka, Eqwosh, and many other names which are very hard to define archaeologically.



[Narrator] What can we learn from the Canaan and Egyptian sources?



In Medinet Habu, in upper Egypt, a monumental inscription dating from Ramesses III,



describes attacks carried out by unknown invaders.



The carvings show a military campaign and a naval battle: capsized boats, archers, men fallen into the sea.



Egypt's adversaries are clearly depicted.

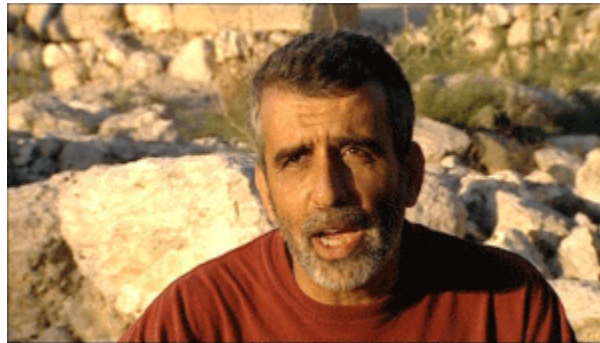


They are wearing plumed helmets with chin-straps, and sometimes strange horned helmets. A visual account of the horrors of a battle.





In less than one century -- the 12th -- the Sea Peoples occupied the entire coast.



[Israel Finkelstein] It would be a mistake to understand every single destruction of a Canaanite city-state as a result of an attack by the Sea People. The entire eastern Mediterranean was in a complete turmoil. The economy was destroyed, maritime trade routes were cut, ports on the Mediterranean coast were destroyed, were attacked and taken. In a situation like this, of economy falling, famine, political dysfunction, then one city can attack another; a gang of people from the highlands can take a city; pastoral nomads can come also and try to gain some advantage by attacking a single city, isolated city. Everything was in chaos.



[Narrator] While the city-states were collapsing, one-by-one,



another development was secretly unfolding in the highlands.



At the time, the population density of the region was quite low. Its barren topography made communications difficult.
It was an enclosed area, IDEAL FOR A GENESIS OR BIRTH!



Up until the end of the 1960s, the highlands were practically terra incognita in archaeological terms.



After the 1967 war, these territories were **PLACED UNDER** Israeli administration. Exploratory missions were then carried out at the surface level by a number of archaeological teams.



Researchers went over the territory, square meter by square meter, carrying out a meticulous collection at ground level of any traces of human passage or settlement.



The slightest object of significance was collected and its location noted,



a task that required observation, sorting and classification,



followed by analysis. Certain sites were then chosen for excavation.



This type of research is based on statistical methodology.



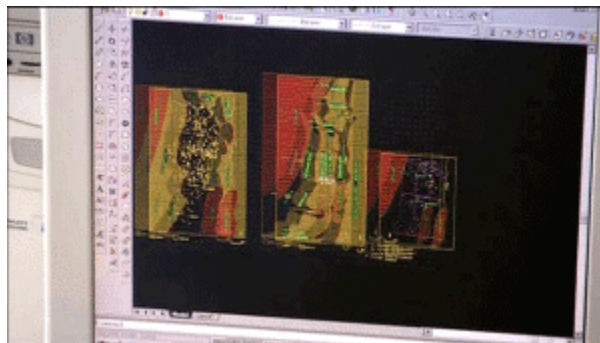
The location of remains and concentrations of fragments are transferred onto a map of the area. This allows a reconstruction of how a given territory was occupied, the size of sites, their number, and their evolution over time.



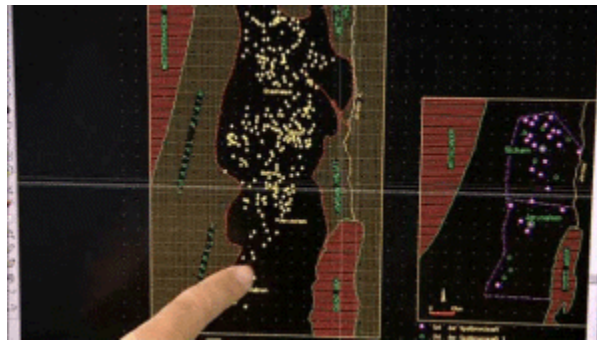
In this way, the highlands were inspected with a fine-tooth comb. **THE RESULTS WERE AMAZING!**



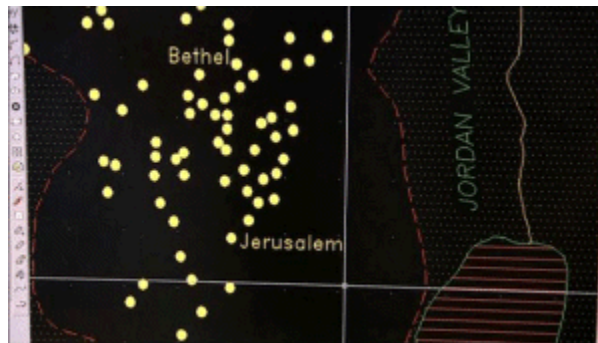
Between the 12th and 10th centuries B.C., almost 250 villages were to be found in the highlands of central Canaan.



This occurred without the slightest trace of a military conquest. It was a social transformation that was gradual, but nevertheless **RADICAL.**



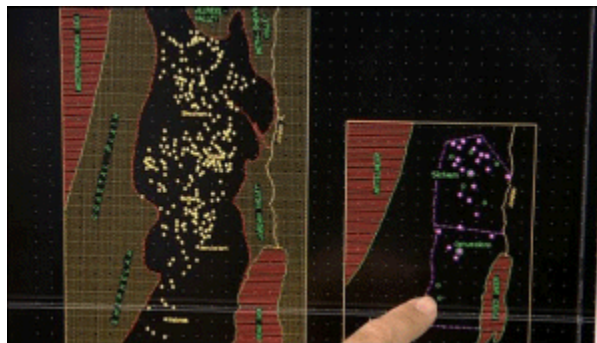
[Israel Finkelstein] So what we see here is the entire map of all the surveys of many years in the highlands,



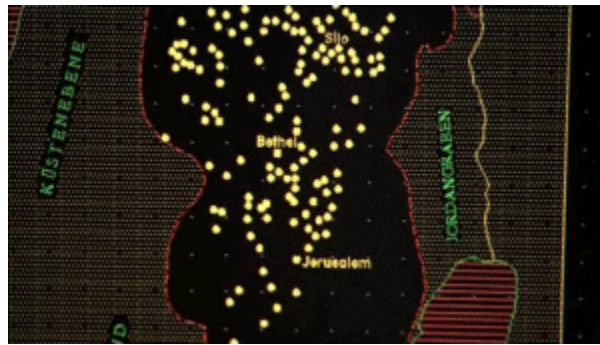
from south to north.



