



JOURNAL OF TALES

Volume 1 Issue 2 June 2023



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Founded by April Lynn Downey

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The Journal

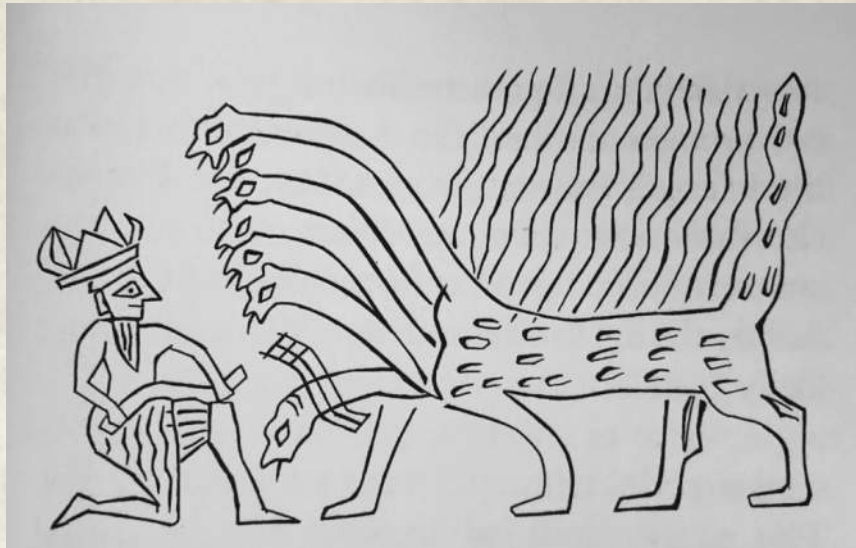
Snake Symbology and the Snake in Genesis 3

Before delving into the context of snake symbology in the Bible, it is compelling to take a brief moment to note the numerous ways snakes have played a vital role in various world mythologies. From the Arctic down to the tropics and beyond, snakes have been important religious characters across the world. In the ancient Near East, serpents symbolized life, death, wisdom, nature, chaos, and fertility. The connection to life, death, and fertility is easily understood with the snake's ability to renew its skin, molting as an act of regeneration. This connection between the molting of skin and immortality represented in Hinduism and African myths carry similar motifs to ancient Near Eastern mythologies. Some African myths mirror Genesis 3, claiming that before humans had offended God, there was no death, food was easy to obtain, and there was no sex and childbirth. In ancient Egypt, snakes were residents of the underworld, which could annihilate traveling souls. A serpent represented Apophis, the underworld. In Norse and Mesoamerican cultures, serpents were sometimes thought to have world-destroying powers. Snakes throughout world mythology are often seen as holders and conveyors of wisdom, as also seen in Genesis 3. In Asia, Africa, and South America, snakes were used as oracles or consumed in shamanism. In Mesoamerica, it was said that Quetzalcoatl (a deity represented as a feathered serpent) gave culture to the people there. Naga serpents in Buddhism possess great wisdom. Snakes have been seen in world mythology as omens, creators, the central axis of the world, deities, and villains. Another common motif in world mythology is that of a snake either guarding or destroying the world tree. The snake has played a vital role in humanity's literature; therefore, it is no wonder it appears in Hebrew scripture. Before examining the snake in Genesis 3, let us consider the other snakes which appear throughout the Hebrew Bible.

SEA SNAKES & LEVIATHAN

The Bible has various passages describing God battling a dreadful and mighty serpent, often associated with the sea. In some passages, this serpent is called Leviathan. Job 41 provides a detailed description of this monster, asserting that it has incredible strength and light shining from its eyes, breathes fire, and is undefeatable. This passage does not say Leviathan is a serpent, but other biblical passages do. Read, for example, Isaiah 27:1, "On that day the Lord with his cruel and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will kill the dragon that is in the sea." In Psalms 74:14, God crushes Leviathan's multiple heads, a possible connection to the seven-headed Litan from Canaanite mythology. Compare Isaiah 27:1 (above) with the Ugaritic text: "When you killed Litan, the Fleeing Serpent, Finished off the Twisting Serpent, the seven-headed monster, the heavens withered and weakened, like the folds of your robe." As evidence for the appropriation of mythologies, the seven-headed serpent can be seen even further back in time, hundreds of miles away in Sumer, where the god Ninurta

defeated a seven-headed serpent. A similar story said that it was Ningīrsu who slayed the seven-headed serpent.



Ningīrsu or Ninurta defeating the seven-headed snake-dragon (Black and Green 165)

Biblical references to Leviathan are also found in Psalms 104:26 and Job 3:8. Battles between deities and great serpent-dragons are found in the mythologies of the Babylonians, Hittites, Sumerians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, and others. This creature seems to represent cosmic chaos. Many academic writings describe the apparent connection between the various passages of God defeating a powerful sea serpent and Marduk defeating Tiamat in the Mesopotamian story *Enuma Elish*. More on Tiamat will follow later in this article.

NEHUSHTAN & SERAPHIM

Numbers 21 is believed to be from the E source, approximately 850 BCE*. (* See the following article about the Documentary Hypothesis for more information about biblical sources.) While traveling to the Promised Land, the Israelites complained about the lack of food and water, and as punishment, God sent fiery serpents to bite and kill many of them. The people pleaded with God for mercy, and God instructed Moses to create “a fiery one” and put it on a staff. Moses does so out of *nechôsheth*, which means bronze, brass, or copper. (While keeping in mind the various translation options, from here on, this article will use “copper”.) When people looked at the snake they were healed of their poison and would live. This act is reminiscent of ancient Canaanite sorcerers who would fight alongside serpents to protect people from snakes and scorpions, as described in texts found from Ugarit, along with the large portion of spells which were used to cure snake bites. The incident quickly passes by, and we do not hear about this snake again until 2 Kings 18, when King Hezekiah of Judah (who reigned from either 727-698 or 715-687 BCE) destroys it for being a cult object that is then called Nehushtan. The people offered incense to the object, and Hezekiah destroyed it as part of his religious reforms (which also included destroying other idols and “high places” of paganism). Unfortunately, the biblical text does not say if Nehushtan still had healing properties, nor does it explain its mythology, which almost certainly

had to have been expanded beyond the Moses story for the object to have become an idol. While Strong's Concordance demonstrates that the name Nehushtan derives from the metal *nechôsheth*, we are not sure how the object came to have a proper name. It is interesting to postulate whether the Nehushtan had such an influence over the people that even six kings after Hezekiah, a person may have been named after it. The mother of King Jehoiachin was named Nehushtan. This could be a hint as to the extent of influence the cult had.

