

# CrossTrek

## Restart Your Bible Journey

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For  
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church

# Introduction

- Vision for the Class
- 1) To answer questions about the Bible's origins and qualities.
- 2) To offer suggestions on how to read and interpret the Bible.
- 3) To leave you better enabled and more excited about reading your Bible.

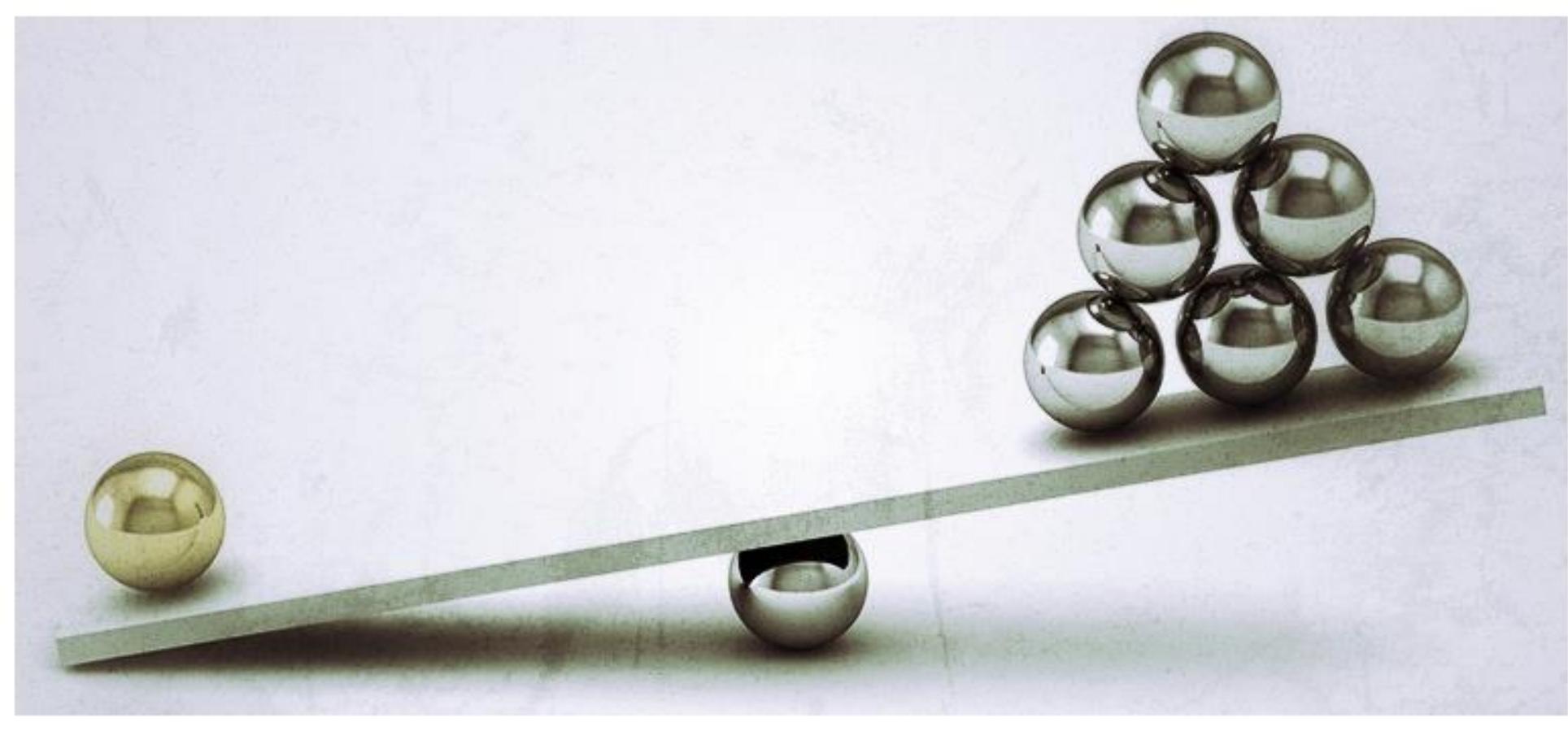
# Introduction

- Overview of the Class Sessions

- 1) What is the Bible?
- 2) How is the Bible Organized?
- 3) How is God Speaking?