This map itself is extremely important, but there is one more step to take. And that is to show, to investigate this map on the background, vis-a-vis the map of the period before, and the map of the period after. And then you see a process. And this is really what is amazing.



Because in the late months, it's very, very sparse. There are very few settlements. Altogether in the highlands, maybe 30 or so. And then during a very short period of time, you have a wave of settlement. We have about 250 sites all over the area.



AND THIS IS REALLY THE RISE OF EARLY ISRAEL!



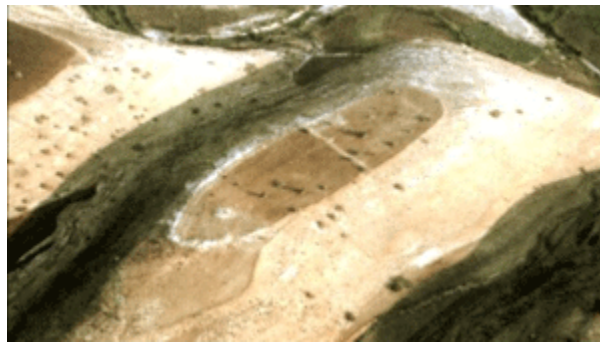
[Narrator] WHY can we call them THE FIRST ISRAELITES? What characterizes this population which appeared in the highlands?



The layout of their villages, which is very different from villages in the lowlands, provides a first clue. These villages were oval in shape.



ANIMAL HUSBANDRY was the principal activity of the inhabitants. A completely enclosed area was used to corral herds, and protect them during the night.



But why were these villages oval?

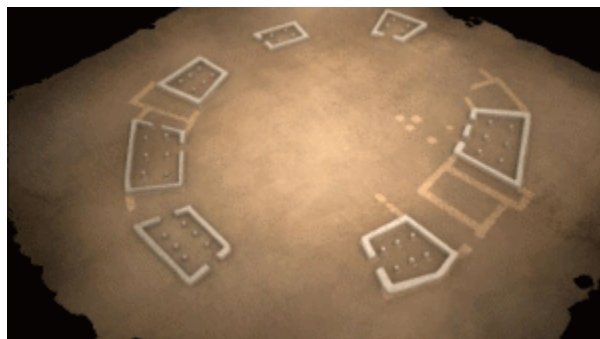


This configuration is similar to that of the bedouins described by the first explorers who entered THE JUDAEAN and TRANS-JORDAN deserts.





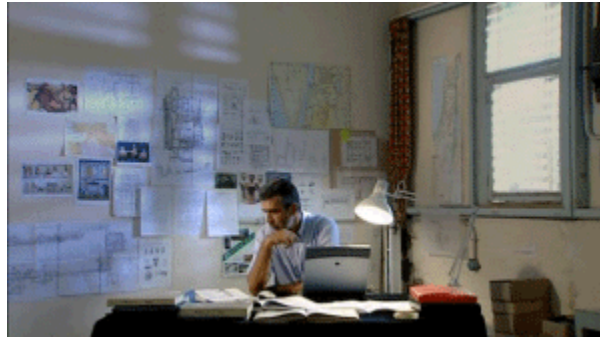
Were the inhabitants of the highlands former pastoral nomads?



Did they exchange their tents for permanent shelters?



And if so, why?



Israel Finkelstein finally seems to identify the lead in his investigation of THE ORIGINS of the Israelites. But in order to go further, he has to take into account ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological data drawn from an observation of the bedouins' current way of life.





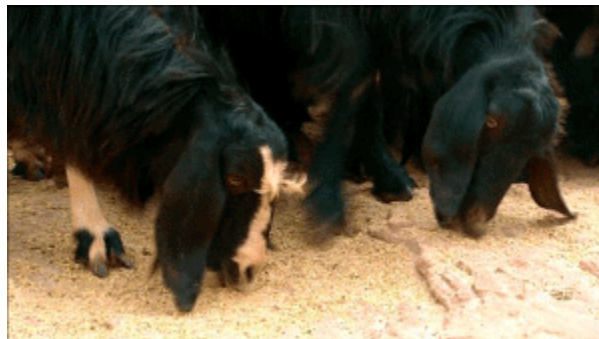
The nomads' livelihood depends on a system of exchange with sedentary populations,



a system that is BASED ON CERTAIN RULES. The pastoralists provide animal protein and leather,



while the settled population provides cereals and other agricultural products.



Cereals form the basis of the diet of traditional societies, including those of nomadic herders.



Without these grains, the bedouins would not be able to continue their nomadic way of life.



If -- for whatever reason -- the exchange system collapses or becomes impossible, the bedouin would be forced to produce their own grain.



But in order to do so, they would first have to settle down.



What caused the collapse of the exchange system, and forced the pastoral nomads to settle down in the highlands?



[Israel Finkelstein] Remember that in the last phase of the late Bronze Age, we are entering slowly a major crisis in the entire region. Canaan, the neighboring lands, the entire eastern Mediterranean, is in a severe crisis. Empires collapse. Cities are destroyed. The Egyptian administration is gone from Canaan. People are running away from the villages. In a situation like this, the villages cannot produce enough grain for the exchange with the pastoral nomads. And the pastoral nomads have to settle down. This is exactly the moment when we see all of a sudden a wave of settlement in the highlands. In my opinion, these are the pastoral people of the late Bronze Age who now settle down because of this crisis.