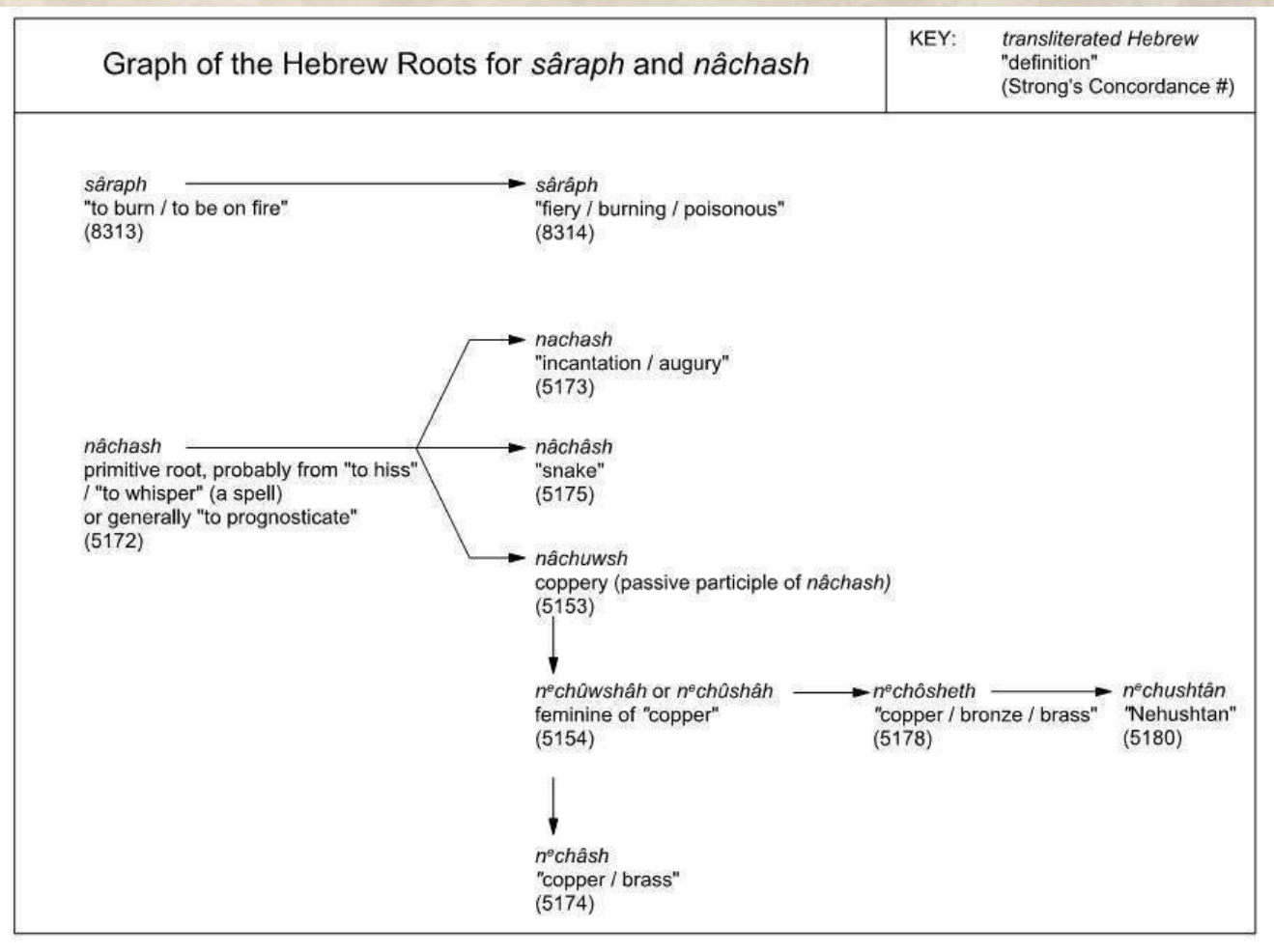
Before going forward about this serpent on the staff, a word must be said about the philology and translation of some of these words. In Numbers 21:8, God orders Moses to make a *sârâph*, which derives from *sâraph*, a verb meaning "to burn" or "to be on fire". Technically, in this verse, God told Moses to create a "fiery (or burning) one." It is often figuratively translated to mean "poisonous one," Strong's Concordance states. Although in all other contexts, aside from being paired with snakes, it is translated as "burning" or "fiery". In verse 6, it was "fiery serpents" (*nechâshim serâphim*) which were plaguing the people, and in verse 9, Moses creates a copper serpent (*nâchâsh nechôsheth*). In order of appearance in the text, we have fiery (poisonous) serpents, a fiery one, and a copper serpent.

Because the copper snake did actually heal people as expected (according to the text), assumably Moses had created it according to God's specifications; therefore, a "fiery one" was indeed a serpent.

Passages in Isaiah have the *serâphim* (standing alone without *nechâshim*), which is also listed under "serpent" in Strong's Concordance. While the words seem to correlate, the author feels it is too assuming and simplistic to interchange them. However, it is possible that in the culture and language of the time, the connection may have been obvious, either because of etymology, mythology, or both. For simplicity and to move forward with our discussion, we will conform to the traditional translations and suspend doubt about the connection between fiery ones and snakes. Below is a chart of verses for the *serâphim* and *nechâshim serâphim*. As we can see, few verses thoroughly capture the connection between the words.

<i>nâchâsh sârâph</i> "fiery snake" or <i>n'châshim serâphim</i> "fiery snakes"	<i>sârâph</i> "fiery one" or <i>serâphim</i> "fiery ones / beings" (stand alone words, no further description))	<i>sârâph</i> "fiery one" or <i>serâphim</i> "fiery ones / beings" (with other mythological descriptions, such as flying or with wings and feet)
Numbers 21:6	Numbers 21:8	Isaiah 6:2 & 6:6 Isaiah 14:29 Isaiah 30:6

As mentioned above, scholars believe Numbers was written roughly around 850 BCE and Isaiah 14 and 30 no earlier than the mid-6th century. In contrast, Isaiah 6 may have been written as early as the late 8th or early 7th century. Below is a graph according to Strong's Concordance on the roots of the Hebrew words to help us visualize the connections between Hebrew words used in this discussion.



From this graph, we can see a clear connection between "copper" and "snake," which Strong suggests may be from the relation of "hissing" to the ringing of a metal bell or from the red under a serpent's throat. We can also see a connection to magic (augury & incantations). Magic was frequently denounced in the Bible and, specifically pertinent for this conversation, by Isaiah, the prophet to King Hezekiah, who later destroyed Moses' snake on a staff. (What we do not see is a linguistic connection between "fiery" and "snake" - a connection, as mentioned above, is derived from context only.)

It is important to note that the original Hebrew did not have written vowels. Vowel locations were mainly transmitted orally through memorization and context, but were eventually written down by the Medieval Masoretic Jewish scholars through the use of "pointing". However, some words had consonants that were used as a vowel form called *mater lectionis*. *Nâchash* ("to whisper"), *nachash* ("incantation"), and *nâchâsh* ("snake") do not have these maters, and therefore, originally, there was no *written* difference between "incantation/augury" and "snake".

ENUMA ELISH

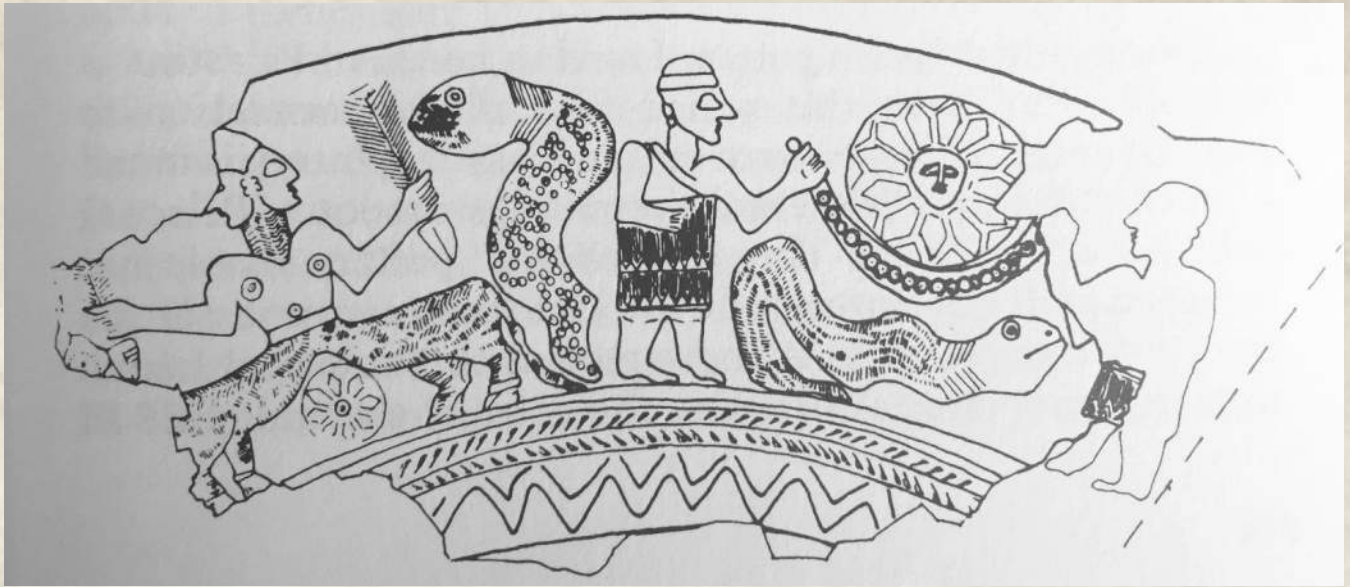
The *Enuma Elish*, the ancient Babylonian creation epic, is often referred to when discussing the creation story in Genesis 1. In the *Enuma Elish*, Marduk defeats the saltwater goddess Tiamat,

splits her body in two, and uses it to create the heavens and the earth - imagery which Genesis 1 appears to echo, when the waters of creation are divided. However, the creator deity battling with sea monsters appears in other passages of the Bible as well, as described in the previous section, "Sea Snakes & Leviathan." Tiamat is often depicted as a dragon or serpent despite the lack of exact detail in the text. For example, see Figure 3 below.



