

The Old Testament begins: 'In the beginning when God created the universe . . .'

Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, in harmony with God. But they wanted to be free of him and go their own way. The 'fall' into sin was the result . . .

Noah and his family were saved from the great flood by building the ark.



By building the Tower of Babel, people tried to reach up to God. But the result was confusion and a 'babble' of different languages.

2000 BC

Abraham is called by God to leave his home city. God promises to make him the founder of a whole new nation.

The temple tower called a ziggurat was built by the king of Ur at about the time of Abraham.



1750-1250 BC

Joseph is sold as a slave, but becomes Prime Minister of Egypt.

Jacob (Israel) has twelve sons who become fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel.

The Egyptian civilization can be traced back as far as 3000 BC. From the paintings, inscriptions and models in their tombs, we have learnt a great deal about Egyptian culture.



The Philistines The fierce 'Sea People' known as the Philistines held cities on the coastal plain. They were skilled workers in iron.



The Israelites are slaves in Egypt for 400 years.



Ramesses II was probably the Egyptian king who had to let Moses and his people go.



Judges including Deborah, Gideon and the strong man Samson rule Israel, and free them from enemies.



Moses leads the people's escape from Egypt, through the Sinai Desert to the borders of Canaan. God gives them the Ten Commandments.

Under their leader Joshua, the Israelites invade Canaan and gradually win possession of their 'promised land'.

1250 BC

1050 BC

The Israelites ask for a king: Saul is anointed by the prophet Samuel.

The boy given back to God by his mother Hannah grows up to become the prophet Samuel.

550 BC

Daniel at the court in Babylon. Ezekiel encourages the exiles.



Jerusalem falls to Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon. Judah is taken into exile.

The prophet Jeremiah calls the people of Judah to return to God.

God sends prophets to call his people back. But Samaria falls to the Assyrians: the end of the Kingdom of Israel.

600 BC

500 BC

The vast Persian Empire extended from India in the east to Egypt and Greece in the west. When the Persian King Cyrus took over the Babylonian Empire in 539 BC he allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.



Jews are allowed to return home and rebuild the temple.



The Babylonian Empire falls to King Cyrus of Persia.

Under Nehemiah, the walls of Jerusalem rebuilt.

350 BC

Judea under foreign rule: Greeks 331-320, Egyptians 320-198, Syrians 198-63.

In 63 BC Pompey takes Jerusalem for Rome.



750 BC

The Assyrians were fierce fighters, dominating many neighbouring kingdoms, including Israel and Judah. Scenes of victory are carved on their palace walls.



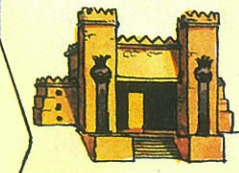
Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria conquers Israel.

850 BC

After Solomon's death, the kingdom is divided by civil war. The south, under Solomon's son, is called Judah; the north becomes Israel.

Both kingdoms have a succession of good and bad kings. The people worship foreign gods.

950 BC



King Solomon realizes his father's dream to build a temple for God at Jerusalem.

1000 BC



Shepherd-boy David becomes Israel's greatest king, after defeating the Philistine champion, Goliath.