[Narrator] Archaeology tells us that the material culture of the pastoral nomads who settled down in the highlands,

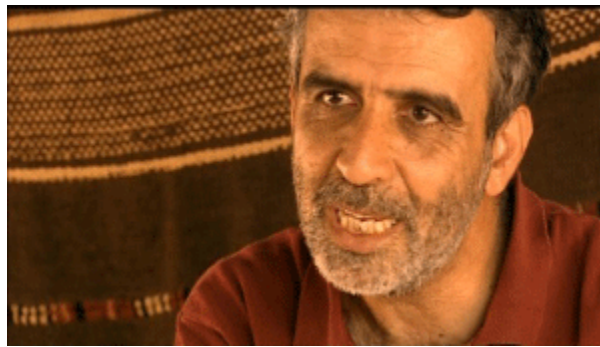


was not very different from neighboring peoples, except for ONE PARTICULARITY THAT DISTINGUISHES THEM: THEIR DIET.



In all the archaeological excavations of the highlands, NO PORK BONES HAVE EVER BEEN FOUND! WHAT CAN THIS MEAN? What reasons can we find to explain THIS ODDITY!



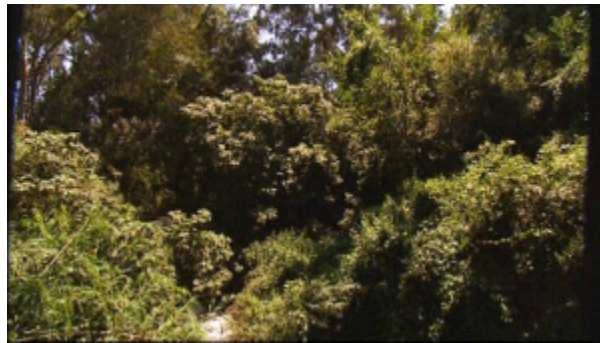


[Israel Finkelstein] There are several possible reasons: (1) is that if these people came from pastoral background, OF COURSE THE PASTORAL PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE PIGS, and this COULD HAVE BEEN one of the reasons.

BUT I THINK THAT THERE IS A STRONGER REASON to the fact that there are no bones of pigs in the highlands and that is at the same time exactly, you have the sites of THE PHILISTINES in the lowlands, and in general the sites in the lowlands -- Canaanites, Philistines and others -- they eat a lot of pork. So the distinction between the people of the lowlands and the people of the highlands COULD HAVE BEEN A SITUATION OF WE AND THEY: "THEY EAT PORK; WE DON'T."



[Narrator] But that's not all. The highlands, where a population that ABSTAINED from eating pork settled, were NOT A HOMOGENOUS territory. In the south, vegetation was scarce, and rainfall uncertain. The arid soil prevented any real development of agriculture.



The environment in the north was quite different.



More abundant water sources and fertile valleys meant that a cereal-based agriculture was able to develop.



Not only cereals, but olive trees and grape vines.



The many remains of presses that have been found in the area provide evidence of a developed agricultural system,



and one of the most lucrative of activities: the production of oil and wine.



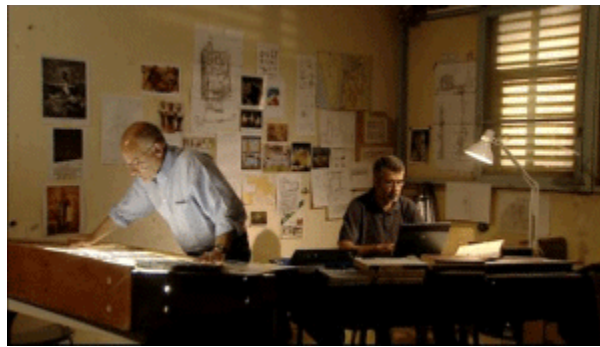
Samaria. The villages settled on these trading routes became more and more wealthy, and developed into cities.



Hazor. Two different ecosystems explain the emergence of these TWO DISTINCT ENTITIES. The one in the north, which WOULD BECOME THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL, and the other in the south, which WOULD BECOME THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.



Megiddo. ARCHAEOLOGY HAS SEARCHED IN VAIN FOR A TRACE OF THE UNIFIED KINGDOM OF DAVID AND SOLOMON as described in the Bible.



Did such a kingdom ever exist?



Neil Silberman and Israel Finkelstein have analyzed the data from remains found in Canaan and in bordering regions.



Two [?] inscriptions in particular have SHED LIGHT on the subject.



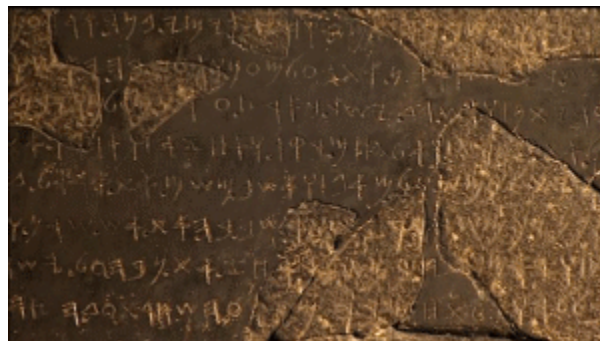
The Louvre Museum, France

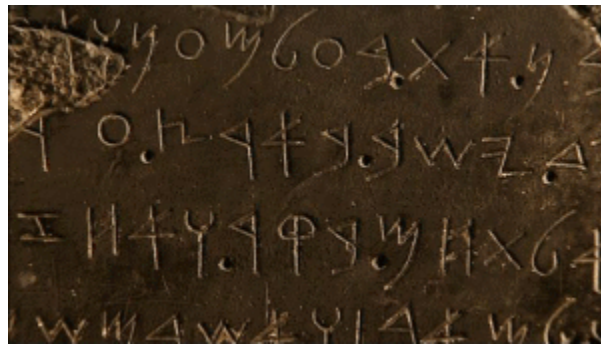


The Mesha stele, on display in the Louvre, was DISCOVERED BY AN ALSATIAN MISSIONARY in SOUTH JORDAN in 1868.



The inscription advises that it was erected by King Mesha of Moab in order to thank the God [?] Kemosh for a victory against the kingdom of Israel.





This stele contains the name of Omri, king of Israel, and dates from the 9th century B.C.



Dan, Israel



Another stele from the same period was discovered in 1993 in the north of Israel. It states that King Hazael [?] of Damascus killed the king of Israel, Jehoram and the king of Judah, Ahaziah, of the house of David. [?]



These descriptions CLEARLY DISTINGUISH [?] between two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. There is NO MENTION of A SINGLE KINGDOM. [?]



