

REGIONAL STUDY GUIDE ***SUPPLEMENT***

A CHRONOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE REGIONAL STUDY GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The *Regional Study Guide* (as distinct from the *RSG Supplement*) presents the Land of the Bible regionally in order to establish a foundation for a more serious study of events and message. Some users of the *Regional Study Guide*, however, have requested that we offer a brief chronological approach to these same materials to help them in their historical studies. This brief *Supplement* is an attempt to meet that request and appears as a free download from our Biblical Backgrounds' web site (www.bibback.com). The title page notes that the same guidelines of copyright and duplication apply to this *Supplement* as apply to the *Regional Study Guide*.

Please note the following suggestions:

- a. While chronological considerations are helpful during the study of the *Regional Study Guide* this *Supplement* is not intended to replace the regional study of the land which remains the basic approach to the *Guide*.
- b. The *Supplement* is used most effectively in conjunction with the 4000 Year Overview chart which folds out from the back cover of the book *Regions on the Run*. Indeed, the chart provides the base for the *Supplement's* brief chronological essay with **boldface** items in the *Supplement* appearing on the 4000 Year Overview chart (or its amplification in the 500 Year chart; p. 39 in *Regions on the Run*). The reader will increase the value of the essay by locating the boldface items on the chart.

May this Supplement add yet another facet to your study of the Bible in context, and may it shed light upon the message of the Bible which is our ultimate goal.

BEGINNINGS/NEW BEGINNINGS (-2200 to -1600)

EVENT 1 (ME): ABRAHAM'S JOURNEYS—'GO ... TO THE LAND I WILL SHOW YOU!'

Around -2200 (red line on chart) the **Beginnings** of the historical age began to fall apart. Prior to this time the **Old Kingdom** of Egypt had unified the two lands of **Lower and Upper Egypt**; it had begun trade and mining operations beyond the borders of Egypt and had left the great **pyramids** as a testimony to the eminence of the culture along the Nile. In Mesopotamia the mythical texts of the **Classical Sumerian Age** introduced ideas of world order, the founding of city-states and the beginning of kingship. No texts speak of life in the Land Between, but the archaeology of the **Early Bronze Age** reveals the development and then the decline of strategically located **city-states**.

At -2200, however, a time of disorder arose across the ancient Near East. Some of this disorder is credited to a movement of peoples sometimes called the '**Amorite invasion**.' In Mesopotamia the kingdom of Akkad ended with a time called the '**Dark Ages**.' Egyptian history labels the time as '**The First Intermediate Period**,' and **deurbanization** characterized the time in the Land Between.

'Abraham's Journey' (Event 1) may have begun in these unsettled times, but the **Patriarchs**—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—also witnessed **New Beginnings** in the resurgence of city-states in **Middle Bronze** Canaan and the renewal of Egyptian power in the **Middle Kingdom** with its growing **economic interest in Canaan**. The biblical stories recall patriarchal interaction with settled populations at Shechem, Hebron and Gerar. They also speak of entrances into a strong and well-organized Egypt by Abraham and Jacob. Joseph himself rose to the top of Egyptian administration.

At some point when Egypt experienced a major shift in administration, Israel entered its time of **slavery**. Perhaps this occurred with the disintegration in Egyptian governmental and social structures that led to the **Second Intermediate Period** (red on **Israelite Origins**, chronology 1 at -1730). A more likely time for Israelite loss of position, however, is with the expulsion of the '**Hyksos**' by **Ahmosé** (at -1580; red on chronologies 1-3). By Egyptian thinking and terminology the Hyksos were 'alien rulers,' and the native dynasty established by Ahmosé may have viewed the Israelites as a remnant of the aliens who had entered and dominated Egypt.

