

# NEAREAST 339

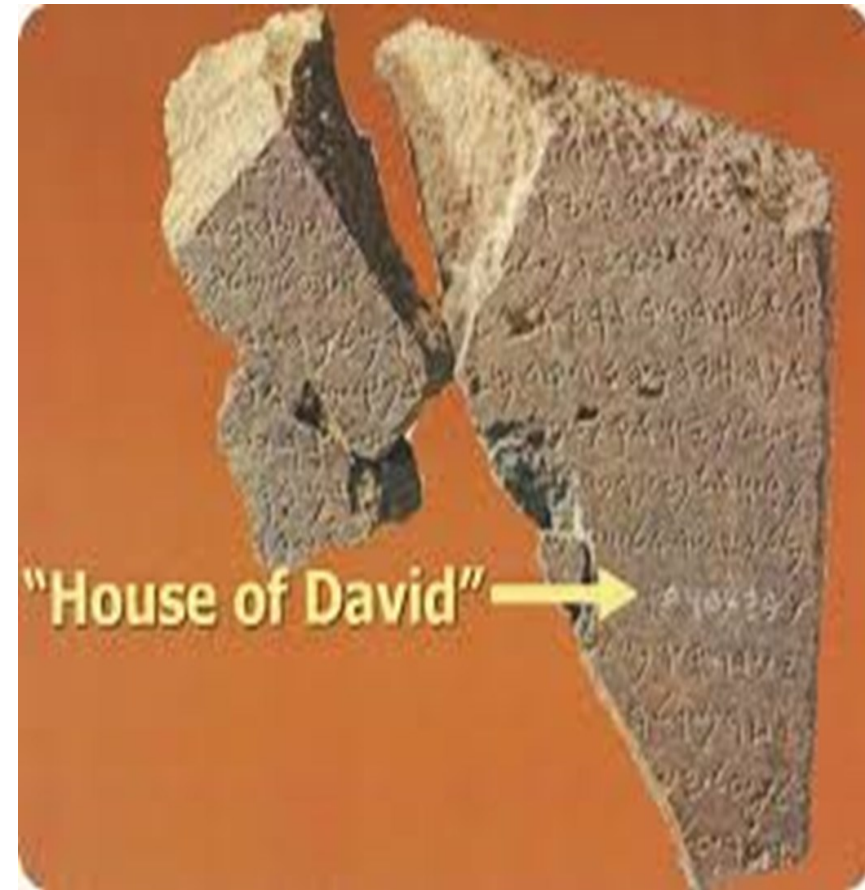
## ISRAEL BEFORE THE EXILE (587 BCE): ITS HISTORY & RELIGION

**HISTORY 259 - RELIGION 358 - JUDAIC 339**

*Israel Before The Exile* encompasses a series of intersecting studies on the history and religion of early Israel spanning more than 600 years. It is dedicated to the cultural, religious, and political histories of ancient Israelite society. The centuries spanning 1200 to 600 BCE constitute the formative period of the two well-known trajectories of early Israelite urbanizing society, those of Samaria and of Judah. Ancient Israel has left the world a number of contributions and legacies like an early ancient alphabet, monotheism, and a distinctive legal discourse. Yet, first and foremost we are heirs to the literary traditions that now make up the Hebrew Bible - Jewish Tanakh - Christian Old Testament. NEAREAST 339 will explore that 600-year historical frame from which the Hebrew Bible emerged and the ensuing kaleidoscope of literary and historiographic images of ancient Israelite life which those texts preserve. Special attention will be paid to the archaeological remains and written records from both ancient Israel and the wider ancient Near East that convey something of the ever-changing geo-political and wider cultural contexts within which early Israelite society emerged and developed including those of the ancient Canaanites, Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Philistines and Persians. Topics for historical inquiry include Israel's 'ethnic' origins, its pre-state civilization, the rise of the territorial polities of Israel and Judah, their growth and development, and the reconstitution of the exiled communities. Religious beliefs and practices to be explored include the rise of monotheism and the imageless cult, angels and demons, prophecy and ethics, sacrifice and the exotic, death and afterlife, apocalypticism, ritual and magic, wisdom and the sages, and the religion(s) of women and the marginal. **NO Pre-requisites.**

Department of Near Eastern Studies

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Tel Dan Inscription - 9<sup>th</sup> Cent. B.C.E. History's earliest mention of "The House of David."

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**Tuesday/Thursday 11:30am-1pm**