Nevertheless, THE BIBLE attributes a common religion to these two kingdoms: that of Yahweh. What do we know about this religion?



Tel Rehov



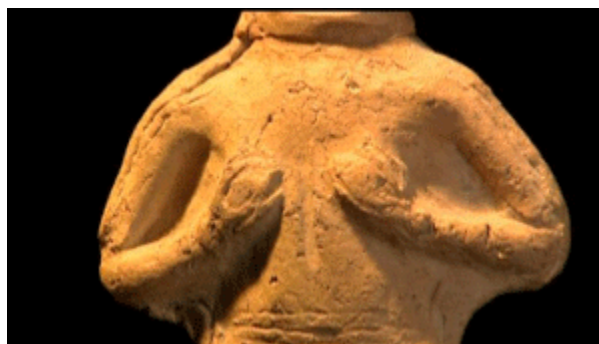
It is difficult to reconstitute the vision that a people had of their gods through archaeology. Difficult, but not impossible.



Excavations carried out in different sites in both the north and the south have unearthed a range of objects of worship:



fertility goddesses, companions of gods,



and animal incarnations of the divinities.

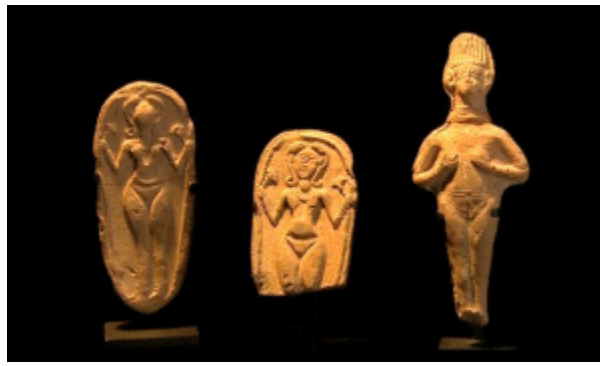


They are to be found both in Canaanite sites from the Bronze Age,



and in sites from THE ISRAELITE ERA [?], in the Iron Age.

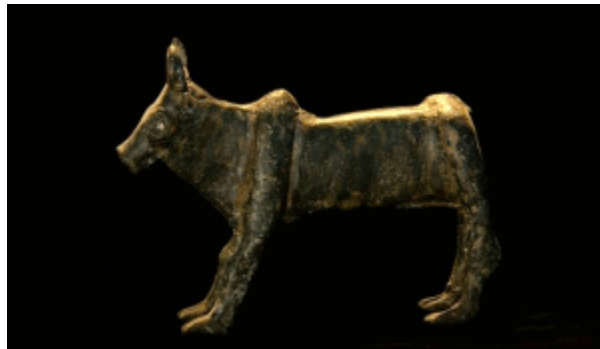




[Amihai Mazar, Hebrew University of Jerusalem] WE HAVE VERY, VERY LITTLE INFORMATION about the religion. One of them I published, I found once in a kibbutz, in Galilee, not far from here -- Kibbutz Shamir. I visited and found on a shelf there a bronze figure of a bull.



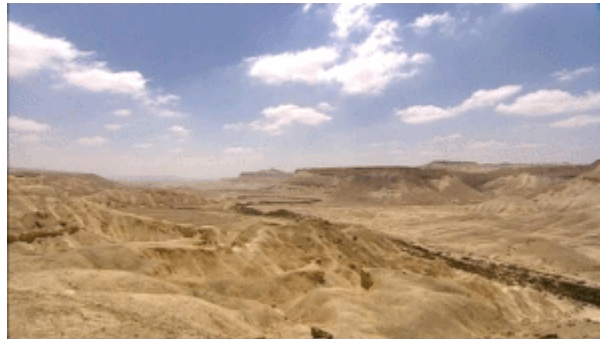
And I asked where this bull was found? It's very nice.



It's about 18 centimetres long, beautiful bull. They said, a member of the kibbutz, he was a soldier, he was in training in the north in Samaria hills, he found it on a hill.



The bull is the symbol, of course, of BAAL, THE MAIN GOD OF CANAAN, and also of EL, THE CHIEF GOD OF THE CANAANITE PANTHEON. But also is related to the Israelite [?] god. Especially in the northern part of the country, the bull, you know, the golden calves, THEY ARE THE MAJOR SYMBOLS OF THE TEMPLES OF DAN AND BETH-EL during the Israelite period. [?] There is a lot of continuity between Canaanite and Israelite religion.



[Narrator] What do we know about Yahweh? CERTAIN BIBLICAL VERSES refer to a god from the southern desert,



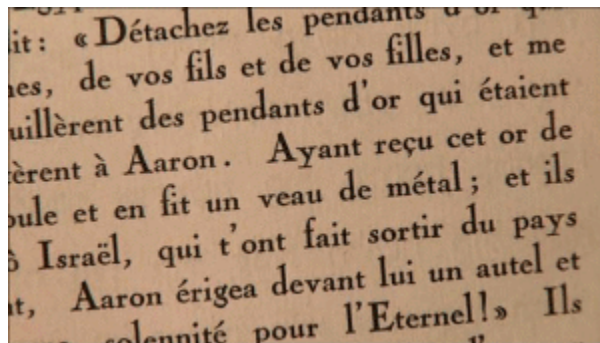
worshipped with MORE OR LESS THE SAME FERVOUR in the north and the south.



How well did Yahweh -- the god of the south -- and El, or Baal -- gods from the north -- co-exist?



QUITE WELL if we go by the evidence of remains found throughout the land.



However, THE BIBLE refers to A CONFLICT: the well-known incident of the golden calf that occurred when Moses went up Mt. Sinai TO RECEIVE the Tablets of the Law from Yahweh.





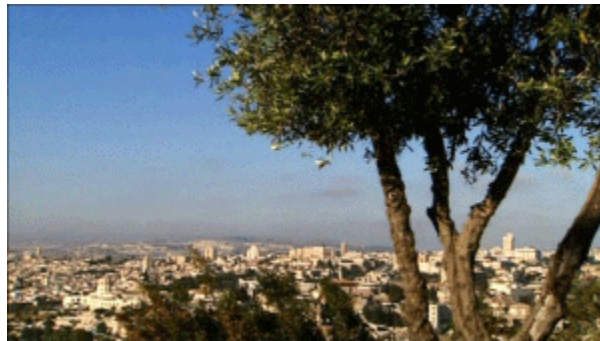
While Moses was going up to the mountaintop,



the people waiting in the valley made a golden calf.