Marduk and Tiamat. A drawing of a mid-second-millennium B.C.E. relief. Michael D. Coogan, The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 9.

A silver goblet found in 'Ain Samiya from the Middle Bronze Age might possibly represent Tiamat as a snake being fought against by double-headed Marduk and his assistants. See Figure 4. This goblet appears to be from Syria but was influenced by Mesopotamian culture, the origin of *Enuma Elish*.



Drawing of a Middle Bronze Age silver goblet from 'Ain Samiya. Amhai Mazar, Archaeology of the Land of the Bible 10,000-586 B.C.E. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 167.

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

The Epic of Gilgamesh is a story found in several cultures in the ancient Near East. The Sumerians, Akkadians, Old Babylonians, the Hittites, and the Hurrians all had versions of it. In the story, after the death of his friend Enkidu, Gilgamesh goes on a quest to find immortality. He finds Utnapishtim, the survivor of the great deluge, and he leads Gilgamesh to where he can find a plant that will give Gilgamesh eternal life. He calls the plant "Man Becomes Young in Old Age." Later in his journey, a snake steals the plant from Gilgamesh. One way this story is similar to Genesis 3 is that in both, a snake's actions barricade the way to eternal life by cutting off access to a life-giving plant, directly in the epic and indirectly in Genesis.

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SNAKE IN GENESIS 3

The snake in the Garden of Eden story in Genesis 3 has acquired several interpretations over the centuries. Most of these interpretations mysteriously do not appear to have much to do with the cultural context thus far explored.

The Snake as Satan

Originally in the Hebrew Bible (called the Tanakh), the term *sāṭān* meant "adversary" or "opponent," and in all but four places, it refers to a human. The non-human *sāṭān* was a Heavenly accuser and a part of God's divine council. However, later in Judeo-Christian theology, this adversary was developed into a more powerful and sinister entity we know today as Satan, the Devil. Theological evolution also later equated the Eden snake with Satan.

However, the serpent does not appear from his actions to be in direct conflict with God, and this does not quite seem to fit with later ideas about the nature of the Devil. The only (somewhat) malicious statement the snake made implied that the reason humans are not allowed to eat of the fruit is jealousy; God does not want them to be like Him. Additionally, the snake does not seem to fit the typical Satanic description of being the "father of lies." The snake does not lie to Eve. He said that she would not die and that she would know good and evil, which indeed was the result. In verse 22, God admits as much when He declares that they do, in fact, learn good and evil like Himself. Another incongruence in associating the snake with Satan is that the author does not explain the source of evil and only says that now the humans are aware of it. God questioned Adam about eating the fruit who blamed Eve. When also questioned, Eve blames the snake; however, God does not ask the snake about his part - the mystery of evil and why evil was brought into humanity is left out of the story. God then curses Adam and Eve and the Earth, but the description is merely hardship, not evil.

Sexuality

The motif of linking sex with knowledge and knowledge with mortality occurs in a few places in the ancient Near East. Some Rabbinical interpretations state that the snake had developed a sexual desire for Eve. This craving led to copulation and, consequently, the pollution of humanity. We see this motif in other literature as well. For example, in the Epic of Gilgamesh, the wild and immortal Enkidu is tricked into discovering knowledge and becoming "like a god" by being seduced by a cult prostitute and having sex with her. Enkidu became angry that he lost his wildness and was tricked into a new form of life, which would eventually lead him to his death.

There is also another clue about sexuality hidden in the Genesis 3 account. In the name "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," the word for knowledge is *dā'aṭ*. It is the word often associated with intimate or sexual knowledge in the Bible. The "good and evil" here could be interpreted as a way of indicating "everything." Therefore, the first humans' fall from grace was discovering all sexual knowledge. It is interesting to note that in the second creation account in Genesis 2 (J source), God does not tell Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply (unlike in Genesis 1, from the P source), perhaps because they had not yet had - nor were intended to have - sexual knowledge. After they attained this new sexual knowledge, God would have needed to keep them from the tree of life because having children combined with immortality would have caused a massive problem for the Earth.

Ophiomancy

Ophiomancy is the practice of using snakes for divination, a practice attested to in ancient Akkadian texts *Šumma Ālu ina mēlê šakin*, which contains about 500 snake omens, and the Akkadian *namburbi* ritual texts of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Both these texts convey that the snake (or snakes) can relay the mind of the deities. In this framework, perhaps it is possible to interpret the knowledge of good and evil as the knowledge/divination of fortune and misfortune. Many omens contain a man, a woman, and one or more snakes. Throughout the Hebrew Bible, *nachash* (divination) is heavily condemned and grouped with other evils such as child sacrifice and wizardry.

A Kabbalist Symbol

While some religious people believe there was literally a talking snake who tempted Eve, others take a more esoteric, symbolic view. For example, the snake is often believed to be a literary convention created to convey a deeper meaning. The primary Kabbalistic text, *The Zohar*, embraces this interpretation of the snake. In this text, the snake represents Eve's inner wicked self, and she is actually debating with herself about eating the fruit (or, having sex). Her desire for sex is awakened, and she then attempts to awaken Adam's carnal desire. (Consider the similarities to Enkidu and the prostitute in *Gilgamesh*.) Similar to Kabbalistic symbology, the 1st-century Jewish philosopher Philo contested that the snake represented the pleasure aspect of an individual, while Adam represented the soul/intellect and Eve the body/emotion.

Interestingly, Kabbalists believe that the Nehushtan symbol can be converted into the number 358, a number equivalent to the word "messiah." Therefore, Kabbalists see Moses' bronze snake on a pole as a representation of a future savior for those searching for spiritual truth within Kabbalism.

CONCLUSION

A large quantity of information could be discussed regarding ancient snake symbology and mythology, far more than can be contained here. The enormous amount of archaeological and literary information regarding snakes and serpents could not be outlined in this article. However, the author hopes this has provided a solid foundation for contemplation and further study. After reviewing the religious interpretations, there appears to be incongruity between the archaeological and literary context for ancient Near Eastern snakes and the religious interpretations that developed regarding the snake in Garden of Eden. A study about the history of this schism would be fascinating. However, even in the light of the cultural context, it is hard to interpret the exact meaning of the Genesis 3 snake. And the snake, despite his aptitude for talking, has remained silent on the subject.

Written by April Lynn Downey

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Introduction to the Documentary Hypothesis

The Documentary Hypothesis is a widely accepted theory developed by Julius Wellhausen in the late 19th century. This theory claims that the first five books of the Bible were redacted from primarily four sources designated as J for Yahwist, E for Elohist, P for Priestly, and D for Deuteronomic. The Documentary Hypothesis was developed using in depth literary criticism to explain the use of different names for God, patterns in language, themes, doublets, vocabulary, and contradictions in the text. The original sources, however, remain hypothetical because the original documents have never been found.

