

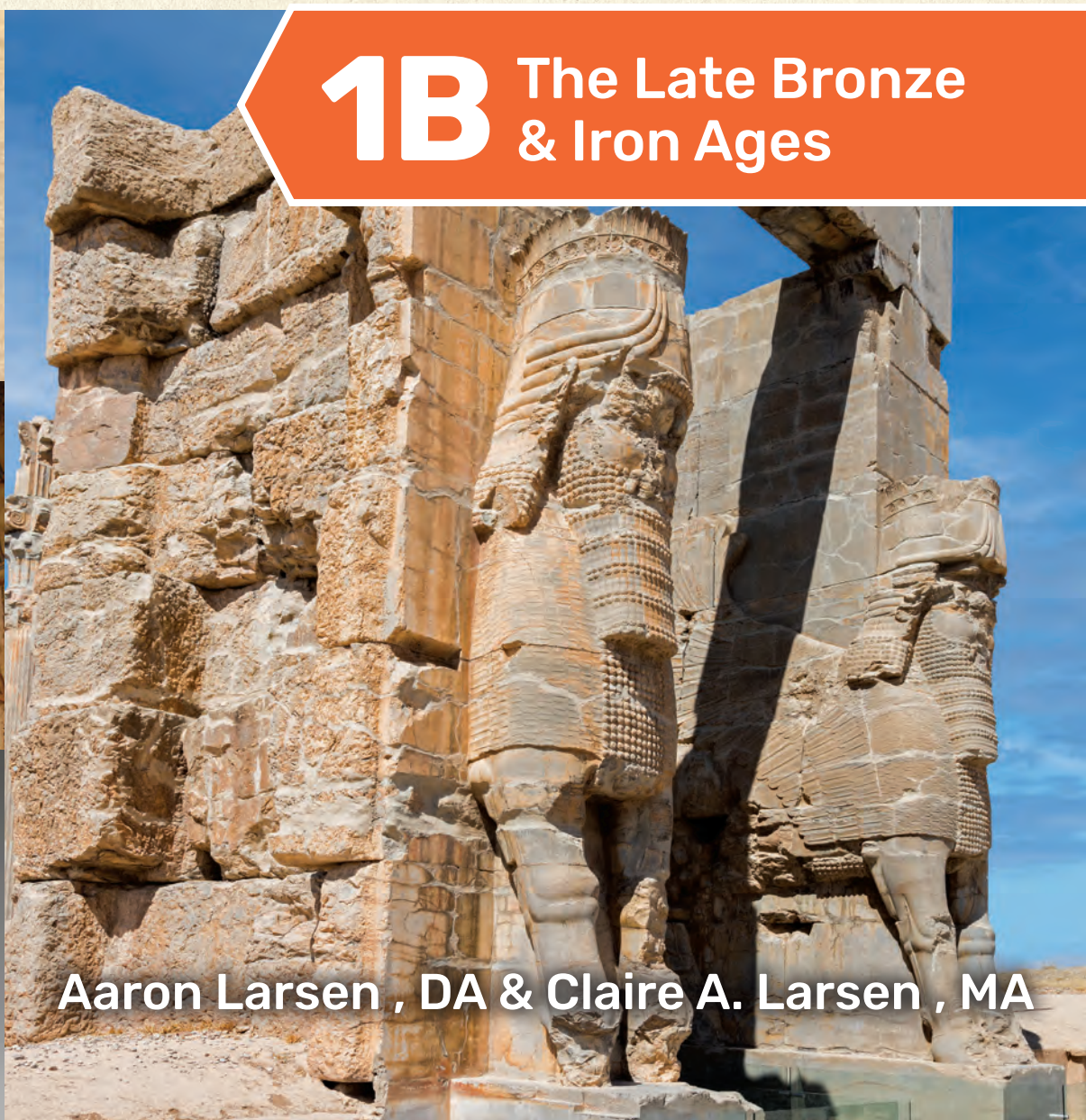
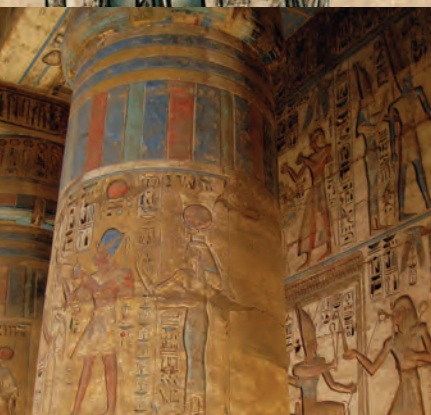
Classical Subjects *Creatively Taught*™

# The Curious Historian



History & Culture  
of the Ancient World

**1B** The Late Bronze  
& Iron Ages



Aaron Larsen, DA & Claire A. Larsen, MA

## Dedication

*For our nephew and grandson, Christian Larsen, who enjoys learning about history and whose enthusiasm we hope will be stirred even more by reading this book.*

*Classical Academic Press would like to thank the scholars, peer reviewers, and teachers who contributed their time, expertise, and feedback in various ways throughout the development of this text.*



*The Curious Historian Level 1B: History & Culture of the Ancient World*

The Late Bronze & Iron Ages

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# Welcome to The Curious Historian

by Dr. Christopher Perrin

## Welcome to History

We are so glad that you are going to study history with us! In each book in The Curious Historian series, you will find a rich, engaging presentation of information about important people and civilizations throughout history that still have much to teach us, even in our modern age. You will learn about the language, religion, arts, architecture, monuments, and writing of each of these civilizations. The full-color art and artifacts pictured throughout each book will help you understand what these civilizations created and will give you an appreciation of the wonder and beauty of history.

In *The Curious Historian Level 1B*, you will be delighted with the history and culture of some more of the most well-known ancient people who formed the earliest civilizations and whose influence we still see in our world today. In addition to continuing with the history of Mesopotamia and Egypt, we will explore many fascinating new lands and kingdoms, such as Assyria, Persia, Israel, India, and China.

*The Curious Historian Level 1* is the first part of our four-level history series. The levels, each consisting of two semester-long texts, will cover the following eras:

<b>LEVEL 1:</b> <b>THE ANCIENT WORLD</b>	<i>Book 1A: The Early &amp; Middle Bronze Ages</i> (the Egyptians and Mesopotamians)
	<i>Book 1B: The Late Bronze &amp; Iron Ages</i> (the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Israelites, Assyrians, Persians, etc.)
<b>LEVEL 2:</b> <b>THE CLASSICAL WORLD</b>	<i>Book 2A: Greece &amp; the Classical World</i> (Classical and Hellenistic Periods; the Far East)
	<i>Book 2B: Rome &amp; the Classical World</i> (the Republic and Empire; the Far East)
<b>LEVEL 3:</b> <b>THE MEDIEVAL WORLD</b>	<i>Book 3A: The Early Middle Ages</i> (Migration Era and the Viking Age)
	<i>Book 3B: The Late Middle Ages</i> (Crusades and the High Middle Ages)
<b>LEVEL 4:</b> <b>THE MODERN WORLD</b>	<i>Book 4A: The Early Modern Era</i> (Age of Discovery; Reformation and Enlightenment)
	<i>Book 4B: The Modern Era</i> (Age of “Revolutions”: Industrial, Scientific, and Political)

Throughout each book, you will learn about important people, leaders, rulers, and generals. You will read about why we remember them, what they did, and what they tried but failed to do. You will learn about what they have left behind that are still of great value to historians: monuments, writings, personal belongings, and more. You will learn these people’s stories.

In fact, history is a story—a very long story with many, many interesting events. It is a record of what people have done, what they have thought, what they have built, what they have written, even what they have hoped for and believed in. History helps us remember some of the remarkable things that humans have achieved over thousands of years, such as learning how to farm and build large cities, inventing systems of writing, and creating beautiful art and monuments.

History is also a story of conflict and failure. While people in the past achieved great things, they also fought terrible wars that destroyed much that was good. People sometimes struggled to do what was wise and good, and sometimes they were drawn to what was foolish, selfish, greedy, and destructive. The study of history shows us both the wisdom and the flaws of the people of the past, helping us to learn from their successes and mistakes.

### Know What Is Good

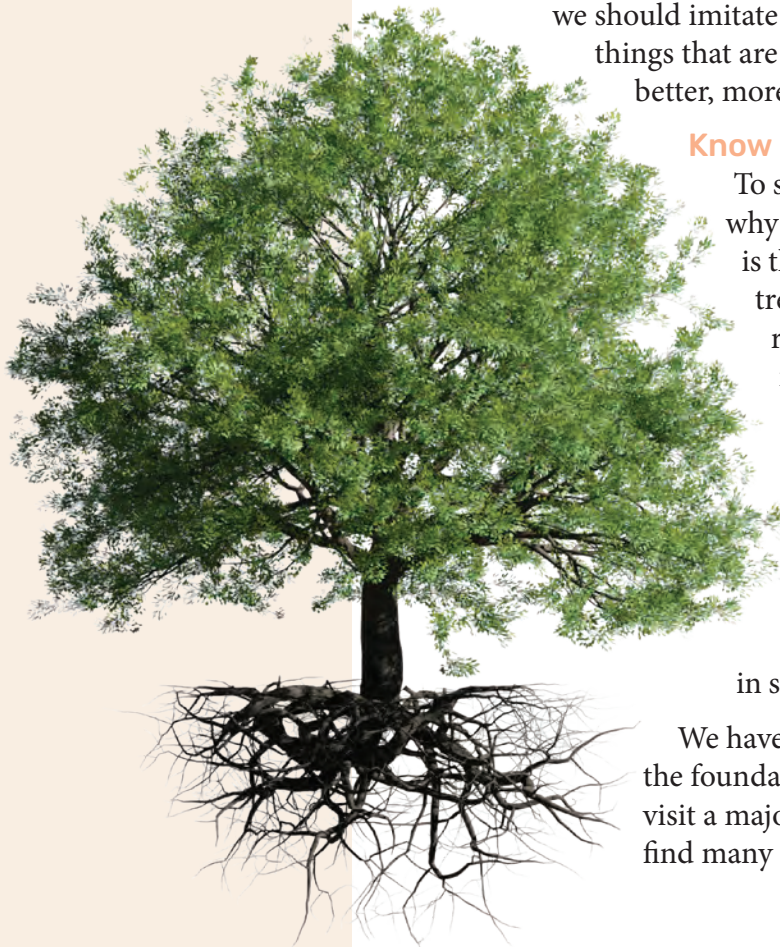
The study of the past has a lot to teach us about what people are like throughout history. This means it teaches us what we ourselves are like, because we are people too. History introduces us to various heroes and villains who teach us something of virtue and vice. It shows us how some people are tempted to become cowardly in times of danger, but also how some people demonstrate courage and bravery. It shows us how people with great power are easily tempted to become cruel and greedy, but also how some people use their power to generously bless and help others. It also shows us how people can be both kind and cruel at different times—for many people are a blend of virtue and vice! In other words, the study of history can serve as a model to show us how to be virtuous and wise and avoid being selfish and cruel. It provides us with cautionary tales and warnings but also with inspiring stories that encourage us to be brave, generous, kind, and daring.

The famous Roman historian Livy said, “The study of history is the best medicine for a sick mind” because history gives a long record of examples of human behavior and experiences that we can all see. He said that in this record we will find both for ourselves and our country “examples and warnings: fine things to take as models, base [corrupt] things, rotten through and through, to avoid.” As students of history, we should imitate the good examples we find in history and avoid those things that are cruel and rotten. If Livy is right, then we can become better, more virtuous people by studying history.

### Know Ourselves

To study history is to study who we once were and to learn why we are the way we are now. You might say that history is the study of our beginning. If we think of history as a tree, then the peoples who came before us are like the roots and the trunk of the tree, and we are like the most recent branches or the new twigs. This means that while we are the most recent people, we are related to those people who have gone before us, just like the branches of a tree are related to its trunk and roots. The Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and other ancient peoples are the roots and trunk of the “history tree.” When we study this tree (these ancient peoples), we are studying ourselves, because in some important ways we came from these peoples.