EGYPTIAN DOMINANCE (-1600 to -1200)

EVENT 12 (GAL): THUTMOSE'S TRIUMPH—'TAKING MEGIDDO IS LIKE TAKING A THOUSAND CITIES'

EVENT 5 (LB): EGYPT'S PRIORITIES—'LET ME KNOW THE WAY TO PASS MEGIDDO'

EVENT 20 (BEN): ISRAEL'S ENTRANCE—'GO UP TO THE ABARIM HEIGHTS, TO MOUNT NEBO IN MOAB,
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EVENT 21 (BEN): JOSHUA'S MARCH—'AFTER AN ALL NIGHT MARCH FROM GILGAL ...

ISRAEL PURSUED THEM ALONG THE ASCENT OF BETH-HORON'

EVENT 13 (GAL): SISERA'S STRATEGY—'AT MEGIDDO BY THE WATERS OF TAANACH'

Ahmosé and his successors introduced a period of Egyptian dominance in the land of Canaan in the Late Bronze Period that lasted for some four centuries. By the fifteenth century, major campaigns in and through the land were aimed at keeping the country under Egyptian control and engaging the forces of the Kingdom of **Mitanni** in northern Mesopotamia. These campaigns were led by the pharaohs of **Dynasty 18**. 'Thutmose's Triumph' (Event 12) recalls one such campaign by which pharaoh **Thutmose** reestablished Egyptian control in the Jezreel Valley.

As the **Hittites** expanded into northern Mesopotamia from Asia Minor, the Kingdom of Mitanni was subdued. At the same time, Egypt became occupied with internal religious and political issues. This allowed stronger leaders in the Land Between to expand at the expense of their neighbors who appealed to Egypt for some type of official action. These decades have been termed the **El Amarna Age**, after the modern name of Egypt's capital at the time, to which Canaanite leaders filed their complaints.

'Israel's Entrance' (Event 20) into the land may well fit into this period of Egyptian introspection, but as the five chronologies of Israelite origins show the dating and method of Israel's entrance into the land is a lively debated subject. With less Egyptian control in the Land Between, local leaders took more responsibility for their own growth and defense, and Jerusalem raised a coalition to challenge the Gibeonite pact with the invaders from Transjordan. 'Joshua's March' (Event 21) reconstructs the Israelite response to the coalition.

In the late fourteenth century the Hittite Empire stood at the northern gateway to the Land Between. The pharaohs of the Nineteenth Dynasty like **Ramses II** rallied to meet this threat, campaigning in and through the Land Between. 'Egypt's Priorities' (Event 5) draws on Egyptian scribal records of Canaan's geography to highlight Egyptian military routes in the Land Between. The famous peace treaty of -1275 following the battle of **Kadesh** terminated the costly war between Egypt and the Hittite Empire and established a recognized border.

AGE OF NATIONS (A): NATIONS EMERGE (-1200 to -930)

EVENT 9 (NCA): SAUL'S BATTLES—'THE PHILISTINES GATHERED THEIR FORCES AT APHEK,
AND ISRAEL CAMPED BY THE SPRING IN JEZREEL'

EVENT 22 (BEN): JONATHAN'S FAITH—'SEEK AND DESTROY DIVISIONS WENT OUT FROM THE PHILISTINE CAMP ...
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EVENT 2 (ME): PHOENICIA'S MARKETS—'YOUR RICHES, YOUR WARES, YOUR MERCHANDISE'

SEE ALSO 'THE ISRAELITE MONARCHIES: 500 YEAR OVERVIEW' (WITH MAP) IN *REGIONS ON THE RUN*, pp. 38-39

Around -1200 (red line on chart) both Egypt and the Hittites were faced with the onslaught of the so-called **Sea Peoples**, peoples from the region of the Aegean seeking new homelands throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Unlike the Hittite Empire, however, Egypt survived their attack, but control of the Land Between slipped out of Egypt's hands.

The disappearance of Egyptian authority in the land and the absence of any major power to the north increased the potential for hostilities among local powers in the country. Canaanite centers, an expanding Philistine presence and various emerging peoples like the Israelites all sought to achieve their own interests

in the **race to control growing trade**. Some of the accounts in the book of **Judges**—like ‘Sisera’s Strategy’ (Event 13)—have their setting in this period, one of the most colorful times in Israel’s history.