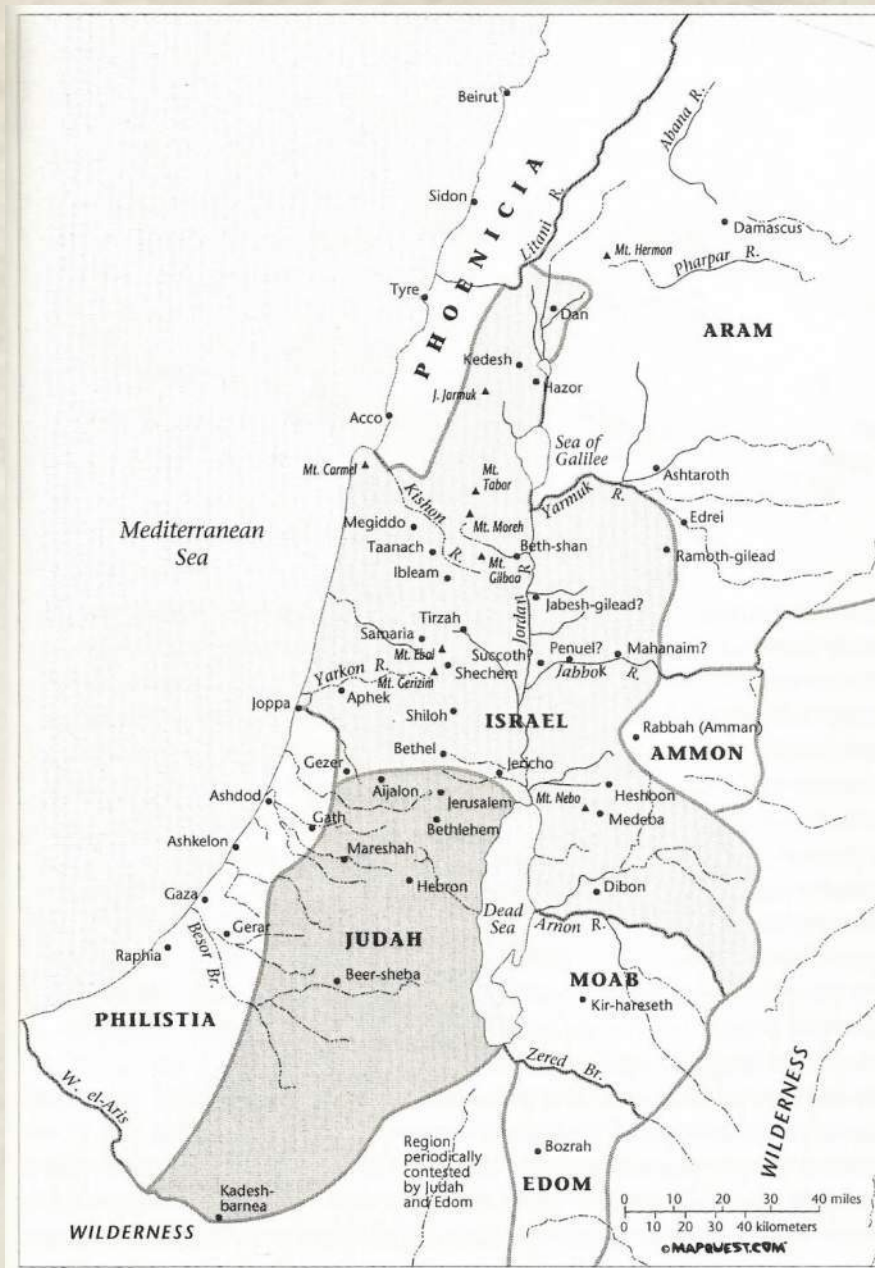
While it is generally accepted that the Bible is derived from different sources, there are debates as to how accurately we can pull apart the text to sort these sources. The Documentary Hypothesis has had its fair share of combatants. The rabbinic scholar Solomon Schechter protested the theory and disapproved of the negative image Wellhausen painted of the Hebrew Bible, which was that of a hodgepodge of stories pieced together from a decaying religion. However, the negative overtone of Wellhausen's work does not diminish the importance of it. It continues to be a helpful theory for scholars, providing what appears to be an adequate framework for the relative chronology of the text.

The different sources were written (or formed from earlier sources) at different dates and locations. The J source is estimated to have come from a time roughly between 922 - 722 BCE, most likely by someone living in the southern kingdom of Judah. This source is named after YHWH (or, Yahweh), one of the names for God. In this source, the name YHWH was known to the biblical characters from the beginning of time, whereas in the E and P sources, the name YHWH was not known to biblical characters until it was revealed to Moses in Exodus.

The E source is also from 922 - 722 BCE like J, but it was probably written by a priest in the northern kingdom of Israel. The E source is named for the use of both Elohim and El for God. The word *el* is the singular form of *elohim* and it generically means "god". It is also the proper name of the head of the Canaanite pantheon. Elohim in biblical Hebrew is used in the traditional plural sense for "gods" and other supernatural entities but has been also often translated as "God" singular. At some point after they were written, the J and E were woven together by a redactor. The P source came from a time after J and E, possibly either shortly after them or later in the 5th and 6th centuries.

The E, J, and P sources each either imply or outright claim that El Shaddai, El, Elohim, and Yahweh were the same God, the difference between them being when the name Yahweh was introduced to the Israelites and which one was the preferred name of the narrator. J is the only one that has biblical characters using the name Yahweh from the beginning.

The D source originated from multiple sources some as early as (or perhaps earlier than) J and E, but it was first formed around 622 BCE, around the reign of King Josiah and a second edition was formed after the Babylonian exile in 587 BCE. The D source primarily is seen in Deuteronomy.



Map 1: Iron Age Levant (Dever 2001, 109)

At some point, all these original documents were arranged by a final redactor (sometimes designated as R), although the date and location of this redaction is unknown. The dates of these sources pose a problem for research on the early development of the Israelite religion because they are dated so much later than when the religion is traditionally believed to have begun. The biblical text (as we know it) appears to have been written a couple of hundred years after the Hebrew religion began, as Abraham was thought to have been born around 1800 BCE and Moses around 1400 BCE. To add to the complexity of the history of the texts, we have more sources for the late monarchy period than we do the pre-monarchy era, within which lie the foundations of the Israelite religion.

Surprisingly, there are several noteworthy cultural differences between the northern and southern kingdoms as can be seen through the material remains discovered by archaeologists.

During the biblical writing period, the southern kingdom of Judah (from where the J source originated) and the northern kingdom of Israel (the E source) distinguished themselves from each other through pottery, tombs, language, and social customs. Some of the differences in the J and E source reflect this distinction between the two kingdoms. Curiously, this distinction between the two Hebrew nations is greater than what the early Israelites (in the Judges period) were from the Canaanites.

The table below illustrates a few examples of the differences in stories between the sources. One of these significant examples is how the J sources shows God talking to people directly whereas in the E source, God speaks through dreams and prophets, and in the P source, God speaks through the priesthood.

THEMES & STORIES OF THE BIBLICAL SOURCES		
J	E	P
Adam & Eve, the talking snake		Seven days of creation
The Flood		The Flood
southern geographical settings	northern geographical settings	
focus on Judah	focus on Ephraim	
anthropomorphic imagery for God	impersonal and cosmic imagery for God	impersonal and cosmic imagery for God
Mountain of Moses' revelation is Sinai	Mountain of Moses' revelation is Horeb	starts in the Moses story after he returns to Egypt to rescue the Hebrews (later YHWH appears on Sinai)
Reuel was the name of Moses' father-in-law	Jethro was the name of Moses' father-in-law	
Biblical characters knew the name of YHWH from the beginning	although not used in the text until Exodus 3, there is an assumption the biblical characters knew the name of YHWH	although known to the narrator, the name of YHWH was not known to any biblical character until Exodus 6
	the plagues of Egypt	the plagues of Egypt
God speaks directly to people	God uses dreams and prophets	God is accessed through priesthood

Richard Elliott Friedman visually shows the distinction between the sources in his book *The Bible with Sources Revealed*. It is a fascinating look into the construction of the first 5 books of the Bible and how the sources were woven together.