We have built our modern cities, governments, and more on the foundations of these ancient civilizations. For example, if you visit a major American city, such as Washington, DC, you will find many museums, capitol buildings, and courthouses with



great pillars and columns supporting triangular roofs. The design of these buildings imitates the architectural style of the Greeks and Romans, which in turn were imitating the great columns and angles of Egyptian structures. In other words, the great buildings in American cities are in fact ancient in their style and design!



The US Capitol building in Washington, DC

### Know the Future



The study of history helps us to understand ourselves now, but it also helps us to make educated guesses about what might happen in the future. Why is this true? Because humans have shared the same nature over thousands of years! History teaches us that people in all times tend to act in the same ways in similar circumstances.

Here is just one example. Throughout history, when people face threats from an invading army there are almost always some who wish to surrender out of fear, and others who are willing to betray their own city or country to save themselves or even to make a profit. There are also those who are willing to stand up and bravely fight to protect their country and those in danger. Therefore, we can predict that if, during our time, our country or city is threatened, we will likely find each of these types of people. So, as you can see, the study of history helps us to better anticipate what might happen in the future!

So, welcome once again to the study of history. We hope this study will help you learn more about pursuing virtue and wisdom and avoiding selfishness and greed. We hope it will also help you know more about where you have come from and learn to wisely anticipate the future. And last but certainly not least, we hope this series will capture your curiosity and spark your imagination about the world of the past, leading you to see that the study of history is not only important but also fascinating!

### A Note on the Sidebars

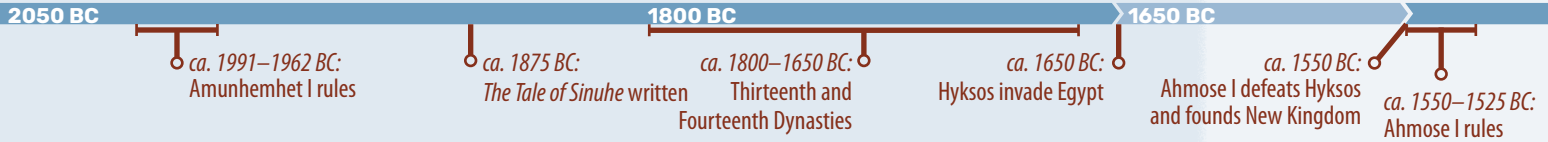
Each chapter lesson in *The Curious Historian Level 1B* is filled with a variety of sidebars. These sidebars are optional, and your teacher or parent will decide which ones you should read each week. The sidebar pieces, which are indicated by icons, help to provide additional information or summarize key facts.

-  *History Bits:* In *Level 1B*, these sidebars are typically numbered lists that give the most important accomplishments of an important ruler or civilization. Sometimes they present interesting cultural information. You do not need to memorize the information included in the History Bits sidebars. However, it can be useful to review the lists of rulers' or civilizations' accomplishments before you complete the chapter exercises and quiz, which will sometimes ask you to supply three or four facts about one of the key figures or civilizations discussed in the chapter.
-  *Religion in History:* Among many other things, the Bible is a historical record of ancient people such as the Israelites. The Religion in History sidebars point out places where ancient history intersects with historical events or figures mentioned in the Bible, such as the Exodus from Egypt.
-  *To the Source:* Many of our English words come from Latin or Greek. When a vocabulary word has interesting or unusual roots, we have supplied this information in a To the Source sidebar. These word origins may be of particular interest if you are also using our Latin for Children or Greek for Children series.
-  *Question Box:* Since we believe history is more than a boring list of dates and facts, we have tried to make it come alive for you by asking you to use your imagination and to draw connections between these ancient civilizations and our modern world. Asking thoughtful questions, such as those found in the Question Box sidebars, is just one way to help you think more deeply about some of the patterns and influences that still exist in our own lives today. For example, how were the ancient royal libraries of rulers such as Ashurbanipal different from our public libraries today? What dangers would merchants have faced as they began traveling longer distances between kingdoms? We have inserted these Question Boxes at key points throughout the chapters to help you explore (with guidance from your teacher or parent) as many thoughts and connections as possible. Be as curious as you can when discussing these questions!



**Middle Kingdom**  
ca. 2050–1650 BC

**Second Intermediate Period**  
ca. 1650–1550 BC



## MEMORY

## Unit I: The Late Bronze Age

# Chapter 1:

## The Egyptian Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period

### THE BIG PICTURE OF EGYPTIAN KINGDOMS<sup>1</sup>

DATES	KINGDOM	DYNASTIES	FAMOUS PHAROHS
ca. 2050–1650 BC	Middle Kingdom	Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth	Mentuhotep II (Eleventh Dynasty), Amunhemhet I (Twelfth Dynasty)
ca. 1650–1550 BC	Second Intermediate Period	Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth	N/A—Hyksos Invasion

### IMPORTANT WORDS

WORD	DEFINITION
Dynasty	One family that rules over a country for a number of generations
Fortress	A military structure or walled town that houses soldiers
Chariot	A light, two-wheeled cart pulled by horses and used as a weapon of war. The driver is called a charioteer.
Composite bow	A powerful and sturdy bow made by combining different kinds of materials, such as wood and horn



Don't forget to learn this chapter's song verse(s)! The lyrics can be found in appendix A.

### IMPORTANT FIGURES

WORD	DEFINITION
Amunhemhet I <sup>2</sup>	The son of an ordinary, non-royal family who took over the Egyptian throne and founded the successful Twelfth Dynasty
Nubians <sup>3</sup>	An African people whose land of Nubia, located south of Egypt, was rich in gold and at times controlled by Egyptian pharaohs
Hyksos	Invaders from the Levant who became the first foreigners to take over and rule Egypt, ca. 1650 BC
Ahmose I	The Egyptian ruler who conquered Avaris, drove out the Hyksos, and founded both the Eighteenth Dynasty and the New Kingdom

### IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS

WORD	DEFINITION
Egyptian Middle Kingdom	The second golden age of ancient Egypt, ca. 2050–1650 BC. This period includes the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Dynasties.
Second Intermediate Period	The period, ca. 1650–1550 BC, when Egypt was once again divided and was ruled by a foreign people, the Hyksos, for about 100 years
Avaris	The city in northeastern Egypt that was built by immigrants from the Levant and later became the Hyksos capital
<i>The Tale of Sinuhe</i>	An ancient Egyptian work of literature written during the Middle Kingdom, ca. 1875 BC

- In appendix F, you can find the complete “Big Picture of Egyptian Kingdoms” chart, which includes the Archaic, Old Kingdom, and First Intermediate Periods that you learned about in *Level 1A*.
- For the more difficult names and words, we have supplied pronunciations in the alphabetical glossary.
- See the alphabetical glossary for an expanded definition.

## The Twelfth Dynasty of the Middle Kingdom

When we last studied the land of Egypt in chapter 14 of *The Curious Historian Level 1A*, it was the Middle Bronze Age and the Middle Kingdom period, the second golden age of ancient Egypt, ca. 2050–1650 BC. Egypt was prosperous, peaceful, and stable under the capable leadership of Pharaoh Amunhemhet I, the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty. Remember that Egypt’s history is divided into dynasties, times when one family rules over a kingdom or country for a number of generations. In order to try to keep all thirty-one Egyptian dynasties straight, historians usually divide Egypt’s long history into “kingdom” periods, each of which includes several dynasties.

### ? The God Amun

As you learned in *Level 1A*, the name Amunhemhet means “Amun is the head.” In other words, this pharaoh’s name was probably meant to be a reminder that the god Amun was the most important of all the Egyptian deities. Amun’s name has been spelled various ways, including Amun, Amen, and Amon. Do you remember what Amun was the god of, according to the Egyptian pantheon?

Amunhemhet I brought Egypt into the Twelfth Dynasty and a time of peace and prosperity. He ruled for about thirty years (ca. 1991–1962 BC). After his death, the land of Egypt continued to prosper under the rule of the other Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs: three named Senusret, three more named Amunhemhet, and a queen named Sobekneferu.<sup>4</sup>

There are four important things to know about the rule of the Twelfth Dynasty, ca. 2000–1800 BC. First, the Egyptian pharaohs were able to keep the Nubians away from the kingdom’s southern borders. The **Nubians** were an African people whose land of Nubia, located south of Egypt, was rich in gold and at times controlled by Egyptian pharaohs. (You will learn more about the Nubians in chapter 8.) All throughout Egypt’s history, the kingdom traded with the people of Nubia, but the Egyptians and the Nubians did not always live side by side in peace. When Egypt was strong, its armies marched south and conquered parts of Nubia. When Egypt was weak, the Nubians fought back, sending groups of soldiers into Egypt. At times, the Nubians succeeded in conquering the southern parts of Egypt.

▼ Tomb artwork of Amunhemhet



Amunhemhet I and the other Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs were able to use the powerful Egyptian army both to keep the Nubians away from Egypt’s southern borders and to take control of the northern part of Nubia. For protection, in southern Egypt and the upper parts of Nubia the Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs built strong **fortresses**, military structures or walled towns that house soldiers. From the fortresses, the Egyptian army could guard against any future invasions from the Nubians. Controlling northern Nubia allowed the Egyptians to keep their Nubian neighbors from rising

up against them. It also helped the Egyptians become richer, since they could now mine the gold found in Nubia. Most of the mining was done by Nubian slaves.

A second important thing during the Twelfth Dynasty was Egypt’s increased trade with other lands. The pharaohs also built fortresses in the north and expanded Egypt’s trade into the Levant. Soon, the larger trade networks led to even greater wealth for Egypt. As Egypt expanded its borders to the north and south and began

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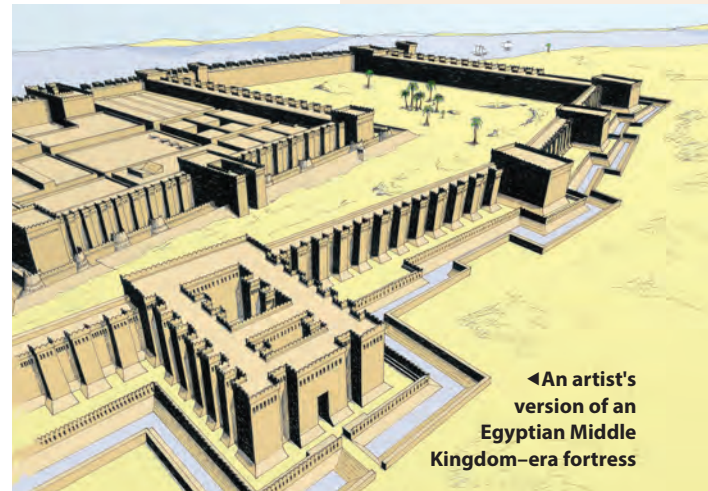
fortress from the Latin word *fortis*, meaning “strong”

4. David P. Silverman, ed., *Ancient Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 28.

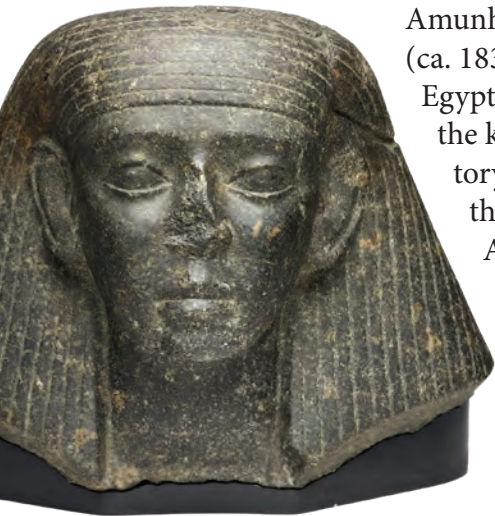
trading more with other kingdoms, it earned an even greater place of importance in the ancient world.