Later, Samuel’s ministry and ‘Saul’s Battles’ (Event 9; **SS**) both reflect attempts to meet the basic security needs of the Israelite tribes, especially in face of the ever-increasing **Philistine** control of the land and its major highways. The Philistines made numerous incursions into the Hill Country in their attempt to contain the young Israelite kingdom. ‘Jonathan’s Faith’ (Event 22) and ‘David Prevails’ (Event 18) both address Israelite victories over invading Philistine forces. ‘A Philistine Sheriff’ (Event 14) remembers David’s retreat to Philistia when Saul’s persistent pursuit made David’s life seem impossible, even in the territory of Judah.

Around -1000 the Israelite tribes were united under David of the tribe of Judah, and he moved his capital from the Judean city of Hebron to the Benjaminite city of Jerusalem. The Philistines responded by placing a military camp on the main route between Benjamin and Judah, an attempt, it seems, to separate David from his supporters in Judah. ‘David’s Maneuver’ (Event 23) plays out his response to this challenge.

‘David’s Expansion’ (Event 7) recounts the military moves from David’s new capital at Jerusalem which extended his control over most of the Land Between. In the absence of international pressures, his son Solomon (**D/S**) was able to exploit the natural routes of the country and to develop trade links in all directions, serving as the middle man for the **Phoenicians** on the Mediterranean Sea.

AGE OF NATIONS (B): NATIONS COMPETE (-930 to -750)

EVENT 19 (JUD): REHOBOAM PREPARES—‘REHOBOAM FORTIFIED CITIES IN JUDAH AGAINST SIEGE’

EVENT 24 (BEN): JERUSALEM’S ACCESS—‘BAASHA, KING OF ISRAEL ... FORTIFIED RAMAH TO PREVENT ANYONE FROM LEAVING OR ENTERING THE TERRITORY OF ASA, KING OF JUDAH’

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EVENT 8 (LB): HAZAEL’S EXPANSION—‘HAZAELE DEFEATED ISRAEL THROUGHOUT ALL THEIR TERRITORIES’

Rehoboam’s promise of oppressive measures, however, released internal tribal tensions—which David and Solomon had contained—and the kingdom exploded into an armed struggle between Israel in the north and Judah in the south. ‘Rehoboam Prepares’ (Event 19) recalls a fortification project carried out by Rehoboam which may reflect an attempt to delineate the area he felt he could reasonably defend. At the same time, a major invasion by Pharaoh **Shishak** of Egypt left the country in a weakened position.

The fifty years following the division of Solomon’s kingdom could be termed the Battle of Benjamin (**BB**). In this half century, Israel and Judah fought bitterly over this small but strategic tribal territory which, with its approaches, was located between the two kingdoms. ‘Jerusalem’s Access’ (Event 24) recalls the climax in the battle when Baasha of Israel shut up Asa of Judah in Jerusalem. The rising power of **Aram-Damascus** made good use of this internal Israelite conflict to bargain for financial and political advantages, waiting for the day when Damascus would be strong enough to take control of the Transjordanian Highway and routes which led through the Land Between to the International Coastal Highway. ‘Ben-hadad’s New Markets’ (Event 10) records the advance of Damascus during the battle between Baasha and Asa.

Following the Battle of Benjamin, Israel and Judah appear to have resolved their differences and entered a period of cooperation. This ushered in a time of affluence for both kingdoms which culminated in the reigns of Ahab and Jehoshaphat (**AJ**). It was in these decades that Elijah preached against the spiritual apostasy and affluence in the north which was augmented by Ahab’s wife, Jezebel of Phoenicia, and her followers. Expansion in Transjordan brought **Moab** under Israel’s control while Judah was able to hold on to the region of **Edom** and the Red Sea and received tribute from Philistia. In this context it was ‘Ahab’s Claim’ (Event 11) that Ramoth-gilead in the Bashan also belonged to Israel, so he and Jehoshaphat engaged Ben-hadad of Damascus in battle along the Transjordanian Highway. In spite of the serious conflict of interests in Transjordan, however, Israel and Damascus are listed as allies (with others) against Assyrian forces led by Shalmaneser III which had moved into northern Mesopotamia (Battle of **Qarqar** in -853).