8¹And God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark, and God passed a wind over the earth, and the water decreased. ²And the fountains of the deep and the apertures of the skies were shut, And the rain was restrained from the skies. ³And the waters went back from on the earth, going back continually, and the water receded at the end of a hundred fifty days. ⁴And the ark rested in the seventh month, in the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵And the water went on receding until the tenth month. In the tenth month, in the first of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared. ⁶And it was at the end of forty days, and Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made. ⁷And he let a raven go,* and it went back and forth until the water dried up from the earth. ⁸And he let a dove go from him to see whether the waters had eased from the face of the earth. ⁹And the dove did not find a resting place for its foot, and it came back to him to the ark, for waters were on the face of the earth, and he put out his hand and took it and brought it to him to the ark. ¹⁰And he waited still another seven days, and he again let a dove go from the ark. ¹¹And the dove came to him at evening time, and here was an olive leaf torn off in its mouth, and Noah knew that the waters had eased from the earth. ¹²And he waited still another seven days, and he let a dove go, and it did not come back to him ever again. ¹³And it was in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, in the first of the month: the water dried from on the earth. And Noah turned back the covering of the ark and looked, and here the face of the earth had dried. ¹⁴And in the second month, in the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth dried up.**

¹⁵And God spoke to Noah, saying, ¹⁶“Go out from the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you all the living things that are with you, of all flesh, of the birds and of the domestic animals and of all the creeping animals that creep on the earth, and they will swarm in the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.”

¹⁸And Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. ¹⁹All the living things, all the creeping animals and all the birds, all that creep on the earth went out from the ark by their families.

*In P Noah sends out a raven. In J he sends out a dove (three times). (In the Epic of Gilgamesh, the hero of the flood sends out a raven, a dove, and a swallow.)
**In P the flood lasts a year (or a year and ten days). In J it is the more familiar forty days and nights.

An example of Richard Elliott Friedman’s *The Bible with Sources Revealed*.

While the details of the Documentary Hypothesis are not entirely agreed upon by all scholars, the idea is generally accepted, and it goes a long way to explain many of the apparent contradictions throughout the text. One famous example is in the beginning of Genesis. The entire first chapter and the first 3 verses of chapter two are interpreted as being from the P source. The rest of chapter 2 is from the J source, with a couple of inclusions from the redactor. This perfectly explains why in chapter 1, Elohim created the first man and woman together, presumably out of nothing whereas in chapter 2, Yahweh creates man first out of dirt and later creates women from his rib.

Sources:

"Abraham." (date unknown) *Jewish Virtual Library*. www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/abraham

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Coogan, Michael D. *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

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Harris, Stephen L. *Understanding the Bible, 8th Edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011.

"Moses." *Jewish Virtual Library*. www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/moses

Sarna, Nahum M. *Understanding Genesis*. New York: Schocken Books, Inc, 1966.

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The Archives

The New York Herald, August 25, 1895

**THIS WILD MAN
SCARES THEM ALL.**

He Wears No Clothes, His Eyes
Swim in Red Fire and He's
a Good Rifle Shot.

WEST WINSTED IN TERROR.

Morris Pacflin Met Him at Night and
Two Others Saw Him Rise
from the Earth.

MILITIA ON THE SEARCH.

The *New York Herald* was in operation from 1835 to 1924 in New York City, New York, USA.

White Woman in Bonnet Holding Sleeping Child with Black Woman with a Headscarf Seated



<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/76e88dc0-82ff-013b-2e7d-0242ac110003>

Above is a precious photograph taken approximately between 1860-1869. It is an ambrotype photograph, also called a collodion positive. This sort of photography was a quicker, less expensive alternative to daguerreotype photography. While nothing is known about the people in this photograph, it is positive this may have been a post-mortem photograph of a deceased baby. From the mid-19th century through the early 20th century, post-mortem photography was a common practice and was often the only photograph taken of an individual, due to the expense of photography at the time. Note the mother's black clothes, possibly mourning clothes, and her sad expression.

Sources:

Harding, Colin. "How to Spot a Collodion Positive, also Known as an Ambrotype (Early 1850s-1880s)". *Science + Media Museum*. April 24, 2013.

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Photographs and Prints Division, The New York Public Library. "White Woman in Bonnet Holding Sleeping Child with Black Woman With a Headscarf Seated" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1860 - 1869.

West, Nancy. "Pictures of Death." *The Atlantic*. July 2017.

The Jolly Broom Man's Garland

Printed for John Bowles & Son at the Black Horse in Cornhill, between 1753-1764

"Montage of prints, text, and musical notation includes title page to song book "The jolly broom man's garland;" and small prints of birds, people, architecture, religion, and commedia dell'arte." Excerpt from: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/ds.07532/>



Two Musicians Seated on a Bench, Wearing Geta

By Toyonobu Ishikawa, 1711-1785

Print shows a man and a woman sitting on a bench, playing a shamisen. A shamisen is a Japanese plucked three-string instrument, which evolved from the Chinese sanxian.



<https://www.loc.gov/item/2008680309/>

Reading Room of Congressional Library, Washington D.C.

Keystone View Company, Manufacturers and Publishers, c. 1927



<https://www.loc.gov/item/2017647956/>

Marionettes

Federal Theatre Project, 1935-1939



<https://www.loc.gov/item/musftpphotoprints.200224869/>

The Museum

Ceramic Stamps

Costa Rica, 5th-6th Century CE

Found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

These ceramic stamps were created by the Atlantic Watershed culture in the 5th-6th century CE, in modern day Costa Rica.



1-5/8" long and 15/16" high

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/313377>



1-1/2" long and 1-3/8" high

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/313378>

Wine Cup

China, Shang Dynasty, 13th Century BCE

Found at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

A bronze wine cup (Zhi), 6-1/4" high, from China during the Shang Dynasty.



<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/53951>

Ecuadorian Female Figure

Valdivia culture, Ecuador, 2700-1400 BCE

Found at The Walters Art Museum



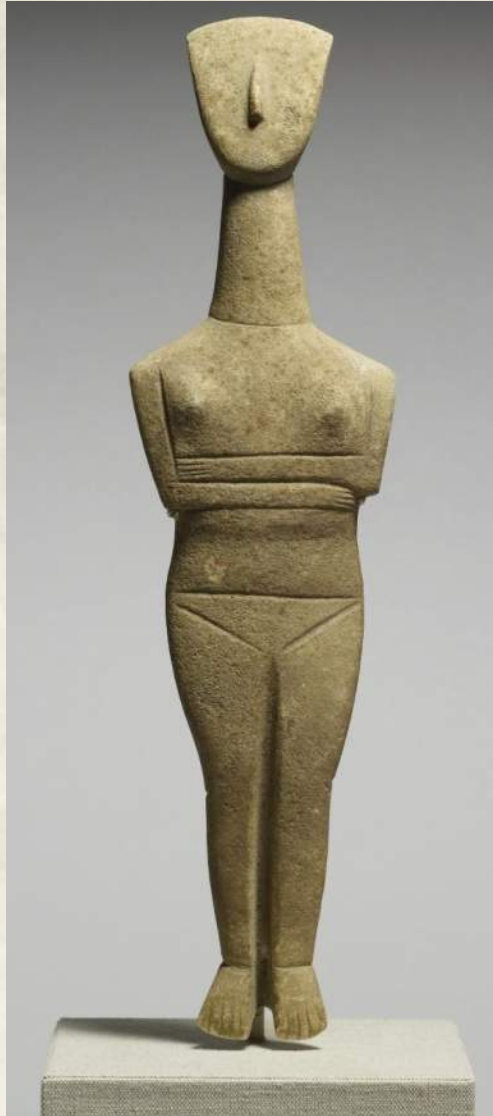
“Among the earliest ceramic figural art in South America is the figurine tradition of the Valdivia culture, which arose on the Guayas Coast of southwestern Ecuador sometime after 3200 BCE. The tiny figurine's highly stylized form attests to the Valdivia artists' sculptural sensitivity and the expressive possibilities of the understated form. Valdivia figurines are made of two rolls of clay pressed together and sculpted to form the standing figure. This lady's elaborate hair style, with its typically bulbous shape, remained popular for millennia among native peoples of western Ecuador. Most Valdivia figurines portray nude females, prompting their interpretation as fertility objects. However, they usually are encountered in domestic contexts and frequently found intentionally broken. It is more likely that they played a role in rituals concerned with daily life and survival, especially childbirth and healing ceremonies, an interpretation based on modern practices among traditional healers throughout western South America.”