Third, the Twelfth Dynasty period was a time of many building projects, including temples, statues, and pyramids. One pharaoh, Amunhemhet III, had workers drain swamp-land and increase the use of irrigation in order to create more areas of fertile farmland.<sup>5</sup>

Fourth, the pharaohs gradually took back their power from the nomarchs who had ruled Egypt during the First Intermediate Period.<sup>6</sup> Limiting the power of the nomarchs meant that the government became more and more centered under the control of the pharaoh. Eventually, the position of nomarch lost much of its importance and power.



◀An artist's version of an Egyptian Middle Kingdom-era fortress



Amunhemhet III ruled Egypt for nearly fifty years (ca. 1831–1786 BC). During his reign, he brought Egypt into the greatest time of prosperity that the kingdom had seen so far in its long history. He was followed by Amunhemhet IV, the last male ruler of the Twelfth Dynasty. After Amunhemhet IV died, his wife, Sobekneferu, took the throne as the final Twelfth Dynasty pharaoh. In Egypt, it was very unusual for there to be a female ruler, but it did happen occasionally! However, Queen Sobekneferu's reign was very short, lasting fewer than four years.



▲This carving of a scarab beetle includes the owner's title and name in hieroglyphics.

◀Likely a sculpture of a local government official

## The Decline of the Middle Kingdom

At the end of the Twelfth Dynasty, ca. 1800 BC, Egypt's importance in the ancient world began to lessen. One reason was that the Nile River's mighty floods were being affected by changes in the local weather patterns. Sometimes the water level in the Nile River was too low to flood the banks. Without water, the crops died in the fields. Other times, the Nile River would rush so forcefully over its banks that the floodwaters washed away the seeds that had been planted. And sometimes high water levels meant the water lay flooded over the fields for too long and the seeds rotted in the ground.

Archaeologists have found a good bit of evidence of Egypt's expanded trade with other lands in the Near East. Stone vases from Egypt have been discovered on the Mediterranean island of Crete, and a people known as the Minoans liked to imitate the Egyptian style of pottery. Additional Egyptian items such as carved scarab beetles and sphinxes, statues, and jewelry have been found on Crete and as far away as the land of Phoenicia. There is also archaeological evidence that the Egyptians bought wood, oil, wine, and silver from places such as Syria. There were certainly many goods being carried back and forth across the Mediterranean Sea and along the coastline as Egypt and the other Near Eastern peoples traded with one another.<sup>7</sup> —A.D.

5. James K. Hoffmeier, "Egyptians," in *Peoples of the Old Testament World*, ed. Alfred J. Hoerth, Gerald L. Mattingly, and Edwin M. Yamauchi (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 269.
6. Do some of these terms, such as "nomarchs" and "First Intermediate Period," look familiar? Don't forget you can look up *Level 1A* vocabulary in the alphabetical glossary at the back of this book if you cannot remember what a word means!
7. Gae Callender, "The Middle Kingdom Renaissance (c. 2055–1650 BC)," in *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Ian Shaw (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 178.

There are only a few official written records from the time of Sobekneferu's reign, so unfortunately we do not know much about this queen of Egypt. One statue of her is unique because it shows the queen wearing a combination of male and female clothes. According to the records, Sobekneferu sometimes wanted to be addressed by female titles and other times by male titles.<sup>9</sup>

—A.D.



► Statue of Queen Sobekneferu

The next two dynasties of rulers, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties (ca. 1800–1650 BC), were both weak, but in many ways things in Egypt went on as before. The pharaohs still used Itj-tawy as their capital, and trade with other lands continued. Monuments were still built, although they were not as impressive as the Twelfth Dynasty's projects.<sup>8</sup>

Yet unrest bubbled up in various parts of the kingdom, especially in the conquered area of Nubia. The pharaohs of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties were losing control of Egypt. Does this sound familiar? Just like at the end of the Old Kingdom (Sixth Dynasty), Egypt was entering another intermediate period of division and change. With the end of the once-mighty Middle Kingdom, a new period in Egypt's history began: the Second Intermediate Period, ca. 1650–1550 BC.



▲ The Nile River during a time of flooding

## The Hyksos Invasion and the Second Intermediate Period

Egypt was falling into another time of political division, but in a different way than it had split apart during the First Intermediate Period. This time, Egypt was being squeezed at both the northern and the southern ends of the land. The Thirteenth

Dynasty pharaohs had been neglecting the fortresses that earlier Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs had built in the south. Over time, the Egyptians abandoned the southern fortresses and the Nubians gradually took over them. In chapter 8, you will learn more about this series of events.

In the north, ca. 1650 BC, a group of invaders charged down into Egypt from the northeast. This marked the first time in Egypt's long history that foreigners invaded, took over, and ruled the land.

Most historians think these newcomers came from the Levant and joined with other immigrants who had settled in Egypt much earlier. In fact, so many immigrants from the Levant had gathered in northern Egypt over the years that they built their own city, called **Avaris**, in the northeast. As Egypt became divided at the



▲ An artist's depiction of the Hyksos invasion



### To the Source:

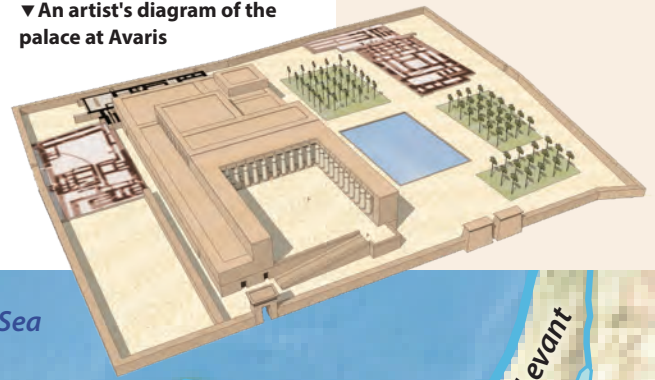
Hyksos from the Egyptian phrase *hekau khasut*, meaning “rulers of foreign countries”<sup>10</sup>

8. Callender, “Middle Kingdom Renaissance,” 171.
9. Callender, “Middle Kingdom Renaissance,” 170–171.
10. Janine Bourriau, “The Second Intermediate Period (c. 1650–1550 BC),” in Shaw, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, 187.

end of the Middle Kingdom, the settlers joined forces with a new group of warriors marching down from the Levant into Egypt. Since they shared a common culture and language, the two groups of Levantine immigrants united to take over most of Egypt. The new, foreign dynasty became known as the **Hyksos**, and they made Avaris their capital.

The Hyksos army was more powerful than the Egyptian army because Egypt's soldiers were not prepared to fight against men who rode in chariots and were armed with a powerful new type of bow. How could Egypt's foot soldiers, with their lightweight armor, heavy shields, and large, awkward spears, be a match for an army that moved so swiftly and shot arrows with accuracy from a great distance? Ancient warfare had begun to change, and Egypt was paying the price.

▼ An artist's diagram of the palace at Avaris



Many artifacts and records have survived from some of the later periods in Egypt's history. You would think that the more archaeological evidence we find from old civilizations, the more we would know about their people, right? Not always! Archaeologists have found many written materials from the *Second Intermediate Period*, and also a good number of other artifacts. The problem is, there is *so* much information for historians to sort through. And the records do not always agree with each other! For example, written records for the *Second Intermediate Period* include lists of pharaohs, business records, and a later history written by the Egyptian historian and priest Manetho. At times, these written accounts all disagree with each other, and they also often disagree with carved inscriptions on monuments dating from the period.<sup>11</sup> What a mess! This is why historians must be careful and patient as they sort through all the facts and try to reach the best conclusions.

-A.D.

11. Bourriau, "Second Intermediate Period," 186.



### To the Source:

*chariot* from the Latin word *carrus*, meaning “cart”



### To the Source:

*composite* from the Latin word *compositus*, meaning “put together”



### Who Else?

The Hyksos were not the first ancient people to fight with bows and arrows. Can you remember the name of the Mesopotamian ruler whose army was known for its powerful bows and skilled archers?



### The Rise of Full-Time Warriors

Chariots and composite bows were not technology for part-time “citizen soldiers” who served in the army for part of the year and then returned home to work on their farms. First of all, these more advanced weapons were expensive to make. Second, training to use these two weapons took a lot of time—time that farmers did not have to spare. Archery is a challenging skill, no matter what type of bow you use, and requires many hours of practice. If a soldier’s only job was to learn how to use the composite bow, then with time he could learn to master the skill, as well as learn how to shoot while standing in a moving chariot. But part-time soldiers would not have been able to spend that much time training in such a specialized skill. So, with the rise of these two Bronze Age

*Continued*

## The New Weapons of the Bronze Age

The Hyksos soldiers were known for using **chariots** and composite bows, two weapons that had become popular in the Levant. Their chariots were light, two-wheeled carts pulled by horses and used as a weapon of war. One or two soldiers could ride standing up in the chariot. One man served as the driver, or charioteer, while the other was armed with a composite bow and would fire upon the enemy.

The **composite bow** was made by combining different kinds of materials, such as wood and horn. This new type of bow was more powerful and much sturdier than a bow made from just one material. The combination of materials allowed the composite bow to store more energy (power) when the bowstring was pulled back. This meant the archer could shoot arrows faster and farther than he could using a simpler style of bow. Composite bows were also smaller and easier to handle than other styles of bows, such as the traditional longbows perfected by the Nubians. In order to shoot well while standing in a moving chariot, Bronze Age warriors needed the power, sturdiness, and smaller size of the composite bows.



▲ A limestone carving of a two-wheeled chariot

Imagine what it would have been like to be a soldier in an ancient army, fighting on foot with only a spear and a shield. You march with a band of fellow soldiers onto the field of battle. Suddenly, rushing toward you are enemy attackers riding in swift chariots. In the chariots, warriors stand ready to shoot, loaded bows pointing your way. All around you, the sharp, bronze-tipped arrows begin raining down upon your friends. On your left and right, men are collapsing in pain. Your simple armor and shield are not strong enough to protect you from the arrows shot from such powerful bows. And, supposing you could catch up to your enemy, how can you fight back against them when your only weapon is a large, heavy spear?

When an army combined the speed of a chariot with the long-distance force of a composite bow, they took Bronze Age warfare to an entirely new level. The army became firepower in motion! Armies with chariots and composite bows were hard to beat and a truly intimidating sight on the battlefield. Armies without these weapons were left at a disadvantage. It is possible that, after some time and thought, an unprepared army might invent weapons and strategies that could be used to successfully fight against this new kind of well-armed enemy. But first, the soldiers would be too busy fighting for their lives! Kingdoms that adopted this new, “modern” way of doing warfare were able to conquer many groups of people and build new kingdoms . . . and even new empires! The swift chariots also allowed the armies to travel faster and farther than armies had gone before. Using these two powerful weapons, the Hyksos rulers were able to conquer most of Egypt.



▲ A replica of a composite bow

## Egypt under Hyksos Rule

During the Second Intermediate Period, ca. 1650–1550 BC, the Hyksos ruled as pharaohs over all of Lower Egypt and some parts of Upper Egypt. The Hyksos brought other changes to Egypt besides new ways of warfare. They encouraged trades such as weaving and making objects out of precious metals (especially gold) so that they could sell more of these items to other lands. The Hyksos also introduced their own pantheon of gods and encouraged the worship of deities that were unfamiliar to the Egyptians.

At the same time, other things in Egypt did *not* change during the rule of the Hyksos. Since a number of Hyksos had settled in Egypt as immigrants before they ruled the land, in some ways they were already living like the Egyptians. For example, they dressed in the Egyptian style and used Egyptian as the official language for important government records. During their reign, they also allowed many Egyptians to continue working in the government and as priests in the temples.<sup>12</sup>

Yet even though the Hyksos seemed fairly comfortable and settled in their new kingdom, they never forgot their foreign roots . . . and neither did their Egyptian subjects!