As in other similar passages in the Old Testament, the idol was **ULTIMATELY DESTROYED, AND YAHWEH TRIUMPHED!**



What did this conflict between divinities, and this victory of Yahweh represent? **WHAT HISTORICAL REALITY DID IT REFLECT?**



Is there archaeological evidence for the existence of the worship of Yahweh in the kingdom [?] of Judah [?]



Museum of Israel, Jerusalem



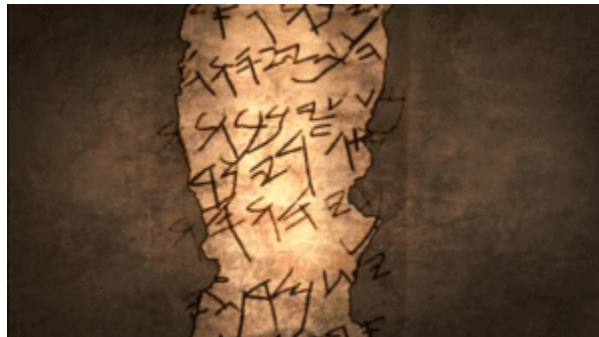
In the Museum of Israel in Jerusalem, we can see two amulets dating from about 600 B.C.,



discovered southwest of the old city of Jerusalem.



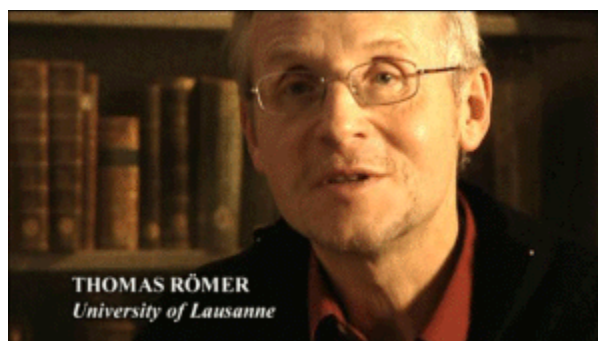
These pieces are covered in an archaic Hebrew text which says, *"May Yahweh bless and keep you."*



"May Yahweh shine his face upon you."



It is the oldest text ever discovered that is similar to a Biblical verse.



[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] It's clear that Yahweh was the national god. Yahweh was worshipped like a national god, just as the Ammonites worshiped Milcom, the Moabites worshiped Kamesh, and so on. But worshipping a national god does not exclude the worship of other divinities. On the contrary. The national god is important for the protection of the people, and leading the king and his people to war, but when it comes to matters of fertility, for example, or storms, other gods can be called on. For fertility, it's primarily goddesses. **YOU HAVE TO IMAGINE THAT IN JUDAH THERE WAS A SMALL PANTHEON SURROUNDING YAHWEH, WHICH WAS ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY THE CASE IN ISRAEL.**



[Narrator] Let us now review the situation.
In 722 B.C. the Assyrian armies annihilated the



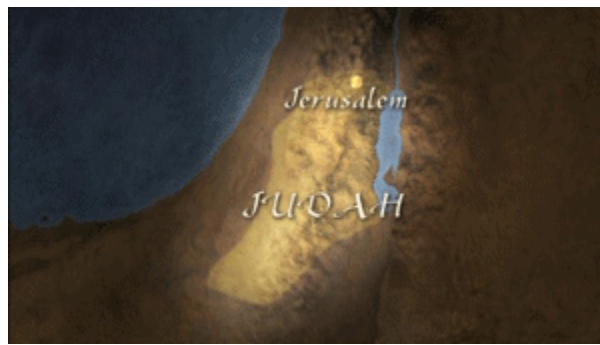
kingdom [?] of Israel -- the kingdom [?] of the north --



causing an influx of refugees into Judah.



At the same time, Judah's economy was developing, and this small kingdom BECAME A GENUINE STATE!



One century after the fall of the kingdom of Israel, the king of Judah [?], Josiah [?], TOOK ADVANTAGE of the decline of the Assyrian empire TO ENVISAGE the conquest of the territories in the north.



The refugees from the kingdom in the north brought with them their traditions and religions. However, Josiah's PLAN was based on a united people, a single nation. Josiah's [?] PLAN was CARRIED OUT in steps.



First of all, HE DISCOVERED A BOOK [?] that was attributed to Moses and UNITED THE POPULATION AROUND THE LAWS it contained.



LEAVING ASIDE THE HISTORICITY OF THIS EVENT, IT IS BELIEVED the book in question was the fifth book of the bible: Deuteronomy.



[Israel Finikelstein] One of the most important IDEAS in the book of Deuteronomy, is the idea of the centralization of the cult. And it says, ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL MUST WORSHIP one god, and one god only, in one place. So it's one nation worshipping one god in a single temple.



[Narrator] [According to the Bible], the second step of the REFORM involved eradicating any competing religions in order to unite the people around a single god. Finally, the third step involved ELABORATING A COMMON HISTORY by combining the traditions of the north with those of the south. Is it possible to find TRACES IN THE FIELD of Josiah's [?] reform? Proof that this centralization of religion in Jerusalem occurred?



Tel Arad



The temple of Arad in the Negev, constructed in the 8th century B.C., is located inside a fortress.



The temple was destroyed at the end of the 8th century, and was never rebuilt.



It was constructed on the model of temples that had been erected in Canaan for centuries, a model going back to the late Bronze Age.



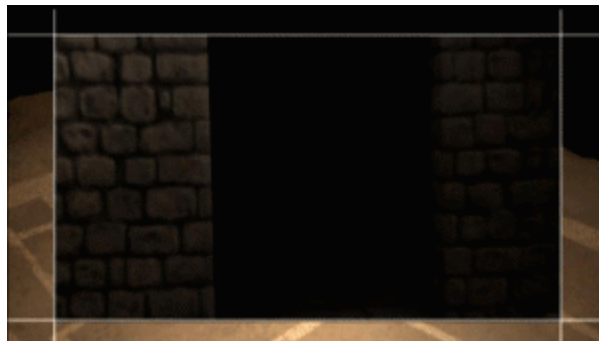
In the internal courtyard, which was open to the public,



we find the sacrificial area.