<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/80385/female-figurine-5/>

Greek Female Figure

Cyclades Islands, Greece, Early Cycladic III, 2500-2400 BCE

Found at The Walters Art Museum



“Figurines of this type, from the Cyclades islands in the Aegean Sea, have been found almost exclusively in tombs. Although it was first believed that these so-called "idols" represent deities, they probably should be interpreted more broadly as representations of "femaleness." The geometric shapes, the position of the arms across the abdomen, and the close-set legs with dangling feet are distinctive and may appear strikingly modern to the viewer today. This example represents the high point of Cycladic figurine carving, when the form had become extremely elegant.”

<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/31097/cycladic-female-figurine/>

Granite Sphinx of Ramses II

Egypt, 13th Century BCE

Found at The Penn Museum



“The archetypal Egyptian sphinx usually had the body of a lion and the head of a man – usually the king, although examples of female (queen) sphinxes exist. A combination of human and leonine elements endowed the sphinx with the intelligence of a human being and the awesome physical prowess of a lion. Sphinxes appear early in the Egyptian artistic canon and remain an important royal and divine symbol throughout the Pharaonic Period. The Egyptian sphinx was quite distinct from the sphinx found in Greek mythology. The Egyptian sphinx was a protective, positive entity, while the Greek sphinx was a fearsome and dangerous creature.

Excavated by W. M. Flinders Petrie in 1913 near the Ptah Temple at Memphis, the Penn Museum's 13-ton sphinx is the largest sphinx in the Western Hemisphere. The sphinx, a lion with a human head, represents the power of the Egyptian king. Carved of a single block of red granite, quarried at Aswan, the five-fold titulary of Ramses II appears along the base of this sphinx. Ramses II's son and successor, Merenptah, added his own cartouches on the shoulders after his father's death.”

<https://www.penn.museum/collections/highlights/egyptian/sphinx.php>

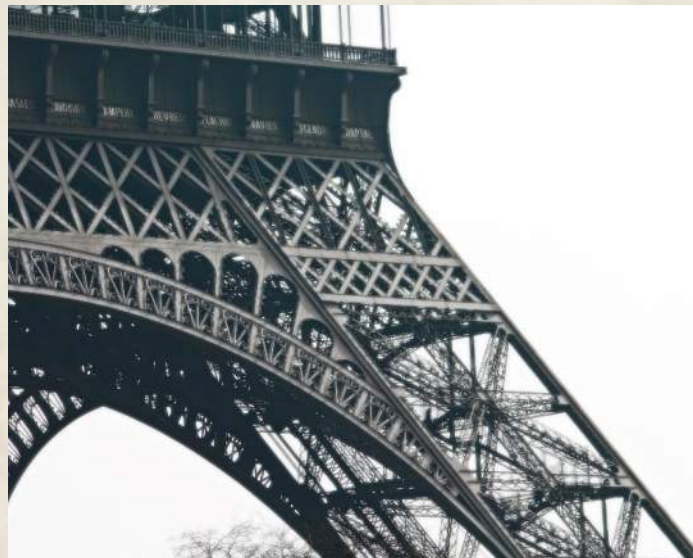
The Gallery

Paris, France

"The history of Paris starts with a humble settlement by a tribe of Celtic fishermen in around 259 BC. Since then it has enjoyed a long and illustrious history to become the thriving metropolis that it is today. Here is a brief roundup of some of the key events in the history of Paris. The area around L'Île de la Cité was first settled around 259 BC, when the Parisii, who were a tribe of Celtic fishermen, discovered the fertile banks of the River Seine. They named their new home Lutetia. In 52 BC, Julius Caesar's Roman army took the city, and it became part of the Roman Empire, within the territory known as Gaul. It was later invaded by the Franks and Normans and became known as Lutetia Paris. In Medieval times, around 1200, work began on the fortifications, including the Louvre, which were to surround the medieval city. In the late 1300s, Paris, in common with the rest of Western Europe, was engulfed by the plague, known as the Black Death, which killed almost half of its entire population. It was in 1449 that the iconic figure of Joan of Arc at the head of the French army, defeated the English at Orléans. This ended almost ten years of Norman English control. They were finally driven from France in 1453. In 1870, the third Republic of France was declared and the institutions of democracy were first put in place. It began a period known as the Belle Époque, which was a time of great artistic and cultural achievement, when movements, such as impressionism, spread throughout the world, cementing the reputation of Paris as a cultural and artistic capital."

Excerpt from: <https://paris.com/general/history/>

Photography by April Lynn Downey



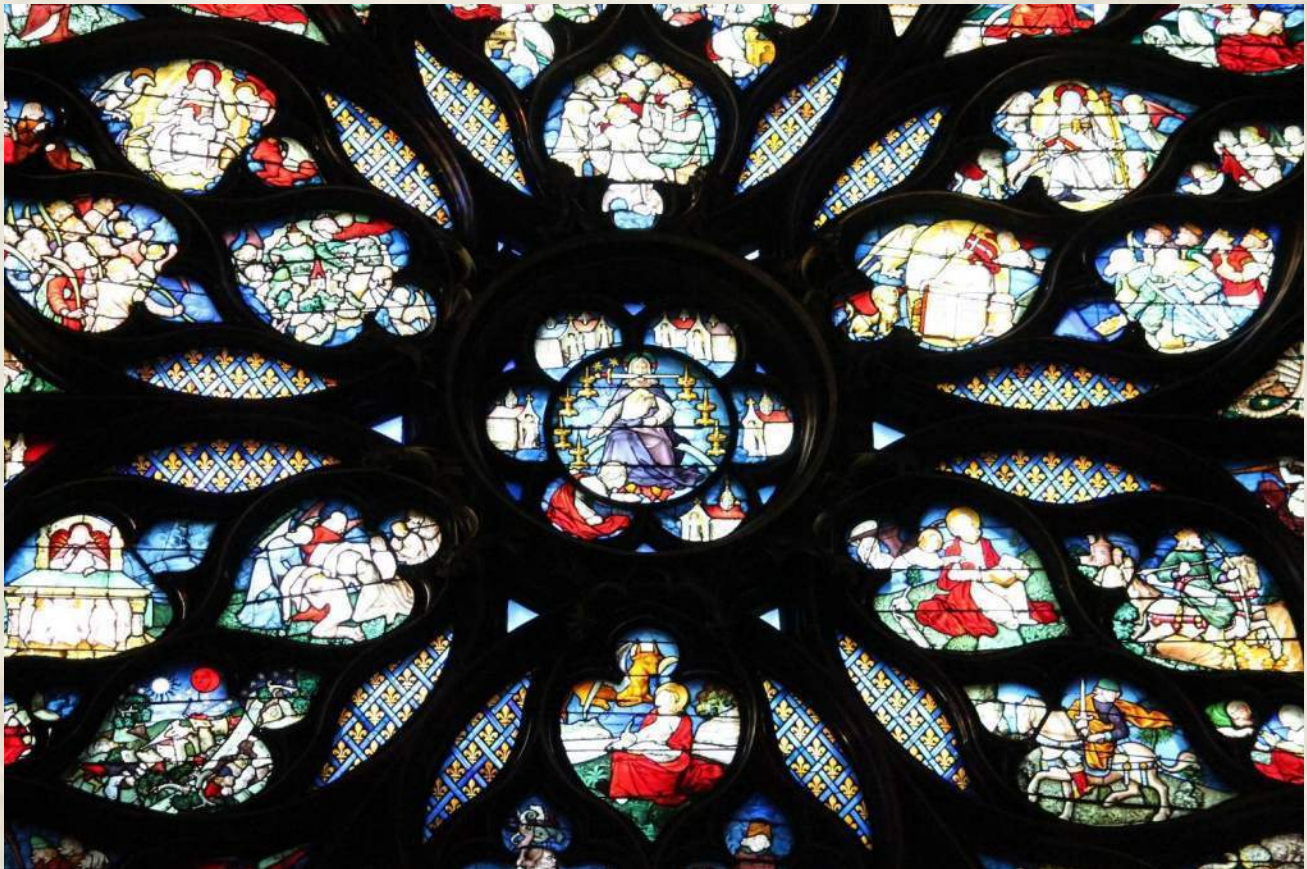
Prints of this photo can be purchased at www.phoenixfeatherbooks.com. Search "France"