The years preceding -841 saw many changes in the Land Between. Revolts in Moab against Israel—‘**Mesha’s Rebellion**’ (Event 15)—and in Edom and Philistia against Judah—‘A Southern Attack’ (Event 16), the over-

throw of ruling houses in Damascus and in Israel, and the resulting internal strife in Judah were only a prelude to another campaign by Shalmaneser III through the north of the country. Shalmaneser's Black Obelisk found in Assyria characterizes this dark moment in Israel's history. It shows Jehu, the new king of Israel, prostrating himself before the king of Assyria, followed by his servants carrying tribute.

When the dust had settled after -841, Assyria again became occupied with matters in Mesopotamia. Jehu's bloody revolution had left Israel crippled and Judah weakened by internal strife. Hazael, the new king of Damascus, knew that it was his moment to exploit these weaknesses, and during 'Hazael's Expansion' (Event 8) both the Transjordanian and International Coastal Highways (with Galilee and the Jezreel Valley) came under the control of Damascus (**HD**). During these difficult closing decades of the ninth century, the ministry of Elisha, the successor to Elijah, took place.

Damascus' domination of the Land Between ended abruptly just before -800 when Adad-nirari III of Assyria sacked the city. This allowed Israel and Judah to recover their former power and to expand again, even beyond the limits of Ahab's and Jehoshaphat's kingdoms a century before. This political and economic revival reached its zenith in Israel under Jeroboam II and in Judah under Uzziah (**JU**). Again, prophets arose (Amos and Hosea) who preached against the affluence and resulting spiritual apostasy which characterized this period, especially in Israel.

EMPIRES CONTROL (-750 to -63)

EVENT 3 (ME): ISRAEL, THE THIRD—'A HIGHWAY FROM EGYPT TO ASSYRIA'

EVENT 17 (SCA): EDMON'S INCESSANT ADVANCE—'LEST EDMON COME'

EVENT 6 (LB): EZEKIEL'S SIGNPOST—'THE KING OF BABYLON STOOD ... AT THE FORK OF THE HIGHWAY'

The late eighth century saw the return of **Assyria** to the Land Between, this time to annex it systematically as a prelude to an invasion of Egypt. In response, Egypt feverishly attempted to encourage revolts in the land through diplomatic maneuvers, promising assistance to those who followed her advise. To meet the Assyrian threat, local leaders formed alliances (as they had done in -853), hoping that Assyria could be contained. Refusing to join with Israel and Damascus, King Ahaz of Judah requested aid from Assyria. Swift and effective action by Tiglath-pileser III brought the major highways of the Land Between under the control of Assyria (-734 to -732). By -721, the city of Samaria fell to Shalmaneser V, and what remained of the northern kingdom of Israel was annexed into the Assyrian Empire by Sargon II. The region became the province of Samaria, and its inhabitants were replaced by foreigners.

The next two turbulent decades saw more Egyptian inspired revolts against Assyria in Philistia and in Judah. Assyrian annexation continued, leaving only Judah in the Hill Country after an abortive revolt by Hezekiah (**H**) against Sennacherib, who also failed in his attempt to capture Jerusalem. Both Micah and Isaiah lived and ministered during these troubled times, and Isaiah spoke of a strange vision in which, along the highway running from Egypt to Assyria, 'Israel, the Third' (Event 3) stood between the two larger powers.

In the seventh century, under Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, Assyria realized her century old dream of controlling Lower and Upper Egypt (Assyrian imperial blue reaching into Egypt). While some revolts broke out along the International Coastal and Transjordanian Highways, little is known about events in the Land Between during this period.