## The Eighteenth Dynasty and the Victory over the Hyksos

We are going to skip over the three dynasties of the Second Intermediate Period because they are not very important in the big picture of Egypt's history. All you need to know is that the Second Intermediate Period included the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Dynasties. The rulers of these dynasties were a mix of Hyksos kings and a few native Egyptians who resisted the control of the Hyksos. And all three dynasties ruled at the same time!

The Hyksos ruled for about 100 years, ca. 1650–1550 BC, but they never controlled all of Egypt. A small part of Upper Egypt in the south was never conquered by the Hyksos or by the Nubians. Instead, it remained under the rule of a group of native Seventeenth Dynasty Egyptian pharaohs.

Eventually, some young Seventeenth Dynasty princes gathered in the city of Thebes to plot a rebellion against the Hyksos rulers. Overcoming the Hyksos would not be easy, and it would not be quick. In fact, two Egyptian rulers had already been killed in battle trying to rid Egypt of the Hyksos. Although these next two young princes were also unsuccessful in overthrowing the Hyksos completely, they helped prepare the way for eventual victory.

**Ahmosé I**, the brother of the last Seventeenth Dynasty pharaoh, was the ruler who finally succeeded in overcoming the Hyksos. Using the fast chariots and powerful bows that the Egyptians had learned about from the Hyksos, Ahmosé I and



▲ Hyksos headband decorated with animal heads and stars or flowers



▼ Part of a decorative carving found on the handle of a Hyksos dagger

### ? Up and Down in Egypt

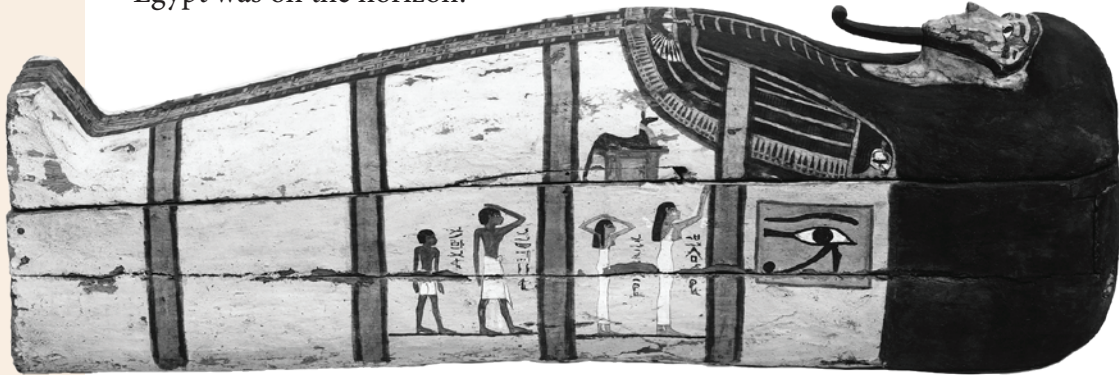
The Egyptian kingdom was often divided into two parts: Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. Can you remember which was the southern part and which was the northern part?

### Ahmosé I (ruled ca. 1550–1525 BC)

1. Used chariots and composite bows to conquer Avaris and overcome the Hyksos, ca. 1550 BC
2. Drove the Hyksos all the way back to the Levant
3. Founded both the Eighteenth Dynasty and the Egyptian New Kingdom

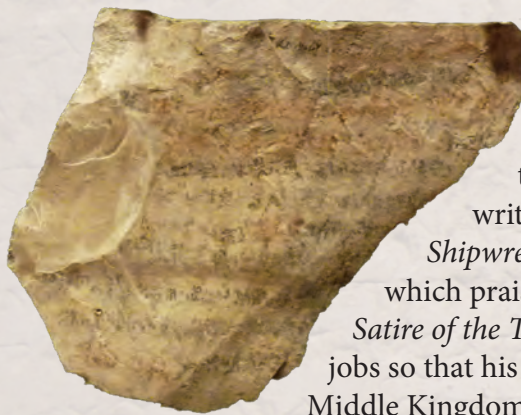
12. Susan Wise Bauer, *The History of the Ancient World: From the Earliest Accounts to the Fall of Rome* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2007), 180.

his army conquered Avaris ca. 1550 BC, and then drove the Hyksos all the way back to the Levant. His victory was so important that Ahmose I is considered to be the founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty as well as the founder of the Egyptian New Kingdom, both of which we will study in the next chapter. Another golden age for Egypt was on the horizon!



► The sarcophagus (coffin) of Ahmose I

## 📖 Literature of the Age: *The Tale of Sinuhe*



▲ A portion of *The Satire of Trades* carved on a piece of limestone

Egyptian literature became more important during the Middle Kingdom than it had been during the Old Kingdom. There were two reasons for this change. First, during the Middle Kingdom more middle-class people were able to read. And second, more men held the respected position of scribe. Therefore, many different kinds of writing flourished. Works written during this time include *The Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor*, which is just what it sounds like, and “Hymn to the Nile,” which praises Hapi, the god of the Nile’s flooding. In another piece, titled *The Satire of the Trades*, a father writes to his son and exaggerates the hardships of many jobs so that his son will think being a scribe is the most appealing career to choose. Middle Kingdom writings also include a wide variety of letters, reports, and official accounts that give us a bigger picture of what life was like during Egypt’s second golden age.<sup>13</sup>

It is hard to find an ancient Egyptian work of literature that rivals the fame of Mesopotamia’s *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Perhaps the most similar Egyptian work is *The Tale of Sinuhe*, which was written during the Middle Kingdom, ca. 1875 BC, by an unknown author. (The Egyptian name “Sinuhe” was most likely pronounced “shin-hay.”) However, *The Tale of Sinuhe* is different from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* in both length and writing style. The Egyptian work is shorter, and throughout the entire tale the mood and style frequently change. For example, the writing shifts from a happy tone to a sad tone, and from story form to poem form. These frequent changes make *The Tale of Sinuhe* a unique and fascinating piece of literature.

*The Tale of Sinuhe* starts out by describing the life of the main character, a man named Sinuhe who is an official in the pharaoh’s court. In many ways, this beginning makes the tale similar to a type of writing known as the Egyptian tomb autobiography. An autobiography, as you will learn in English class, is a description of someone’s life that is written by the person himself (or herself). An Egyptian tomb autobiography was written while the person was still alive and gave a record



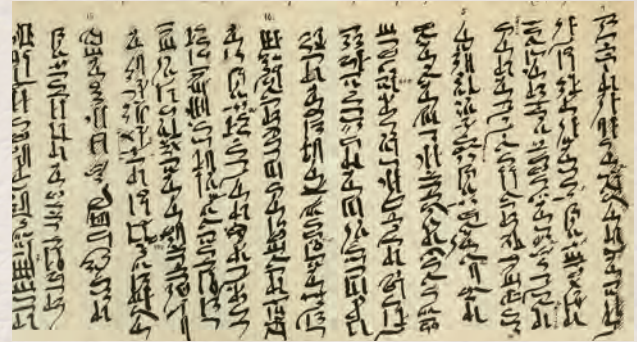
▲ Carving of a hero (possibly Gilgamesh) taming a lion

13. Bourriau, “Second Intermediate Period,” 183.



of his life. The record was then inscribed on the walls of the person's tomb after he died. So, it is possible that *The Tale of Sinuhe* was written by a real man named Sinuhe, but historians still do not know for sure.

The tale then suddenly shifts from a summary of Sinuhe's life and work to a tragic story. The pharaoh unexpectedly dies, and Sinuhe is startled to find himself no longer able to enjoy his privileged life as part of the royal court. He panics and flees Egypt. The writer does not clearly explain why this panic grips Sinuhe. Most readers assume that Sinuhe is afraid he will be unfairly accused of being part of a plot to kill the king and of having a hand in the pharaoh's death.



▲ A section of *The Tale of Sinuhe* papyrus

The tone of the poem changes again as Sinuhe becomes confused and lost. He wanders north from Egypt without a clear direction or purpose until he faints from thirst and exhaustion. Just after he faints, he is rescued by a nomad chief. Before long, he finds himself living with a tribal group somewhere in the Levant or the surrounding desert lands. He marries the daughter of a chief named Amunenshi and becomes both Amunenshi's son-in-law and his right-hand man.

While serving Amunenshi for many years as his loyal enforcer of laws, Sinuhe grows wealthy and powerful. His own sons become warrior chiefs as well. Eventually, he is challenged to a duel by a massive, intimidating warrior, whom Sinuhe overcomes easily. After this, everyone in his new homeland realizes that Sinuhe is indeed a strong and powerful man.

Just as the story seems to become a tale of epic heroism, Sinuhe remembers the kingdom from which he came: his beloved Egypt. The mood and style switch to that of a sorrowful poem as Sinuhe reflects on all that he has lost. He prays to the gods that he will be able to go back home.

Miraculously, the far-off pharaoh hears of Sinuhe's sadness and offers him forgiveness for having left Egypt. Here, the tale changes to sound like an official decree from the king as he formally invites Sinuhe to come back to Egypt. This section sounds similar to the writing style of royal decrees that date from the Middle Kingdom. The similarity has led historians to think that the author of *The Tale of Sinuhe* either had a job writing official documents or must have been very skilled at imitating this style of writing.

The tale returns to a sad, poem-like story as it narrates Sinuhe's journey home, his tearful reunion with the royal family, and a meeting with the royal princesses. Finally, the tale once again becomes a tomb autobiography. The author ends by writing about the short but happy rest of Sinuhe's life, including the building and equipping of his tomb and other preparations for his journey to the afterlife.

This may sound like a very long piece of literature, but most English translations of *The Tale of Sinuhe* are only around twenty pages long. While *The Tale of Sinuhe* changes between many different tones and styles of writing, it tells an intriguing story. It also gives historians and modern-day readers a bigger picture of the ideas and beliefs, religion, and customs of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom. For example, from this story we learn that the ancient Egyptians believed Egypt was their one true home and the one sure path to the afterlife.



► Scene of foreigners making an offering to a Middle Kingdom pharaoh

### Talk It Over

The Egyptians were proud of their land and their military successes. They also took pride in the magnificent buildings and temples they had built, and the irrigation systems they had dug to carry the Nile's floodwaters. As you can imagine, it would not have been easy for them to suddenly be ruled by the Hyksos. What do you think it would be like to live with foreign people ruling over your homeland?

### Practice the Facts

On the line provided, write the number of the correct vocabulary word beside each definition.

- |                  |       |   |
|------------------|-------|---|
| 1. Chariot       | _____ | A. The son of an ordinary, non-royal family who took over the throne and founded the successful Twelfth Dynasty               |
| 2. Hyksos        | _____ | B. A light, two-wheeled cart pulled by horses and used as a weapon of war   |
| 3. Dynasty       | _____ | C. A powerful and sturdy bow made by combining different kinds of materials, such as wood and horn                            |
| 4. Amunhemhet I  | _____ | D. Invaders from the Levant who became the first foreigners to take over and rule Egypt, ca. 1650 BC                          |
| 5. Composite bow | _____ | E. The Egyptian ruler who conquered Avaris, drove out the Hyksos, and founded both the Eighteenth Dynasty and the New Kingdom |
| 6. Nubians       | _____ | F. One family that rules over a kingdom or country for a number of generations  |
| 7. Ahmose I      | _____ | G. A military structure or walled town that houses soldiers   |
| 8. Avaris        | _____ | H. An African people whose land, located south of Egypt, was rich in gold and at times controlled by Egyptian pharaohs        |
| 9. Fortress      | _____ | I. The city in northeastern Egypt that was built by immigrants from the Levant and later became the Hyksos capital            |

### Write It Down

1. In this chapter, you learned about two important pharaohs: Amunhemhet I and Ahmose I. First, write down three facts about Amunhemhet I. (Be sure to use complete sentences!) You can include facts you remember from when you learned about him in *Level 1A*.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Now, write down three facts about Ahmose I. (Be sure to use complete sentences!)

a. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Can You Recall?**

1. Circle all of the phrases that have something to do with the *Middle Kingdom*.

Construction of pyramids, temples, and irrigation projects      Queen Sobekneferu ruled  
 Nubians kept away from Egypt's borders      Capital at Thebes  
 Nomarchs became powerful again      Changes in the Nile's flooding  
 Pharaohs took power back from the nomarchs      Time of less trade with other lands

2. Circle all of the phrases that have something to do with the *Second Intermediate Period*.

Time of great building and irrigation projects      Egypt ruled by the Hyksos  
 Fortresses built to protect Egypt's borders      Changes in the Nile's flooding  
 Three dynasties ruled at the same time      Time of more trade with other lands  
 Unrest throughout the kingdom      Twelfth Dynasty ruled

**Make the Connection**

Complete each of the following sentences by circling the correct answer.