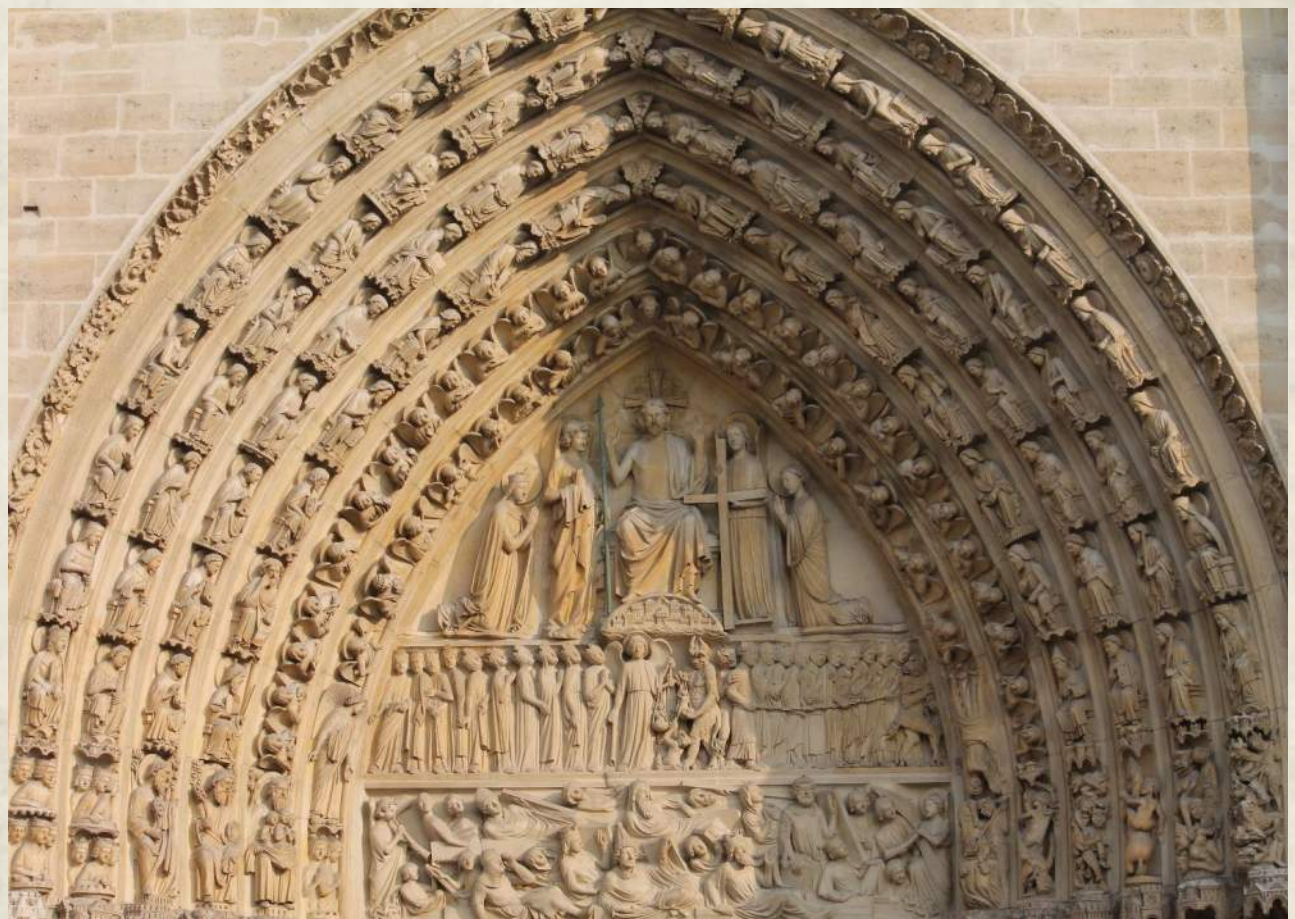
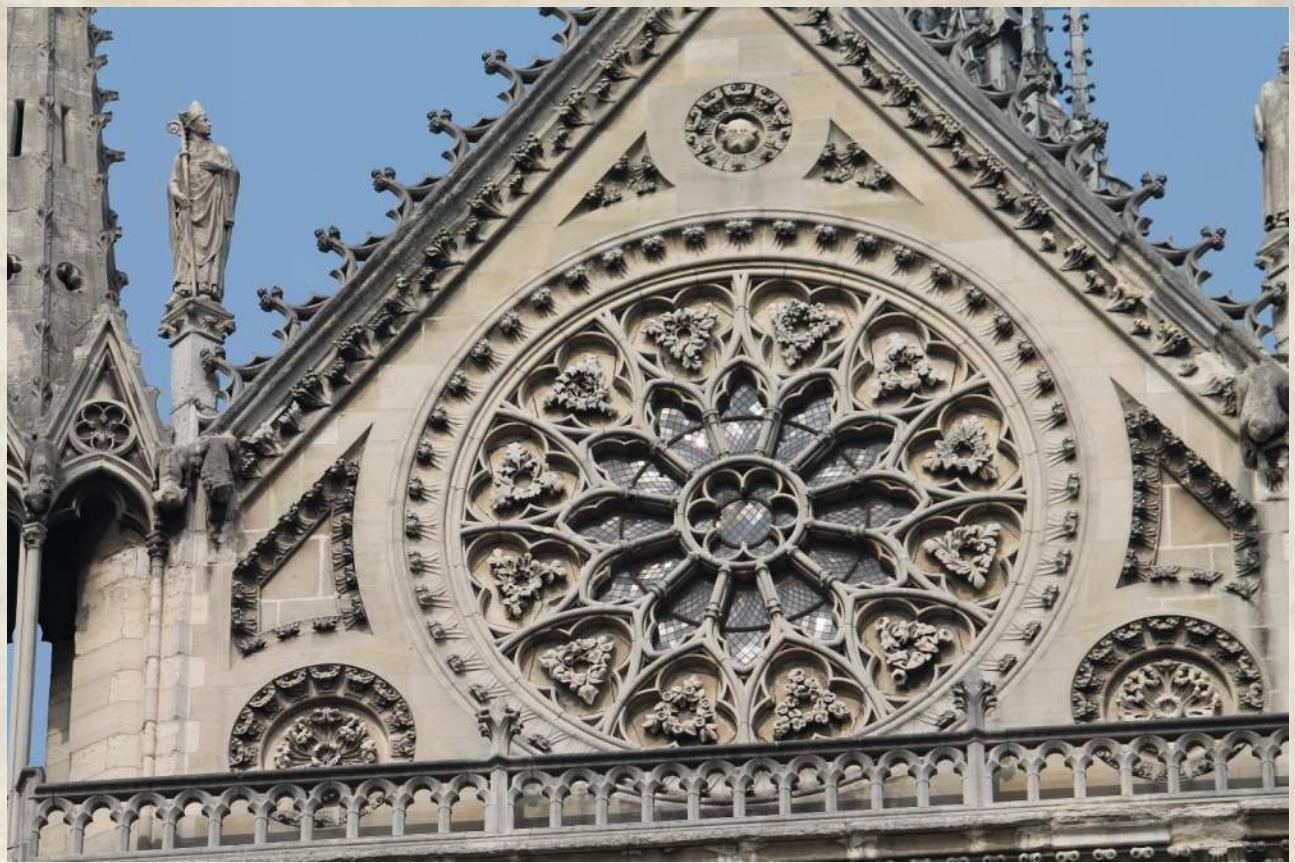