The courtyard gives on to A SANCTUARY reserved FOR PRIESTS ONLY.



Beyond that, THE HOLY OF HOLIES,



with two altars and two vertical stones, representing what the bible ENIGMATICALLY CALLS the matzevah.



This temple is a place of worship like those that existed outside of Jerusalem in the 8th century.



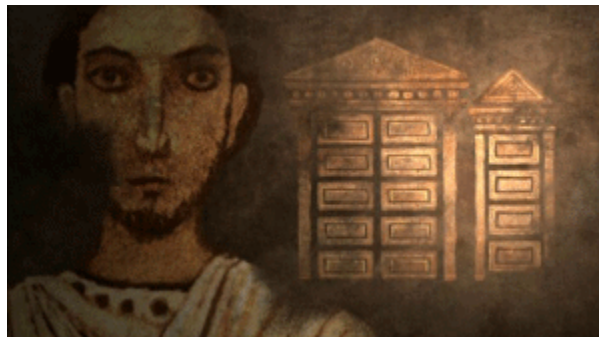
[Israel Finkelstein] IF WHAT WE THINK ABOUT THIS TEMPLE IS CORRECT,



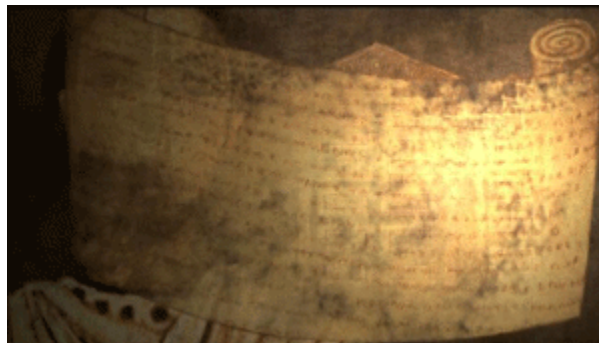
we have a very interesting situation of the difference between the 8th and the 7th centuries, B.C.

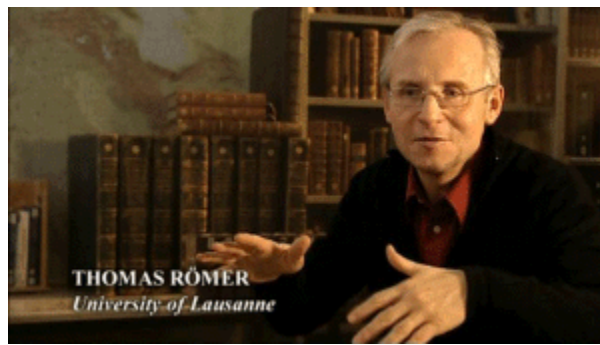


In the 8th century, we have temples in various places in Judah [?], including this one behind me, Beersheba, which is not far from here, and other places. Whereas, in the 7th century, they all disappear, and we have the temple in Jerusalem.

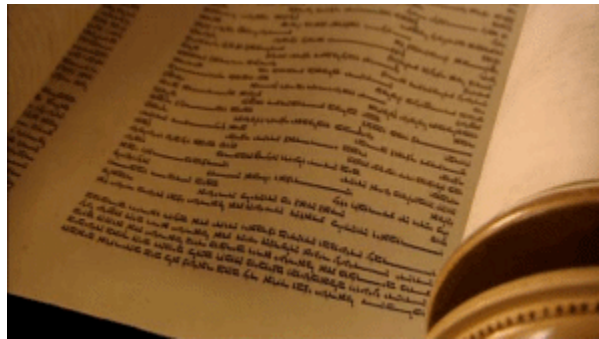


[Narrator] THE BIBLE sets out Josiah's declaration to THE ELDERS of Judah and of Jerusalem. We will now turn to one element of THE STORY which is based on A BOOK!





[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] The fact that THEY SAID a book had been found, which means that it was AN ANCIENT BOOK THAT WAS LOST somewhere in the temple, OBVIOUSLY IT LEGITIMATED the reform. But at the same time, it also shows that the re-definition of the Judaic religion was now going to be based on a book. THE BOOK WAS GOING TO BECOME THE BASIS of a new religion. So it's not just the fact that a book was found, but there is the whole issue of THE STATUS AND IMPORTANCE of that book WHICH IT DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE.



[Narrator] In order to pursue OUR INVESTIGATION,



we have to examine a central question: that of writing.



What do we know about the beginnings of writing in this region? In which circumstances did writing become important in the society of ancient Israel [?]? Did the Israelites [?] know how to read and write in the 7th century B.C.? Here again, we have to look to archaeology for the answers.



Megiddo. In the 7th century sites, we have discovered many seals and ostraka -- fragments of pottery that contain inscriptions.



In the 8th century, they are very rare. Before that, they are quite simply, NONEXISTENT.



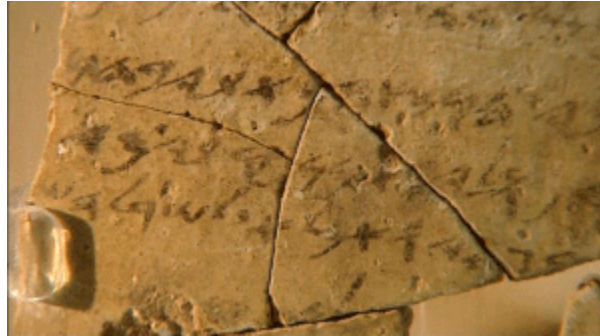
These brief texts deal with economic or administrative questions.



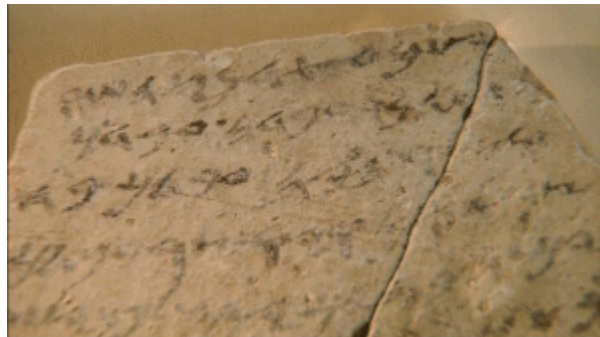
Written by scribes, they provide evidence of the development and centralization of Judah [?], which was then AN ASSYRIAN VASSAL.