1. *The Tale of Sinuhe* is about \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a poor boy who unexpectedly becomes pharaoh  
 an official in the royal court who flees Egypt when the pharaoh dies
2. Throughout *The Tale of Sinuhe*, the writing mood and style \_\_\_\_\_.  
 stay the same      frequently change
3. An Egyptian tomb autobiography was a record of a person's life that was written \_\_\_\_\_ and then inscribed on the walls of his tomb.  
 by the person before he died      by the person's friends after he died
4. Scholars \_\_\_\_\_ who wrote *The Tale of Sinuhe*.  
 know      do not know
5. *The Tale of Sinuhe* was written during the \_\_\_\_\_, a time when more people were able to read.  
 Middle Kingdom      Old Kingdom

**True or False**

If the sentence is true, circle *T*. If the sentence is false, circle *F*.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Amunhemhet I's reign in Egypt was a time of prosperity.   | T | F |
| 2. The Nubians lived in a kingdom to the north of Egypt.   | T | F |
| 3. Egypt was the first kingdom to use chariots in battle.  | T | F |
| 4. The Hyksos came from the land of Assyria.   | T | F |
| 5. The Seventeenth Dynasty's rebellion against the Hyksos began in the city of Thebes.                         | T | F |
| 6. Nubia was a land rich in gold.  | T | F |
| 7. Chariots slowed down armies because the wheels broke so often.  | T | F |
| 8. It was very difficult for an army of foot soldiers to defeat an army that used chariots and composite bows. | T | F |

## Be Creative

Use your imagination to write a short story of two to three paragraphs about what it might have been like to be a soldier using the fearsome new weapons of the Late Bronze Age: chariots and composite bows. What would be hard about learning to fight with these new weapons? What skills would you have to practice during training?

## Find It on the Map

Label the following on the map. Here in the chapters we will give you a few hints for the places that might be harder to remember, but in the unit review you will have to label them without the hints!

1. Upper Egypt
2. Lower Egypt
3. Mediterranean Sea
4. Nile River
5. Nubia
6. The Levant
7. Itj-tawy (*Amunhemhet I's capital*)
8. Thebes
9. Avaris (*the Hyksos capital*)

## Think About It

Egypt is not the only example of a civilization that has experienced many periods of great change. All societies, kingdoms, and countries change over time. The United States of America has been a country for more than 200 years. Can you think of some ways our country has changed over the centuries? Were these changes good or bad? Write down some of your ideas. (Be sure to use complete sentences!)

## Do It Yourself

At the end of the Twelfth Dynasty, changes in Egypt's weather patterns affected the Nile River's floods. Would you like to learn more about how the Nile's times of drought and flooding had an impact on the Egyptians' crops? First, you will need to plant four or five different "crops" of your own. Your teacher or parent will provide you with plastic cups, soil, and a variety of seeds. Add the same amount of soil and the same number of seeds to each cup. Then put all of the plants in a window that lets in plenty of sunlight—just like crops would get in Egypt!

Next, work with your classmates or family to set up a schedule for watering your "crops." Here is a sample schedule to follow:

- |                                |                                 |  |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Crop #1: Water once a day.  | 3. Crop #3: Water once a week.  | 5. Crop #5: Water once every other week. |
| 2. Crop #2: Water twice a day. | 4. Crop #4: Water twice a week. |  |

Observe your "crops" for several weeks. Take notes on what you see and how the plants change. Which crops grow and which ones do not? Can you see how changes in the Nile's water levels would have affected Egypt's fields and harvests?



Late Bronze Age: ca. 1600–1200 BC

Iron Age: ca. 1200–300 BC

ca. 1225 BC: Sea Peoples migrations begin  
 ca. 1200 BC: Late Bronze Age world begins to collapse  
 ca. 1177 BC: Ramses III defeats Sea Peoples in Nile River battle

**Philistines hold power in the Levant**  
 ca. 1150–1000 BC  
 1150 BC  
 1050 BC  
 ca. 1050–931 BC: Saul, David, and Solomon rule Israel

ca. 931 BC: Israel splits into two kingdoms

ca. 722 BC: Neo-Assyrian Empire conquers Kingdom of Israel

ca. 586 BC: Neo-Babylonian Empire conquers Kingdom of Judah



MEMORY

Unit II: The Iron Age

Chapter 7:

The Sea Peoples, the Philistines, and the Israelites



IMPORTANT WORDS

WORD	DEFINITION
Nomad	A person who moves around, often each season, usually to find new places with fresh food for himself or his herd
Covenant	A formal agreement in which two people (or two groups of people) promise each other that they will or will not do certain things
Exodus	A “going out” of a group of people from one land in order to settle somewhere else; also refers to when the Israelites left Egypt

IMPORTANT FIGURES

WORD	DEFINITION
Sea Peoples	The name given to the unknown groups of people who played an important role in the changes that took place at the end of the Late Bronze Age
Peleset	The group of Sea Peoples who settled in the southwestern Levant and from whom the Philistines descended
Descendant	A person who is related to and born <i>after</i> another person or generation. For example, you are a descendant of your parents and grandparents.
Philistines	Descendants of the Peleset who lived in the southwestern Levant and are best known for being fierce rivals of the Israelites
Israelites	The group of twelve tribes, also known as the Hebrews, who became the first monotheistic nation of the ancient world. They lived in the part of Canaan that became known as Israel.

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS

WORD	DEFINITION
Jerusalem	The capital of the nation of Israel and later of the Kingdom of Judah; the location of Solomon’s temple
Kingdom of Israel	The northern ten tribes of Israel who were later conquered by the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Before the nation divided in 931 BC, Israel was also the name for the land of all twelve Israelite tribes.
Kingdom of Judah	The southern two tribes of Israel who were later conquered by the Neo-Babylonian Empire
Solomon’s Temple	The magnificent temple in Jerusalem that was built by King Solomon and was the single place of worship for the Israelites

## The Arrival of the Sea Peoples

As we mentioned in the unit introduction, a large group of people played an important role in all of the changes that took place at the end of the Late Bronze Age. This group has become known as the **Sea Peoples**. But who exactly were these mysterious Sea Peoples? Where did they come from? Historians call them the “Sea Peoples,” but did the newcomers travel to the Near East only by sea, or did they also come by land?

These are all complicated questions because the Sea Peoples did not leave behind any writings to explain who they were. Historians have figured out that the Sea Peoples were not just one group of people, and that the groups were probably not even related to each other. Instead, the Sea Peoples were made up of a number of different groups, each with its own unique name, who came from various places in the north around the same time. The groups approached the Near East from several directions. Some crossed the Mediterranean Sea and sailed toward Egypt and Libya. Others took a land route across Anatolia, moving southward through Syria.

What we know about the Sea Peoples comes mainly from archaeological discoveries and from the writings of the Egyptians, who fought several battles against them. One Egyptian account of such a battle describes the Sea Peoples as “northerners from all lands” and “of the countries of the sea.” Based on this description, scholars have tried to simplify things by referring to all of these unknown groups of people by one common name: the “Sea Peoples.”<sup>1</sup>



◀Bronze figurine of an archer

▶Sketch of a wall carving at Medinet Habu showing Ramses III in battle with the Sea Peoples at the Nile River delta



One group of Sea Peoples, the Sherden, was defeated ca. 1278 BC by Ramses II. The pharaoh then had the Sherden settle on Egyptian land. He used their warriors to form a group of professional soldiers who fought in the Egyptian army for many decades. The Sherden were later part of Ramses III's army that fought against the Libyans (whom you will learn about in chapter 8). They even became loyal and trusted enough to serve as the elite palace guard for a while! Based on artwork from the period, the Sherden soldiers seem to have had an interesting style of armor. They are usually shown wearing horned helmets and kilts. Other groups of Sea Peoples are pictured wearing a unique style of headdress that looks sort of like a ring of feathers or a very stiff hairdo!<sup>2</sup> —A.D.

What were the Sea Peoples looking for? Most likely, these various groups of people were not trying to be conquerors who set out to create a great kingdom for themselves. Instead, it seems that they were seeking a good place to settle down with their families and herds and start a new life. Pictures found on the walls of Medinet Habu, Ramses III's funeral temple, show groups of the northern migrants traveling with warriors and chariots as well as with women and children. In ancient times it was very unusual for women and children to go off to fight in wars, so historians see the pictures as a clue that the Sea Peoples were looking for a new land in which to live with their families.<sup>2</sup>

1. Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:386.
2. David M. Howard Jr., “Philistines,” in Hoerth, Mattingly, and Yamauchi, *Peoples of the Old Testament World*, 234.
3. Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:388–389.

### The Sea Peoples' Battles with Egypt

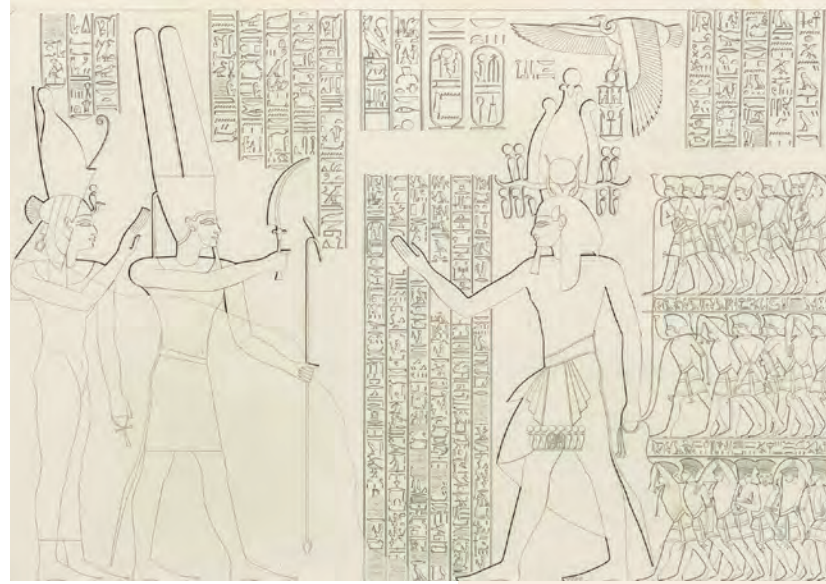
From surviving Egyptian inscriptions and texts, historians can confidently say that the Egyptian armies had at least two significant fights with the Sea Peoples. First there was a land battle fought in the Levant, and later there was a sea battle fought in the Nile River delta area.

As the power of the Egyptian New Kingdom faded little by little, the Sea Peoples steadily advanced through the Levant toward Egypt. It seems that at least some of the Sea Peoples had armed warriors with them when they came to the Near East. “No country could stand before their arms,” one inscription by Ramses III reads. “They [destroyed] Syria’s people, and its land was like that which has never come into being. They were advancing on Egypt . . .”<sup>4</sup> Gradually, the Sea Peoples pushed the Egyptian army back toward the border of Egypt.

Around 1220 BC, in the southwestern part of the Levant, the Egyptians and the Sea Peoples met on the battlefield in their first fierce fight. At the border of Egypt, the Egyptian army held fast against the Sea Peoples. The pharaoh successfully defended his kingdom, but no longer did Egypt control fortresses outside its boundaries.