In the last half of the seventh century, the great Assyrian Empire showed signs of decline. Egypt again gained her independence, and much of the Land Between came under the control of Josiah (**J**), who ruled Judah during her last period of greatness. The last three decades of the century saw a quick succession of violent events which resulted in the demise of the Assyrian Empire and its takeover by Babylon, the ancient religious and political capital of southern Mesopotamia.

During this period the forces of Egypt marched through the land in order to assist Assyria as she battled for her life against Babylonia. For a few years after -609, Pharaoh Neco was able to reassert Egyptian dominance in the Land Between. However, in -605, the tables turned again at the great battle of **Carchemish** in northern Mesopotamia. The defeat of the Egyptian army in that year opened the doors of the north to Nebuchadnezzar of **Babylonia**, the new master of all Mesopotamia, who soon entered and occupied the former Assyrian provinces in the Land Between.

During the sixth century, Babylon made several attacks on Egypt with limited success. There is also some evidence that Egypt attempted to gain a foothold again in Phoenicia, as 'Phoenicia's Markets' (Event 2)

continued to drive the economy of the Mediterranean world. Egyptian activity, however, was mainly on the diplomatic level. Again she encouraged Judah to revolt, this time against Babylon, and the prophecy of 'Ezekiel's Signpost' (Event 6) warned of the sure return of Babylon to the highways of the Land Between.

The closing years of Judah's history are filled with intrigue and turmoil. Jeremiah, the major prophet of the period, witnessed revolts, deportations, the fall of Jerusalem itself, and **Temple I destroyed** (-587) before he was taken to Egypt by his own people. In addition to Jeremiah, the promise of a return to Zion is heard in the writings of prophets Ezekiel and Daniel who lived in exile in Babylon during the sixth century.

With the fall of Babylon to Cyrus of **Persia** in -539, a small number of Jews did **return** to the Land Between, to the region of Jerusalem. In -525 Cambyses of Persia took control of Egypt, sealing the fate of the country for the two centuries to come. Shortly thereafter, Jeshua and Zerubbabel began to build **Temple II** in Jerusalem, together with encouragement from the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. It was in the following century (about -450) that **Ezra** and **Nehemiah** returned to the Land Between to rebuild Jerusalem, both physically and spiritually.

Alexander's lightning invasion of the eastern world (red line just before -300) brought the Land Between along with the northern battlefield of Aram and the rich land of the Nile under one ruler, and this time a ruler from the west. With his death, two Hellenistic kingdoms, the **Seleucids** in the area of Aram and the **Ptolemies** in the land of Egypt renewed the age old struggle from these two regions for control of the economy of the eastern Mediterranean. In -198 at the battle of **Panias** the Seleucids were victorious and took the Land Between from Egypt. Oppressive measures and forced hellenization, however, brought about the **Maccabees** revolt that led to a brief century of Jewish independence and the **Hasmonean Kingdom**.

ROME SUPREME (-63 to +325)

EVENT 4 (ME): JESUS' JOURNEY—'ARCHELAUS WAS RULING JUDEA IN PLACE OF HIS FATHER HEROD'

SEE ALSO 'THE LAND BETWEEN INTO THE DAYS OF JESUS' (WITH MAP) IN *REGIONS ON THE RUN*, pp. 30-31

SEE ALSO 'A REGIONAL OUTLINE OF THE GOSPELS' (WITH MAPS) IN *REGIONS ON THE RUN*, pp. 32-37

The **Roman Empire** entered the eastern Mediterranean in response to **Parthia's** move into **Mesopotamia**. A Hasmonian appeal to Parthia for aid against the rising power of the Idumean Herod brought an end to Hasmonian hopes. Rome supported Herod, and **King Herod** ruled the Land Between on behalf of Rome. In this context with Rome securely ensconced at both ends the eastern Mediterranean—Egypt and Aram—and with Roman-supported rulers in the Land Between, Jesus' Journey (Event 4) along the Coastal Highway from Egypt brought the boy and his parents into an eastern land chafing under the rule and culture of the west while still recalling the taste of Jewish independence.