Prints of this photo can be purchased at www.phoenixfeatherbooks.com. Search "France"









Brugge, Belgium

“Brugge, French Bruges, city, Flanders Region, northwestern Belgium, about 10 miles (16 km) south of Zeebrugge, its port on the North Sea. Originally a landing place on the Zwijn estuary, into which the Reie River flowed, it was mentioned in the 7th century as the Municipium Brugense (a name derived from a Roman bridge over the Reie). Brugge’s intricate network of canals has led many to describe the city as the Venice of the North. After it was evangelized by St. Eloi, bishop of Noyon-Tournai, the first counts of Flanders built their castle there (9th century) against Norman invaders. By the 13th century the town held a monopoly on English wool, was a leading emporium for the Hanseatic League, and, with the other “members from Flanders” (Ghent and Ypres), virtually governed the entire province. After maintaining its independence despite an attack by France in 1302, it reached its commercial zenith in the 14th century. At that time it was one of the largest and most important cities in northern Europe. As the Zwijn estuary silted up in the 15th century, the city began to decline as a trade centre but remained brilliant and powerful as the court of the dukes of Burgundy (counts of Flanders from 1384) and as the artistic centre of the Flemish school of painting, until the religious and political struggles of the 16th century completed its eclipse.

It remained a sleepy medieval town until the construction of the port of Zeebrugge and the cutting of a connecting canal (opened 1907) revived trade and stimulated industry and tourism. It was occupied by the Germans in World Wars I and II; the harbour of Zeebrugge was raided by the British in 1918, and blockships were sunk in the canal to deny the use of the port to German submarines.

As a rail and canal junction, Brugge depends largely on tourism, but a relatively new industrial area in the north produces ships, electronic equipment, dies, yeast, and industrial glass. Spinning, weaving, and lace making are traditional.”

Excerpt from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brugge>

Photography by April Lynn Downey













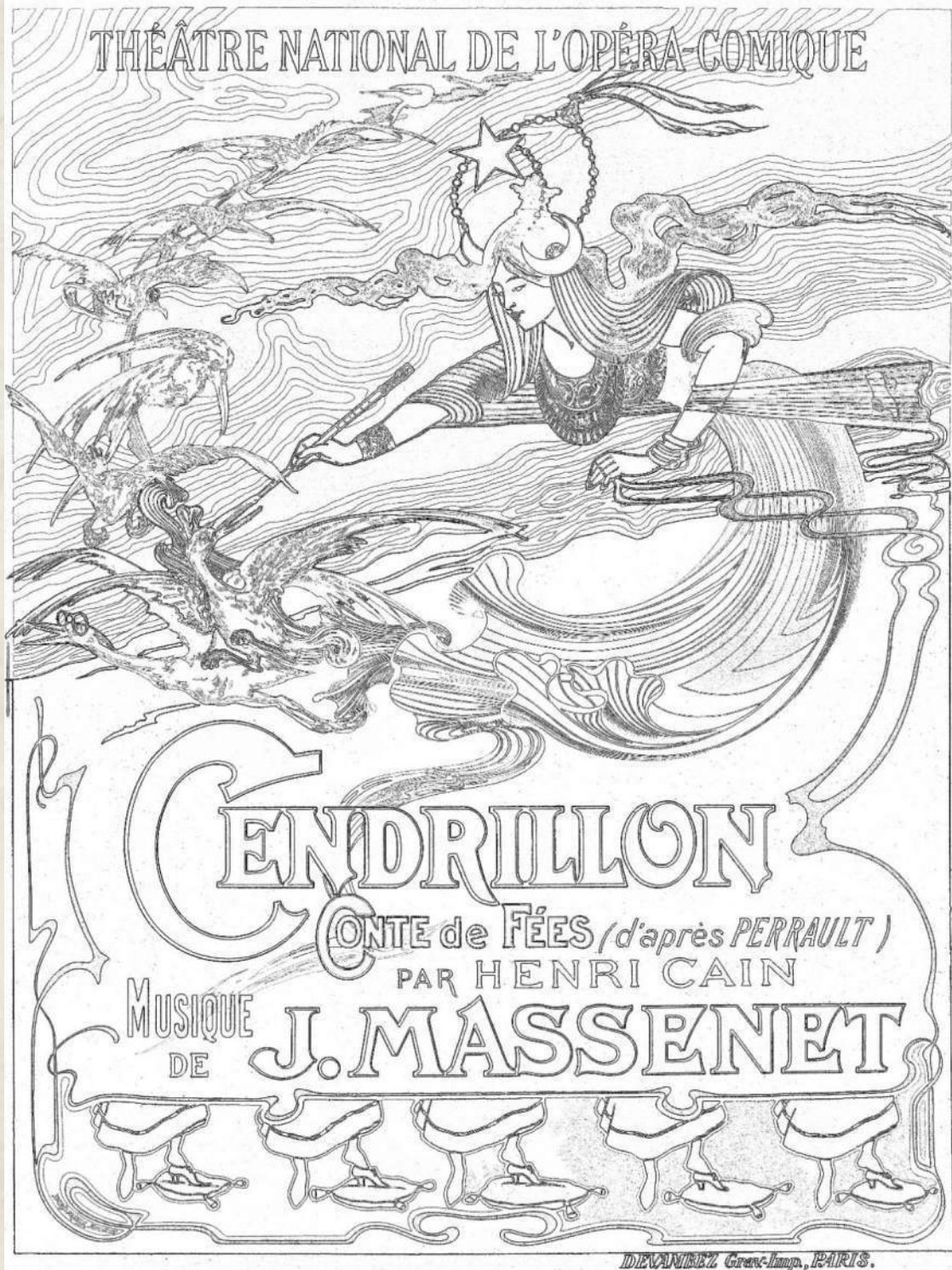






Activities

Cendrillon at the L'Opera Comique – Coloring Page



An 1899 show poster from the Theatre National de L'Opera Comique, founded in 1714 and still in operation today! It is one of the oldest theatres in France. Cendrillon is the French name for "Cinderella".

Pennsylvania Dutch Hex Sign – Coloring Page



To learn about Pennsylvania Dutch hex signs, please visit <https://aprildowney.blogspot.com/2021/02/pennsylvania-dutch-hex-signs-magic.html>

Ancient Egypt Word Search

O	T	P	E	S	P	H	I	N	X	A	A	I	P
I	P	H	A	R	A	O	H	I	I	O	A	I	S
L	T	I	S	I	H	P	O	P	A	O	T	E	D
I	U	E	A	R	R	A	Q	A	S	I	P	G	N
L	T	R	E	D	E	S	E	R	T	I	H	A	H
O	A	O	S	P	U	D	A	R	O	A	S	T	M
T	N	G	E	E	N	M	E	E	S	X	A	A	P
U	K	L	S	I	H	F	T	L	M	E	R	E	D
S	H	Y	N	A	E	S	D	I	M	A	R	Y	P
P	A	P	I	N	I	O	S	I	R	I	S	E	I
N	M	H	L	O	D	J	O	S	E	R	O	H	Y
E	E	S	E	E	T	H	U	T	M	O	S	E	S
O	N	S	U	M	A	T	O	P	O	P	P	I	H
A	S	S	S	A	N	D	T	P	R	I	E	S	T

SAQARRA
NILE
PYRAMIDS
NEFERTITI
PRIEST

TUTANKHAMEN
SPHINX
HIEROGLYPHS
PHARAOH
HIPPOPOTAMUS

DJOSER
SAND
OSIRIS
DESERT

APOPHIS
LOTUS
THUTMOSE

Riddle Contest!

The first person to email the correct answer to JournalOfTales@gmail.com will a history related prize in the mail!

How can it be? Half of nine is one plus three.

How can it be true? Half of eleven is four plus two.

Now can you see? Half of three is also three.

Hint: This riddle is related to history.