Around forty years later, ca. 1177 BC, the Sea Peoples attempted another large attack on Egypt during the reign of Ramses III. This time, the fight was a great river battle in the Nile delta area. The Sea Peoples crossed the Mediterranean and swept down on Egypt like a terrible wave, traveling in powerful sailing ships that were much larger than the Egyptians’ river boats. But Ramses III had a brilliant plan. He lured the invaders into a part of the Nile River delta where all of the Sea Peoples’ ships became trapped. In front of them were the Egyptian ships, and positioned along both banks of the Nile were Egypt’s excellent archers. The Sea Peoples did not have a chance. The Egyptian ships overwhelmed the enemy ships, and the archers on the banks shot arrows at the stranded warriors before the Sea Peoples could get away. Ramses III became a hero for keeping Egypt safe from the Sea Peoples!

Ramses III certainly had good reason to fear the might of the Sea Peoples, but as the pharaoh of Egypt, he had two advantages over them. First, Ramses III and the Egyptian soldiers were fighting to protect their homeland and way of life. And second, Ramses III had quite a few magnificent archers in his army! The battle between the Sea Peoples and Egypt was ferocious, but Ramses III led Egypt to victory.<sup>6</sup>



▲ A sketch of a wall carving at Medinet Habu, Ramses III's funeral temple

At the southern end of Thebes, Ramses III built a funeral temple complex called Medinet Habu. In addition to multiple temples, the complex included residences for priests and other officials, offices, workshops, and storehouses. Large stretches of walls are still decorated with inscriptions and colorful pictures, including illustrations of scenes from Ramses III's fierce battles against the Sea Peoples and the Libyans. Some of the pictures may be exaggerated, and many of the hieroglyphic inscriptions are no longer understandable because the carvings are so old and worn. However, based on the dramatic scenes that show great numbers of soldiers and chariots, fallen warriors, and destroyed ships, we can tell that the land and sea battles fought with the invaders were violent indeed.<sup>5</sup> —A.D.

4. Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:391.

5. Howard Jr., “Philistines,” 235.

6. Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:388; and Howard Jr., “Philistines,” 235.

### ? Fighting for Your Homeland

What difference do you think it makes if you are a soldier fighting to defend your homeland compared to an invading soldier fighting to conquer another land?



#### To the Source:

*descendant* from the Latin *descendere*, meaning “to come down; to descend”



▲ A statue of Ramses II at the temple of Abu Simbel

### The Sea Peoples

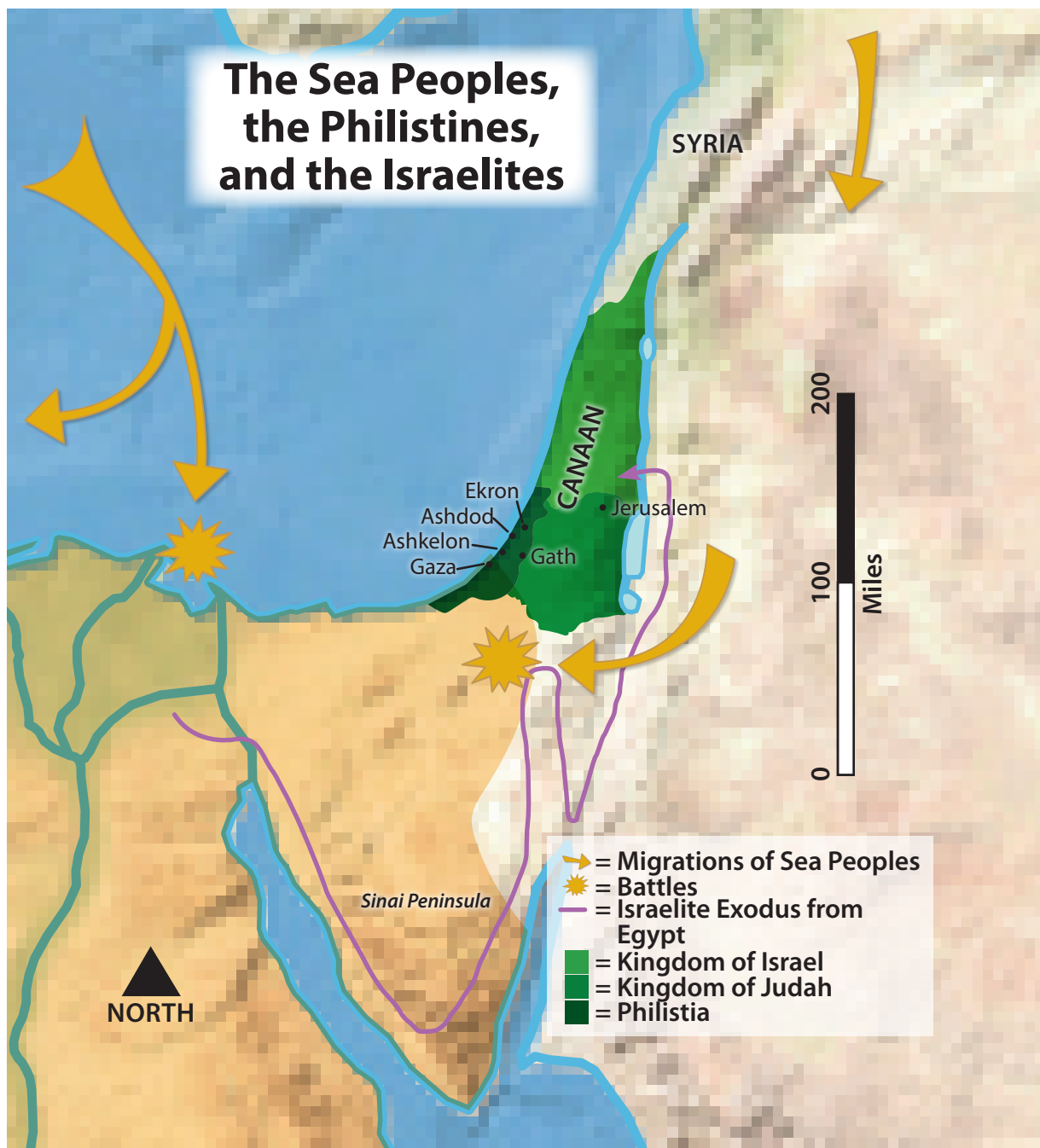
1. Various groups of people who migrated to the Near East around the end of the Late Bronze Age
2. Tried to invade Egypt by both land and sea, but were defeated by the pharaohs' armies
3. The Philistines are thought to be descendants of a group of Sea Peoples called the Peleset, who settled in the southwestern Levant.

### The Sea Peoples' Legacy

Of course, the full story of the Sea Peoples is much more complicated than the events we have described. Unfortunately, without more written records, it is hard for us to piece together the rest of what happened. One other thing we do know for sure about the Sea Peoples is that some of them sailed to the eastern Mediterranean coast and made their home there. The **Peleset** were a group of Sea Peoples who settled in the southwestern Levant. The Philistines, whom we will study next in this chapter, are thought to be the descendants of the Peleset.<sup>7</sup> A **descendant** is a person who is related to and born *after* another person or generation. For example, you are a descendant of your parents and grandparents.

Many questions still remain about the Sea Peoples. Although they had warriors who fought with Egypt (and with some other Near Eastern kingdoms), we really do not know *why* the Sea Peoples left their various northern homelands and came to the Near East. Were they trying to establish a new kingdom? Or were they just looking

7. Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:388–391.





for a land where they could live and create a new life for themselves? We may never know for sure, but one thing is clear: from northern Africa, up along the coast of the Levant, and all the way to the southern border of Anatolia, the Sea Peoples helped to rearrange the political map of the Near East. And their descendants, the Philistines, would go on to play their own important role in history.



▲ A Philistine bowl

▼ Ruins at the site of Gath, a Philistine city-state



## The Philistines<sup>8</sup>

The **Philistines**, a group of people who lived in the Levant in an area named Philistia, are best known in ancient history for being fierce rivals of their neighbors, the Israelites. The Philistines ruled in Philistia for about 150 years, ca. 1150–1000 BC, and built five main city-states: Gath, Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron. Although the five Philistine city-states were not joined together into one kingdom, there seems to have been a strong sense of unity among them. From archaeological excavations, we know that the city-states seem to have been well planned, with organized layouts. Some of the cities had thick walls built around them. Yet none of the Philistine cities were as large as other important Late Bronze Age cities.

Each Philistine city was ruled by its own king, who was given the title of “lord.” Under the Philistine lords were commanders who led armies made up of chariots with archers, soldiers on horseback, and soldiers on foot. The Philistines had an important military advantage over their enemies: They knew how to make weapons from iron, a skill that many of the neighboring kingdoms had not yet learned. When the well-armed Philistine soldiers were preparing to attack, it was a terrifying situation for anyone who faced them!

In addition to their fierce armies, the Philistines were also known for their pottery. Some of their pieces, such as bell-shaped bowls and bowls with two handles, look similar to the Mycenaean style of pottery, but the Philistines added their own touch to make their pieces unique. Philistine pottery usually had a white background decorated with two colors: red and black. The Philistines frequently added designs of birds, half-circles, and spiral loops, similar to those found on Mycenaean pieces.



▲ An artist's portrayal of David versus Goliath

The mighty Philistine warriors are often pictured with the same kind of interesting headdress that the Sherden soldiers wore: the style that looked like a ring of feathers or a stiff hairdo. The Philistine soldiers also wore armor that covered their chests, and kilts that reached down almost to their knees and were decorated with tassels. Each foot soldier was armed with a round shield, two spears, and a long sword. —A.D.

### The Bible: Philistine Blacksmiths

First Samuel 13:19-22 (NIV) tells us that there were no blacksmiths in the “whole land of Israel.” The Philistines were afraid that the Hebrews (Israelites) would make swords or spears and rise up against them, so they prevented the Hebrews from using iron. “So all Israel went down to the Philistines to have their plow points . . . axes and sickles [a tool used for harvesting grain] sharpened.”

8. Unless otherwise noted, the information about the Philistines in the following section is summarized from Howard Jr., “Philistines,” 238–249.

## The Bible: David and Goliath

Do you know the story of David and Goliath? The army of the Israelites and the army of the Philistines were at war near Gath, in the Elah Valley. One way that ancient armies settled disagreements was to have a strong warrior from one side fight a strong warrior from the opposing side. The winner of the duel determined the winner of the entire battle. Goliath was a champion Philistine warrior and a giant of a man, much taller and bigger than any Israelite soldier. For forty days, he challenged the Israelites to send out a man to fight him. He was so terrifying that the entire Israelite army, including Israel's King Saul, was paralyzed with fear. One day, a young shepherd boy named David came to the Israelite camp to bring food to his older brothers, who were soldiers in the army. When he heard Goliath's threat, David said that *he* would face the giant! David armed himself with nothing more than a slingshot and five smooth stones and challenged Goliath. Who won? You can read the rest of the story in 1 Samuel 17.

## The Philistines (ca. 1150–1000 BC)

1. Descendants of the Peleset, a group of Sea Peoples
2. Known for their fierce fighters, iron weapons, and pottery
3. Rivals of their neighbors, the Israelites, for around 150 years

The Philistines were a polytheistic people and they worshipped three main deities: Dagon, Ashtoreth, and Baalzebub. Temples to Dagon, the chief god, were built in the cities of Gaza and Ashdod. The Philistines built a temple to Ashtoreth at Ashkelon, and a temple to Baalzebub at Ekron. The name Baalzebub means “lord of the flies.” Most likely, he was the god who was believed to protect the Philistines from disease.<sup>9</sup>

Although the Philistines had a powerful army, they did not try to go far beyond their borders to build a bigger kingdom. Other than some battles with Egypt, their conflicts were mostly with the Israelites, the third group of people we will study in this chapter. For the 150 years that the Philistines held power in the Levant during the Iron Age, they were constant rivals with their Israelite neighbors.