This corresponds to a well-known phenomenon: THE EMERGENCE OF A STATE is generally accompanied by the spread of writing.



In an ostrakan of the 7th century, a laborer complains to the authorities about the theft of a garment.



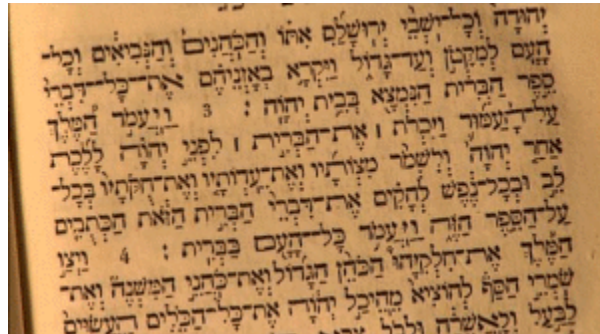
In what way does this text provide proof of a revolution?



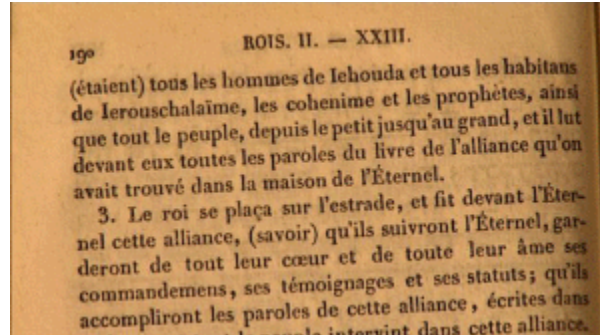
[William M. Schneidewind, University of California, Los Angeles] Before the 7th century B.C., it's clear that THE ANCIENT ISRAELITES [?] were not literate. As a matter of fact, what we would say is that literacy wasn't even a category that people thought about. It wasn't an important idea in society. Beginning in the 7th century, writing spreads through all CLASSES of Israelite society. We see writing by tomb-cutters, by officers in the army, by workmen --



a variety of different kinds of people throughout society are writing, and apparently reading as well. And the spread of writing in ancient Israel [?] at this time indicates that writing at least had the beginnings of literacy in Israel. And, of course, this beginnings of literacy will be **CRITICAL TO THE EMERGENCE OF A SACRED, written, and authoritative text.**



[Narrator] Writing had just expanded beyond the circle of scribes.



Of course, public readings of The Book [according to **THE BIBLE**] discovered in the temple do not **PROVE** the degree of literacy of the population of Judah. But they do show the function that the written word had attained in 7th century society. [?] In the small state of Judah, under the reign of Josiah, a revolution had been launched [according to **THE BIBLE**].



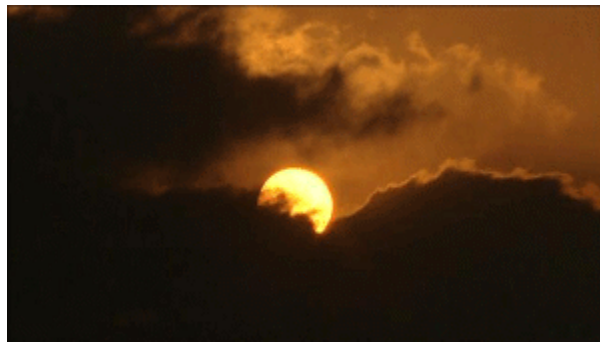
[William M. Schneidewind, University of California, Los Angeles] The fact that a sacred, written text emerged from a pastoral, agrarian society is **A WATERSHED OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION** [??] **NEVER BEFORE IN HUMAN HISTORY** had societies had sacred texts that were **AUTHORITATIVE!** Most near eastern civilizations had texts only for governments, for writing. Authority, cultural authority, religious authority was passed from family to family, through oral tradition. It wasn't passed by reading texts or appealing to the authority of text. **THE FIRST TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY** that we have the authority of human texts is with the Josianic [?] religious reforms where they appeal to the authority of a written text, and have that written text as a binding authority for the entire culture, for all people, as opposed to the authority of the family and the tradition. And this is **A WATERSHED OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION.**



[Israel Finkelstein] In the 7th century B.C., **EVERYTHING MERGES.** Everything **IS RIPE** for something new. When we look at the politics of the time, the economy of the time, the social situation in Judah, even the fact that literacy spreads from the center to the countryside to the villages, to the relatively simple people, what we see is a situation in which **JUDAH PUTS EVERYTHING IN THE WRITTEN WORD, IN A BOOK. JUDAH DESCRIBES ITS PAST -- MYTHICAL OR HISTORICAL.** It tells us about the present and it gives us **THE DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE** in the shape of the written word of a book. And this is something new in the history of the human adventure. [?]



[Narrator] [According to the Bible], based on this legitimacy, founded on a common law and history, Josiah was able to lead the population in his ambitious plan. But **THE DREAM OF A GREAT KINGDOM** that would **UNITE** the people of Israel and Judah for the first time ever was not to be. Josiah died before he was able to accomplish it, killed by Pharaoh Necho II.[?]



His end is related IN THE BIBLE in a few lines: "*And the worst was yet to come.*"



In 597 B.C., the Babylonians wreaked havoc in the kingdom [?] of Judah for the first time.



11 years later, Nebuchanedzzar marched on Jerusalem. [?]



The temple of Yahweh was burned down. [?]



Jerusalem was laid to ruins. [?]



JUDAH WAS ERASED FROM THE MAP. [?]



A significant portion of the rural population was maintained in Judah under the yoke of Babylon. [?]



In line with imperial policy, some of the inhabitants were exiled to Babylon. [?]



The last king of the house of David, Zedekiah, was also exiled, his sons slaughtered. [?]



