**The Hebrews: The Vocabulary**

**Teacher Notes**

**Hebrews**: Also known as the Israelites, Hebrews were a small nomadic group of merchants and herders that lived in the ancient Middle East. Because of their monotheistic religion, they had a significant impact on the world.

**Israelites**: Another name for the Hebrews. After the Hebrew Kingdom split, Israel was located to the north of Judah in the land of Canaan. Israelites and Phoenicians lived around 900 BCE.

**Judaism**: The religion of the Hebrews that still exists today. The Torah is the sacred book.   
There are 2 forms: Orthodox and Reform Judaism.

**Yahweh**: God of the Hebrews who made an agreement with Abraham that the land of Canaan would belong to Abraham and his descendants. Also gave 10 Commandments to Moses. Yahweh is a right and just god.

**Abraham**: The father of Judaism/Hebrew who led his people from Ur to Canaan in 1800 BCE. His grandson, Jacob, fathered 12 sons 🡪 The 12 Tribes of Israel.

**Descendants**: offspring; children, grandchildren, great grandchildren. Yahweh promised Abraham that he and all his descendants could remain in Canaan forever.

**Jacob**: Abraham’s grandson who had 12 sons 🡪 The 12 Tribes of Israel.

**Twelve Tribes of Israel**: Jacob’s 12 sons split apart into the 12 Tribes of Israel, and remained split, until King Saul reunited them. They lived in Canaan until a drought forced them to seek refuge in Egypt.

**Moses**: Leader of the Hebrew exodus from Egypt, Moses led the Hebrews across the Red Sea and into the Sinai Peninsula. Atop Mt. Sinai, Moses received the 10 Commandments from Yahweh according to the biblical story of *Exodus*.

**Ten Commandments**: Hebrews were to obey certain rules or laws of their religion. The most important were the 10 Commandments: One god, no false idols, no name in vain, keep Sabbath, honor father and mother, no murder, no adultery, no stealing, no lying, and no coveting.

**Exodus**: The title given by the Hebrews to the story of their escape from Egypt under the leadership of Moses.

**Covenant**: an agreement or promise. The Hebrews renewed their covenant with Yahweh after receiving the 10 Commandments. They would follow. Yahweh would protect.

**Social Justice**: If God (Yahweh) is right and just, then His followers should be right and just 🡪 the belief that everyone has the right to be treated equally.

**King Saul**: After the 12 Tribes split, Hebrews eventually wished to unite under a single king. A warrior-farmer named Saul became the first king of the Hebrew Kingdom and ruled well for many years until he lost his people’s support.

**King David**: Saul died in battle. David reunited the Hebrews, defeated the Canaanites, and started Jerusalem - the capital of the Hebrew Kingdom. Also wrote psalms (sacred songs) found in the Bible.

**King Solomon**: After King David died, Solomon became king. He made the kingdom more powerful through treaties and trade. The people did not support him because he forced them to pay taxes and build a massive temple in Jerusalem.

**Psalms**: Sacred songs that are found in the Bible many of which were created by King David.

**Jerusalem**: The capital of the Hebrew Kingdom and later of Judah after the Hebrew Kingdom splits (Solomon’s death).

**Temple**: A sacred building of worship for the Hebrews where they gather and practice Judaism. It was a replacement for meeting God in nature.

**Israel**: After Solomon’s death, the Hebrew Kingdom split into 2 kingdoms. Israel, home of the Israelites, was located in the north of Canaan. Israel includes Sea of Galilee and Jordan River.

Because it was south of Phoenicia, Israel was easily invaded and conquered by the Phoenicians.

**Judah**: After the Hebrew Kingdom split, Judah became the southern kingdom. It was home of the Judeans (Jews). Judah was ruled from Jerusalem.

**Prophet**: Person claiming to have messages from God. They were often teachers, farmers, and shepherds who were critical of the Hebrews who were breaking the 10 Commandments.

**Torah:** Sacred text of Judaism. After the Hebrew Kingdom fell, the Judeans were forced to relocate to Babylonia where a scribe named Ezra recorded the 5 books of Moses. These books plus additional readings would eventually become the Torah.

**Old Testament:** The Torah and other readings that were added later became the Old Testament. It is the first part of the Bible today.

**Bible:** The Bible is the sacred text of the Christians. It includes the Old and New Testament.

**Sabbath**: The day of rest meant for followers to meet in small groups to pray and worship. After recording discussions on scrolls, the study of these writings led the Jews to value learning.