The five main Philistine city-states continued to stand strong together under their individual lords until King David of Israel began to conquer the mighty cities one by one. By the end of his reign, David had rid the Levant of the Philistines' threat. The Philistine city-states became isolated from each other and lost much of their combined strength and unity. The Philistines continued to bother the various kings of Israel, but they were never again the strong military force they had once been.



▲ A Philistine bowl



▲ David by Lorenzo Monaco (Piero di Giovanni)

## The Israelites<sup>10</sup>

The collapse of the Late Bronze Age kingdoms and empires created the opportunity for another Near Eastern people, the **Israelites**, to become a strong nation. The Israelites, also known as the Hebrews, were a group of people made up of twelve different tribes. They became the first monotheistic nation of the ancient world and spoke the language called Hebrew. Their homeland was in the area of Canaan that became known as Israel. Because the history of the Israelites is recorded in the Old Testament of the Bible, we know more about them than we do about some of the other peoples of the time.

The beginning of what would eventually become the nation of Israel took place ca. 2200 BC. A man called Abram migrated with his family from the city of Ur, the

9. LaMoine DeVries, “Philistines,” in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand, Eric Mitchell, and Holman Reference Editorial Staff (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 1293.

10. The following historical narrative of the Israelites (Hebrews) has been adapted from the Bible series *God's Great Covenant*, which relates their entire story as recorded in the Old Testament. For more information and to see sample chapters, visit [www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com/Collections/Gods-Great-Covenant](http://www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com/Collections/Gods-Great-Covenant).

center of Mesopotamian culture and religion at the time. (His family's migration is thought to have taken place around the time of the arrival of the Gutians, whom you learned about in *Level 1A*.) Abram left behind everything that was familiar to him to follow God, who was known as Yahweh. He and his large family group became nomads and wandered westward to the land of Canaan. Remember, nomads are people who move around, often each season, usually to find new places with fresh food for themselves or their herds. During his lifetime, Abram and his family and servants set up camp in various locations but mostly stayed in Canaan, except for a couple of short journeys to Egypt.

According to the Old Testament, Yahweh made a **covenant** with Abram. A covenant is a formal agreement in which two people (or two groups of people) promise each other that they will or will not do certain things. In ancient history, covenants were often made between two kings, between a ruler and the people he ruled, or between two individual people of equal status. Covenants were usually created because legal services, such as court sessions or meetings with court officials, were not always available in ancient times. It was common for covenants to include punishments for breaking the terms of the agreement. In fact, breaking a covenant was considered a very serious crime. If you broke the terms of a covenant made with a ruler, it could result in your death or the enslavement of your people!

The most well-known examples of covenants from ancient history are found in the Old Testament. Many covenants probably did not survive over the centuries because they were made between ordinary people, not with kings or other rulers, and therefore no official records were kept.

God's covenant with Abram was a promise to make Abram the father of a great nation, to give his descendants the land of Canaan as their own land, and to bless the world through Abram. In return, Abram promised to worship and serve only Yahweh. In other words, Abram became a monotheist. After making this covenant, Yahweh changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means "father of many nations."

### The Israelites in Egypt

When Abraham and his wife Sarah were very old, Sarah had a son. They called him Isaac. Isaac went on to have two sons, twins named Esau and Jacob. The covenant promises in turn passed on to Jacob, who had a very large family with twelve sons and a daughter. The great nation of Israel was slowly taking shape.

One of Jacob's sons, Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers and imprisoned for years in an Egyptian prison. Eventually, the pharaoh freed Joseph and made him a governor under the pharaoh. During the time Joseph was helping to rule in Egypt, there was a famine that stretched all the way from Egypt up through Canaan, where Joseph's family lived. Many places in the Near East did not have enough food, but because of Joseph's wise management, Egypt had plenty. When Joseph's brothers came to Egypt looking for food, Joseph was able to give food to his father Jacob, his eleven brothers, and the rest of Jacob's family. Eventually, Joseph's entire family moved to Egypt and prospered in their new home.



▲ **Abraham's Journey from Ur to Canaan** by József Molnár (oil on canvas, 1850)



#### To the Source:

covenant from the Latin *convenire*, meaning "to come together; to agree"; the Hebrew word for "covenant" is *berit*, meaning "to bind"

### ? Modern Covenants

Can you think of any long-lasting, formal agreements in our culture today that would be similar to an ancient covenant?

▼ **Joseph in Prison** by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (oil on board, ca. 1670)





▲ *Moses* by Lorenzo Monaco (Piero di Giovanni)

Around 400 years later, Joseph's family was still living in Egypt. His family had grown very large and was divided into twelve tribes, who called themselves the Hebrews. Modern historians call them the Israelites. The reigning pharaoh feared the Israelites because there were so many of them. He was afraid they would grow large enough in number and strength to take over Egypt. So, the pharaoh made the Israelites slaves.

One day, the pharaoh's daughter rescued an Israelite baby boy she found floating in a reed basket in the Nile River. She adopted the child, named him Moses, and raised him as a prince of Egypt. As a grown man, Moses killed an Egyptian who was mistreating an Israelite slave. Afraid to face the consequences for his action, Moses fled into the desert. Forty years later, after an encounter with Yahweh in the desert and continued conflict with the pharaoh over the poor treatment of the Israelite slaves, Moses led his people, the Israelites (Hebrews), out of Egypt. This event is known as the Exodus. The word "**exodus**" means a "going out" of a group of people from one land in order to settle somewhere else.

The Israelites' exodus from Egypt took them through the desert of the Sinai Peninsula on a long, forty-year journey. Along the way, the Israelites renewed the covenant that Abraham had made with Yahweh. There in the wilderness, at Mount Sinai, Yahweh promised to be the one god of Israel, and the people said they would worship and obey only Yahweh. At this point, the Israelites became a nation that was monotheistic and was supposed to worship only Yahweh.

Although it would take centuries for the Israelites to learn to become truly monotheistic, they are recognized as the first nation to make monotheism, the worship of one god, the standard practice of their society. Their monotheistic history and beliefs were the beginnings of the Jewish religion and later the Christian religion.



### To the Source:

*exodus* from a Latin form of the Greek *exodos*, meaning "exit, departure, or going out," which in turn comes from the Greek prefix *ex*, meaning "out," and *hodos*, meaning "road; way"

### Who Else?

In *Level 1A*, you learned about a ruler who said that he was put in a basket as a baby and floated down the Euphrates River until a gardener rescued and adopted him. Do you remember which ruler this was?

11. Note: This is the route most commonly accepted by biblical scholars.



The Hebrew writings were preserved and passed down to the rest of the world as the Old Testament of the Bible and the Hebrew *Tanakh*.

### The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah

According to the Old Testament record, Moses lived for 120 years. After he died, the Israelites continued on their long journey and finally entered the land of Canaan under a new leader, Joshua. Canaan, which had become the home of the Philistines and other Canaanite peoples, was the land that Yahweh had promised to Abraham in the covenant many centuries before. It was also the land the Israelites had left when they went to Egypt during the time of Joseph and the famine.

When the Israelites settled in Canaan and began establishing their new nation, each of the twelve tribes had its own portion of land. The people lived in villages, and farming was the main activity. Everything from daily life to yearly festivals to religious ceremonies was centered around the growing and harvesting of crops. There was no one king who ruled over all of the tribes of Israel. When trouble arose somewhere in the land, a judge from one of the tribes would take up leadership and do what was necessary to free the Israelites from whoever was harassing them. Over the years, there were twelve different judges from different parts of the nation.

Eventually, the Israelites decided they wanted to have a king, like the lands around them had. Over the next 120 years (ca. 1050–931 BC), Israel had three kings: Saul, David, and David's son Solomon. Saul was a strong, handsome man but failed to rule the kingdom according to the laws of Yahweh. David, who was famous for killing the giant Philistine warrior Goliath with only a slingshot and a few stones, was a good ruler. He chose the city of **Jerusalem** to be the capital and center of the Israelites' religion. Unfortunately, he made some very bad decisions in his later years that caused problems for his kingdom.

The third king, Solomon, came to the throne in 970 BC and was a wise man. He was well known not just in Israel but also in neighboring kingdoms for his wise decisions, as well as for the wise proverbs (moral sayings) and other good advice he wrote down. During his reign, Solomon built two magnificent buildings: a fine palace for himself and a majestic temple trimmed in gold and ivory where the Israelites could worship Yahweh. (To read more about Solomon's Temple, see the Monuments of the Age piece on page 121.)



▲ Hebrew Tanakh scrolls

### The Bible: The Law Given to Moses

Once the Hebrews renewed the covenant with Yahweh, they agreed to live under the law that God had given to Moses. As told in Exodus 19–24, this law consisted of three parts. First there was the Moral Law, or Ten Commandments, which stated how Yahweh expected His people to live in relationship with Him and with the other people in the world. For Christians and many others, these laws still govern how people should live today. The second part was the Ceremonial Law, which explained how the Hebrews were to worship God. The third and final part was the Civil Law, which instructed the Hebrews on how to live with each other as families and as a community.



During the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, Israel was an important kingdom. The nation interacted with many of the other Near Eastern lands, including trading with Egypt, Syria, and Phoenicia (a region you will learn about in chapter 9). Battles were fought and treaties were made. Although the kingdom grew larger as Saul,

◀ Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem

## The Holy City of Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem has probably had more names than almost any other city in history. Over the centuries, the capital of Israel has also been called “the city of David,” “Zion,” “the city of our god,” “the city of the great king,” and “the holy city.” Today, Jerusalem is considered a sacred city in three religions: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

Unlike other ancient cities that suffered destruction and disappeared from history forever, Jerusalem has survived and still sits high on a plateau in the modern-day nation-state of Israel. Throughout the years, the holy city has been the location of both devotion and conflict as rulers came and went. Today, an Islamic shrine called the Dome of the Rock sits where Solomon’s Temple once overlooked the city. Tourists—especially Christians, Jews, and Muslims—from all over the world visit Jerusalem to pray at the Wailing Wall (the only wall remaining from when the temple was rebuilt under King Herod) and to remember all of the history that has taken place in this ancient city.<sup>12</sup>

### ▼ A model of the tabernacle



then David, and then Solomon expanded the territory, Israel did not conquer other kingdoms and never became an empire like Assyria or Babylonia. The Israelite army was mainly used for protection from invaders.

When wise King Solomon died in 931 BC, the nation of Israel split in two. The northern ten tribes formed the **Kingdom of Israel**, and the southern two tribes formed the **Kingdom of Judah**. After the two kingdoms split, Jerusalem became the capital city of Judah.

However, even more change was in store for Israel. In 722 BC, the powerful Neo-Assyrian Empire conquered the northern Kingdom of Israel, killing or taking captive most of the Israelites. Years later, ca. 586 BC, the mighty Neo-Babylonian Empire defeated the southern Kingdom of Judah and conquered Jerusalem. (You will learn about these two Iron Age empires later in this unit.) The Babylonian army knocked down the walls of Jerusalem, raided the temple, and left the once-magnificent city in ruins. For seventy long years, most of the people of Judah were taken to Babylonia and forced to live as outsiders, away from their home. At long last, during the time of the Persian Empire (which we will study in chapter 12), the Jewish people were allowed to return home to Jerusalem.

## The Culture of the Israelites

In some ways, the Israelites were much like the other Near Eastern people we have studied so far. What made them remarkably different was their religion. As we mentioned earlier, the Israelites were the first nation of monotheists. Their decision to practice monotheism affected more than just how many gods they worshipped. It affected their entire way of life!