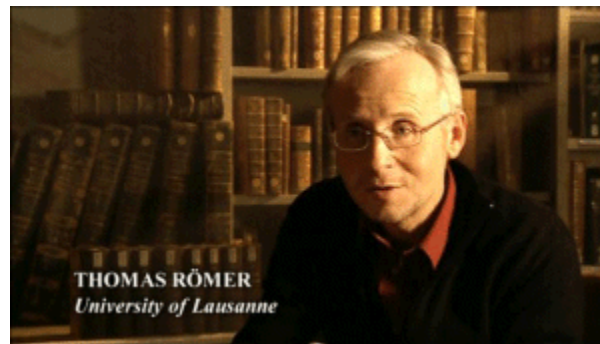
[THE ELITE of the cities, the priests and the scribes



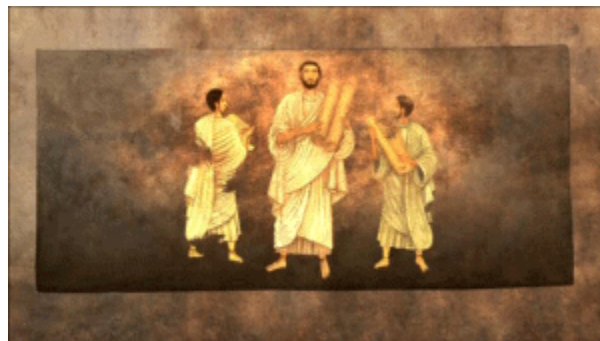
were banished to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. [?]



The Book of Psalms laments that: *"By the rivers of Babylon, we sat down and wept!"*



[Thomas Römer, University of Lausanne] The situation of exile is in fact a situation of huge crisis, because all THE PILLARS ON WHICH THE IDENTITY OF THE PEOPLE WERE BASED NO LONGER EXISTED. There was no more temple, there was no more king, there was no more country, there was no more territorial unity. So in order to survive, it was necessary to find other means of constructing an identity. IT WAS IN FACT THOSE WHO WERE EXILED -- THE SCRIBES, THE PRIESTS -- who CONSTRUCTED THAT IDENTITY, taking up a certain number of earlier traditions, but opening those traditions out. That is, Josiah's reform would become THE SYMBOL of the temple which was TRANSFORMED into a synagogue. Little by little, Moses would replace the king, and the torah would replace the country. THROUGH THIS WORK OF WRITING and re-writing, JUDAISM WOULD BE INVENTED IN THE CONCRETE FORM that it took during the Persian era, notably under Ezra the priest.



[Narrator] Biblical scholars [?] have therefore suggested that the scribe Ezra GAVE THE FINAL TOUCHES to the torah, the pentateuch.



University of Lausanne, Switzerland. We are approaching our conclusion. What have we learned from the evidence provided by the mounds, the broken vases, and the ancient inscriptions?



We're at the theology department of the university of Lausanne. Israel Finkelstein is going to meet with Thomas Romer.



THE TIME WHEN ARCHAEOLOGISTS TOOK THE BIBLE LITERALLY,



AND WHEN TEXTUAL RESEARCH IGNORED MATERIAL EVIDENCE IS PAST [???].



[Israel Finkelstein] And for you, have these new revelations of archaeology -- have they changed something?



[Thomas Romer, University of Lausanne] I think WE HAVE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE FINAL FORM OF THE BIBLE, which has become the basis of not only Judaism, but for the three monotheistic religions, AND THE ORIGINS OF THE HEBREW BIBLE. What I think is important is this question of origins.



It's no longer about the wanderings of Abraham or David.



THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IS THE REALIZATION



THAT THERE WAS A POLITICAL WILL AT WORK IN THE ORIGINS. Let me turn your question around: How do you see the Hebrew Bible? How would you define it?



[Israel Finkelstein] In a way, I STARTED FEELING CLOSER TO THE AUTHORS OF THE TEXT, BECAUSE I SENSED MORE THEIR NEEDS AND FRUSTRATIONS AND THE PROBLEMS THAT THEY FACED AND SO ON. So first of all I would say that I am now, I feel closer to the text, and it gave me a better sense of my own identity, both as an Israeli and as a Jew, and also as a member of the wider community, you can call it, Western civilization or Judaeo-Christian, or whatever. So on both sides.



[Narrator] For many years, our only knowledge of the Bible came from the Bible itself. But modern archaeology has suggested a new approach: an attempt to understand the **STORIES** of the Bible in terms of their political, geographical, historical and cultural contexts. [?]



WHAT WAS AT STAKE WHEN THE BIBLICAL TEXT WAS PUT INTO WRITING WAS THE INVENTION OF A LINEAGE, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LAW, AND THE AFFIRMATION OF A MESSIANIC PROMISE.



All of that was linked to a book which in exile [?] became a portable nation, a land that could be copied, studied, passed on and celebrated.



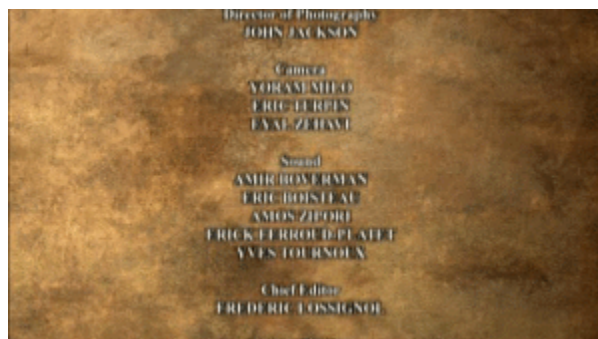
This day of the Jewish calendar is called Simchat Torah -- the rejoicing of the Torah -- or celebration of the book.



AS A RESULT OF EVENTS THAT WERE NOT FORESEEN BY THE PROTAGONISTS, THESE PILLARS
WOULD BECOME THE FOUNDATION OF JUDAISM.



But that is ANOTHER STORY.



A common misperception is that the Jews were forced into the diaspora by the Romans after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. and then, 1,800 years later, suddenly returned to Palestine demanding their country back. In reality, the Jewish people have maintained ties to their historic homeland for more than 3,700 years. A national language and a distinct civilization have been

maintained.

The Jewish people base their claim to the land of Israel on at least four premises: 1) God promised the land to the patriarch Abraham; 2) the Jewish people settled and developed the land; 3) the international community granted political sovereignty in Palestine to the Jewish people and 4) the territory was captured in defensive wars.

-- Pre-State Israel: Jewish Claim to the Land of Israel, by Mitchell Bard