Worship of one god, Yahweh, put restrictions on Israel’s practices of worship. Other kingdoms did not have these kinds of restrictions. For example, the first two commandments of the Mosaic Law state that the Israelites were to worship only Yahweh and were not to make any images, large statues, or idols that they might be tempted to worship in place of Yahweh. This meant that instead of building a temple or shrine for each god, or having a temple in every city, the Israelites had only one place to worship in the entire kingdom. At first it was the tabernacle, a tent-like structure that contained everything they needed for their worship, including an altar to sacrifice animals and a holy place where the priests met to pray to Yahweh. Later, the single place of worship became **Solomon’s Temple** in Jerusalem.

The Israelites did have talented craftsmen who made pottery, worked with silver, and wove cloth, producing beautiful items that were mostly used in the tabernacle or temple. But the Israelite craftsmen contributed little in the way of decorative art on the walls of houses or other buildings. The art that they did create looked similar to the styles of art of the neighboring peoples.<sup>13</sup>



▲ *The Flight of the Prisoners* by James Jacques Joseph Tissot and followers (ca. 1896–1902)

12. Randall K. J. Tan, “Jerusalem,” in Brand, Mitchell, et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 889–898.

13. Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, Library of Ancient Israel (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 129.

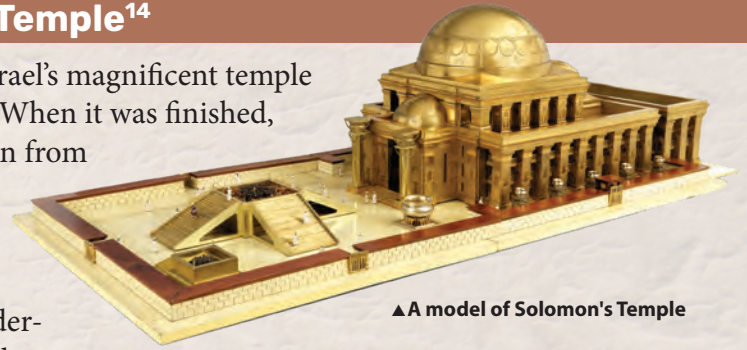
## ▲ Monuments of the Age: Solomon's Temple<sup>14</sup>

Four years into Solomon's reign, he started to build Israel's magnificent temple in Jerusalem. The temple took seven years to complete. When it was finished, ca. 959 BC, it caught the attention of kings and wise men from many far-off places.

The great temple built on Mount Moriah replaced the tabernacle (tent-like structure) where the Israelites had been worshipping since their time living in the wilderness of the Sinai desert. Solomon's Temple was built in the same pattern as the tabernacle, but twice as large. It took 80,000 men to cut the building stones out of the ground and 70,000 workers to take them to the construction site! Another 30,000 men brought cedarwood from the land of Lebanon. The fragrant wood was used to build the inside walls of the temple. Craftsmen from Phoenicia were hired to carve angels, flowers, and palm trees on the walls, which were then covered with gold.

In the courtyard outside the temple stood a large bronze altar on which the priests could make animal sacrifices. There was also a large bronze basin for the priests to wash their hands. Two metal pillars, which were given the names Jachin and Boaz, stood beside the huge entrance doors.

Sadly, the Babylonians destroyed Solomon's Temple when they conquered Jerusalem ca. 586 BC. The temple would not be rebuilt until during the rule of the Persian emperor Cyrus the Great (559–530 BC).



▲ A model of Solomon's Temple

## 📖 Languages of the Age: The Hebrew Language

Over the centuries, the Israelites spoke and wrote in several different languages. Up until the time they were taken captive by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, the people spoke a language similar to that of the Canaanites who lived around them. Later, when the Jewish people were allowed to return from Babylonia to their homeland, they wrote with a form of Aramaic, the common language for most of the Near East at the time, and spoke a language called Hebrew. As time went by, Aramaic became the more commonly spoken language for the Israelites. Hebrew remained the sacred language that they used to write their scriptures and to perform religious services.

The early Jewish people were well educated and sent all of their sons to school to learn to speak and read Hebrew. However, the Jews did not leave behind much written literature other than the Hebrew scriptures (the *Tanakh*), the books of the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, and religious writings commenting on the scriptures.



▲ Hebrew writing on one of the Dead Sea Scrolls (ancient Hebrew and Jewish religious texts)

▼ Israelite cooking pot

About 80 to 90 percent of the Israelites lived in villages scattered throughout the countryside. The Israelites were a very family-oriented people. The father was the head of the family. Extended families lived together in one house, or in a group of two or three houses surrounded by a wall. Much of the people's daily work and activities took place in the courtyard or upon the flat roofs of the houses. Everyone in the family, from the grandparents down to the smallest children, had their own specific tasks to do every day.<sup>15</sup>



14. M. Pierce Matheny, "Solomon's Temple," in Brand, Mitchell, et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 158.

15. King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 21.

 **The Israelites**

1. A group of nomadic tribes who became the first monotheistic nation of the ancient world
2. Three well-known kings were Saul, David, and Solomon
3. After the death of King Solomon, Israel split into the northern Kingdom of Israel, which was conquered by the Assyrians, and the southern Kingdom of Judah, which was conquered by the Babylonians.

 **Looking Back . . . and Looking Ahead**

In this chapter, we learned about three groups of people who had a major influence on the world of the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The Sea Peoples came to the Near East by land and by sea to settle in areas of the Levant and Africa. In doing so, they had conflicts with some of the existing kingdoms of the period, particularly Egypt. In some cases, the Sea Peoples were successful in claiming new territories for themselves. In other cases, kingdoms such as Egypt fought great battles and successfully protected their territory from the Sea Peoples.

One group of Sea Peoples, the Peleset, settled in the southwestern part of the Levant and became known as the Philistines. They had a reputation for their fierce soldiers, their iron weapons, and their beautiful pottery. For many years they were rivals to one particular group of people: the Israelites.

From their humble beginnings as a nomadic tribe led by Abram (Abraham), the Israelites rose to become one of the most influential nations of the Iron Age. Through their religion and Hebrew language, their influence has even stretched into our modern world. As the first nation to practice monotheism, their history and beliefs were the roots of today's Jewish and Christian religions.

In the next chapter, we will learn about two more Iron Age peoples, the Arameans and the Phoenicians, who also made significant contributions to both the ancient time in which they lived and the modern world we live in today. What might those contributions be? Do you have any ideas?

 **EXERCISES**
 **Talk It Over**

What are some ways that the monotheistic religion of the Israelites would have been new and different compared to the polytheistic religions of the other kingdoms and peoples around them?

 **Practice the Facts**

On the line provided, write the number of the correct vocabulary word beside each definition.

- |                     |       |   |
|---------------------|-------|---|
| 1. Exodus           | _____ | A. The single place of worship for the Israelites   |
| 2. Covenant         | _____ | B. The southern two tribes of Israel who were later conquered by the Neo-Babylonian Empire  |
| 3. Peleset          | _____ | C. The name given to the unknown groups of people who played an important role in the changes that took place at the end of the Late Bronze Age |
| 4. Israelites       | _____ | D. A "going out" of a group of people from one land in order to settle somewhere else   |
| 5. Kingdom of Judah | _____ | E. Descendants of the Peleset who are best known for being fierce rivals of the Israelites  |
| 6. Descendant       | _____ | F. A formal agreement in which two people (or two groups of people) promise each other that they will or will not do certain things             |
| 7. Jerusalem        | _____ | G. The group of twelve tribes who became the first monotheistic nation of the ancient world   |



8. Philistines \_\_\_\_\_ H. The group of Sea Peoples who settled in the southwestern Levant and from whom the Philistines descended
9. Sea Peoples \_\_\_\_\_ I. A person who is related to and born *after* another person or generation
10. Solomon's \_\_\_\_\_ J. The northern ten tribes of Israel who were later conquered by the Neo-Assyrian Empire
11. Kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_ K. The capital of the nation of Israel and later of the Kingdom of Judah  
Israel

### Write It Down

On the lines provided, write down the three things promised to Abraham in his covenant with Yahweh.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Which Is Which?

Write *SP* next to the phrases that refer to the Sea Peoples, *P* next to the phrases that refer to the Philistines, and *I* next to the phrases that refer to the Israelites.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| _____ Descended from the Peleset                          | _____ Worshipped Yahweh                                  |
| _____ Migrated from a variety of northern areas           | _____ Left Egypt in the Exodus                           |
| _____ Were skilled at making items from iron              | _____ Fought against Ramses III and his army             |
| _____ Made a covenant with Yahweh                         | _____ Built Solomon's Temple                             |
| _____ Made beautiful pottery, often painted black and red | _____ Lived in five main cities, including Gath and Gaza |
| _____ Had powerful sailing ships                          |  |

### Which Came First?

Circle the correct answer for each of the following questions.

1. Where did Egypt fight the first battle with the Sea Peoples? on the Nile River *or* in the Levant
2. Which event in Israel's history happened first? Abraham left Ur *or* famine in Canaan
3. Who led the Israelites first? Moses *or* Joshua
4. Which event came first? the Exodus *or* the Covenant with Yahweh
5. Which people were known first for their pottery? the Philistines *or* the Mycenaeans
6. Which kings ruled Israel first? the Assyrians *or* Saul, David, and Solomon
7. Which empire conquered part of the divided nation of Israel first? Neo-Babylonian *or* Neo-Assyrian
8. Which was the first nation to practice monotheism? Israel *or* the Philistines

## Decode the Past

Pretend that you are an archaeologist who has uncovered the following imaginary record describing the events of the Sea Peoples, Philistines, and Israelites. Unfortunately, some of the words have been “damaged” (or in this case, scrambled). Can you unscramble the words to fill in the missing pieces of the text?

The collapse of the Late Bronze Age world may have happened partly because of \_\_\_\_\_  
 UALTARN  
 disasters that destroyed some of the kingdoms, and partly because of the Sea Peoples’ \_\_\_\_\_  
 OMSATNIIGR  
 into the Near East. The Sea Peoples tried to invade Egypt twice but were defeated by several of the pharaohs,  
 including \_\_\_\_\_ III. Eventually, a group of Sea Peoples called the \_\_\_\_\_  
 SSEMAR ESELTPE  
 settled in the land of the southwestern \_\_\_\_\_. Their descendants became known as the  
 TALNEV  
 \_\_\_\_\_ and were fierce rivals of the Israelites, or \_\_\_\_\_. After their  
 INTIHESILSP WBEHRES  
 \_\_\_\_\_ from Egypt, the Israelites became the first \_\_\_\_\_ nation and settled  
 UOXEDS OHNCIOTSEITM  
 in Canaan. Eventually, they split into two tribes: the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom  
 of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 JAHDU

## Make It Yourself

With the help of your teacher or parent, create a 3D map of the Iron Age world. On a large piece of foam-board or cardboard, draw the outlines of the following bodies of water, cities, and land areas. Use the map on page 109 to help you draw your map.

- |                                |                     |                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Egypt                       | 6. Zagros Mountains | 11. Syria             |
| 2. Nile River                  | 7. Babylon          | 12. Philistia         |
| 3. Avaris                      | 8. Crete            | 13. Kingdom of Israel |
| 4. Mediterranean Sea           | 9. the Levant       | 14. Kingdom of Judah  |
| 5. Tigris and Euphrates Rivers | 10. Canaan          | 15. Jerusalem         |

Next, use salt dough or modeling clay to shape the landforms (the mountains and islands). Press the dough firmly onto the board and allow it to dry completely. Then, paint the rest of the map, including the bodies of water and kingdom areas.

After the paint has dried, label everything on your map. Finally, trace the routes of the following peoples:

1. The Sea Peoples’ migrations
2. The Israelites’ forty-year journey in the wilderness

Be sure to store your map in a safe location so that you can continue adding new pieces to it as you study more Iron Age peoples!

**Find It on the Map**

Label the following on the map:

1. Canaan
2. The Levant
3. Migrations of Sea Peoples
4. Philistia (*the area where the Philistines lived*)
5. Kingdom of Israel
6. Kingdom of Judah
7. Gath and Gaza (*two of the Philistine city-states*)
8. Jerusalem