## **4)What am I Missing Here?**

- 5) How can I Interpret the Bible?
- 6) What Resources Are Most Helpful?



# Language Economy

# Language Economy

“I am going to become a polar bear!”



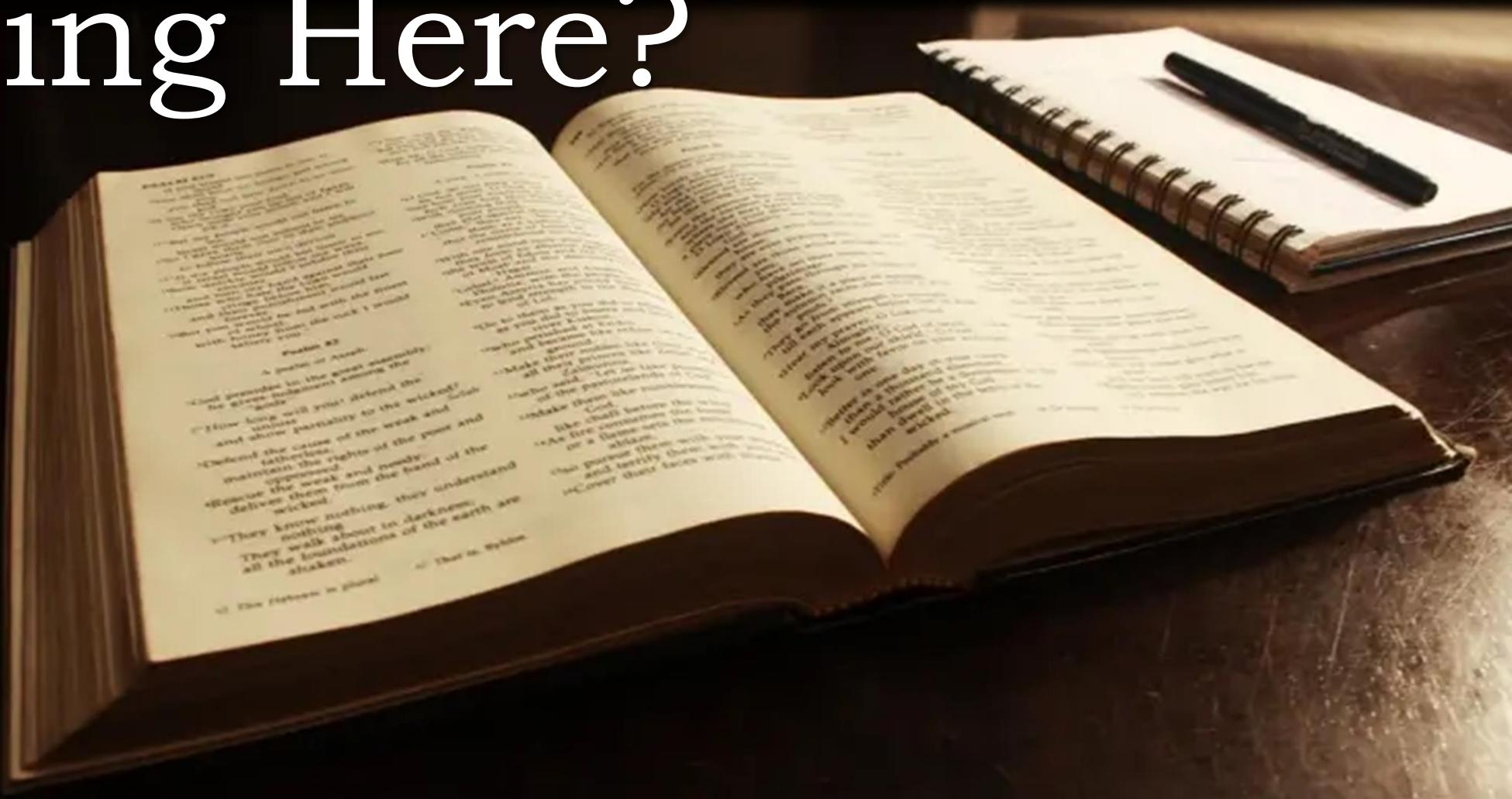
# Language Economy

- Biblical authors/poets and their first readers shared in a common language, historical memory, culture, and geography.
- They could say more with less.

Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.

(Luke 14:34-35 NIV)

# What am I Missing Here?



The Bible was written *for us*,  
but it was not written *to us*.

# Bible Background

- 1) Historical Context
- 2) Cultural Context
- 3) Geographical Context

# Historical Context

- The Bible does not provide a comprehensive history of the world.
- The Bible presumes familiarity with the historical backstory.



# Historical Context

Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the *Roman governor*.

(John 18:28 NIV)

“If you let this man go, *you are no friend of Caesar*. Anyone who claims to be a king *opposes Caesar*.”

(John 19:12 NIV)



# Roman Governor?

- Rome ruled Judea from 63 BC.
- In 6 AD, Rome began ruling Judea with a Roman governor.
- Pontius Pilate (26-36 AD) was the fifth Roman governor to rule since the governorship was initiated.
- The principal role of the Roman governor was not to better the lives of the locals but to collect taxes for Rome and keep the peace.

# Jewish Leaders and Pilate?

- As a judge, his verdict was nearly final.
- As a politician, he was politically vulnerable and so malleable.

# Historical Context

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# Cultural Context

- Culture is defined by the set of social customs that guide the way we live our lives.
- Examples:
  - The clothing we wear
  - How we get married
  - The food we eat
  - The holidays we celebrate



# Cultural Context

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was **pledged to be married** to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind **to divorce her quietly**.

(Matthew 1:18-19 NIV)

# Marriage in First Century Nazareth

- Marriages were arranged by the parents.
- The *mohar* offered by the groom and dowry offered by the bride were established in a legal document called a *ketubah*.

יבט אַצְלָוָהוּ

נִצְאָתָה תְּמָה לְהֵיא שָׁלָא אֶת־  
בָּחֲזֹור לְעַלְתָּה יְמָא דְּאַלְיָהָה אֶת־  
רַיְמָרְזָר אַמְרָמָעָדְעָלָה וְמַרְעָוָתָה וְעַזְעָשָׂה אַמְלָזָה  
זָרָעָה לְפָנָיָה כְּעַמּוֹס יְהֻוָּאָין וְאַתָּה כְּהֻוָּא עָגִין אַמְלָלָם  
וְשִׁיקְרָה יְלָעָשָׂהוּ בְּקָשָׂטָה וְשִׁמְרָתָה יְלָעָמָדָה  
בְּבָל וְלָל וְקָנְלָל וְלָאָשָׂבָב יְזָלָלָה יְזָלָלָה אַזְלָלָה אַזְלָלָה  
עַל וְעַלְזָן וְעַזְלָזָן וְעַזְלָזָן וְעַזְלָזָן וְעַזְלָזָן וְעַזְלָזָן  
לְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן וְלָזָן

# Marriage in First Century Nazareth

- A young couple was “pledged to be married” when the *ketubah* was signed.
- Nevertheless, the expression of their sexuality was not permitted until the public wedding day.
- The public wedding typically followed within one year.

# Cultural Context

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Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind **to divorce her quietly**.

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# Divorce Options First Century Nazareth

## PUBLIC

- Voided engagement contract
- Mary verbally denounced at a community gathering
- Joseph disassociated from the child
- *Mohar* returned
- Dowry returned
- Avoided shame

## NON-PUBLIC

- Voided engagement contract
- Mary presented with a written document in a private setting
- Joseph's role in the pregnancy ambiguous
- *Mohar* not returned
- Dowry returned
- Shared shame

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# What do you mean by geography?

- Physical Geography
- Human Geography
- Natural History

# What do you mean by geography?

- Physical Geography—

natural features and forces that shape life on the surface of the earth



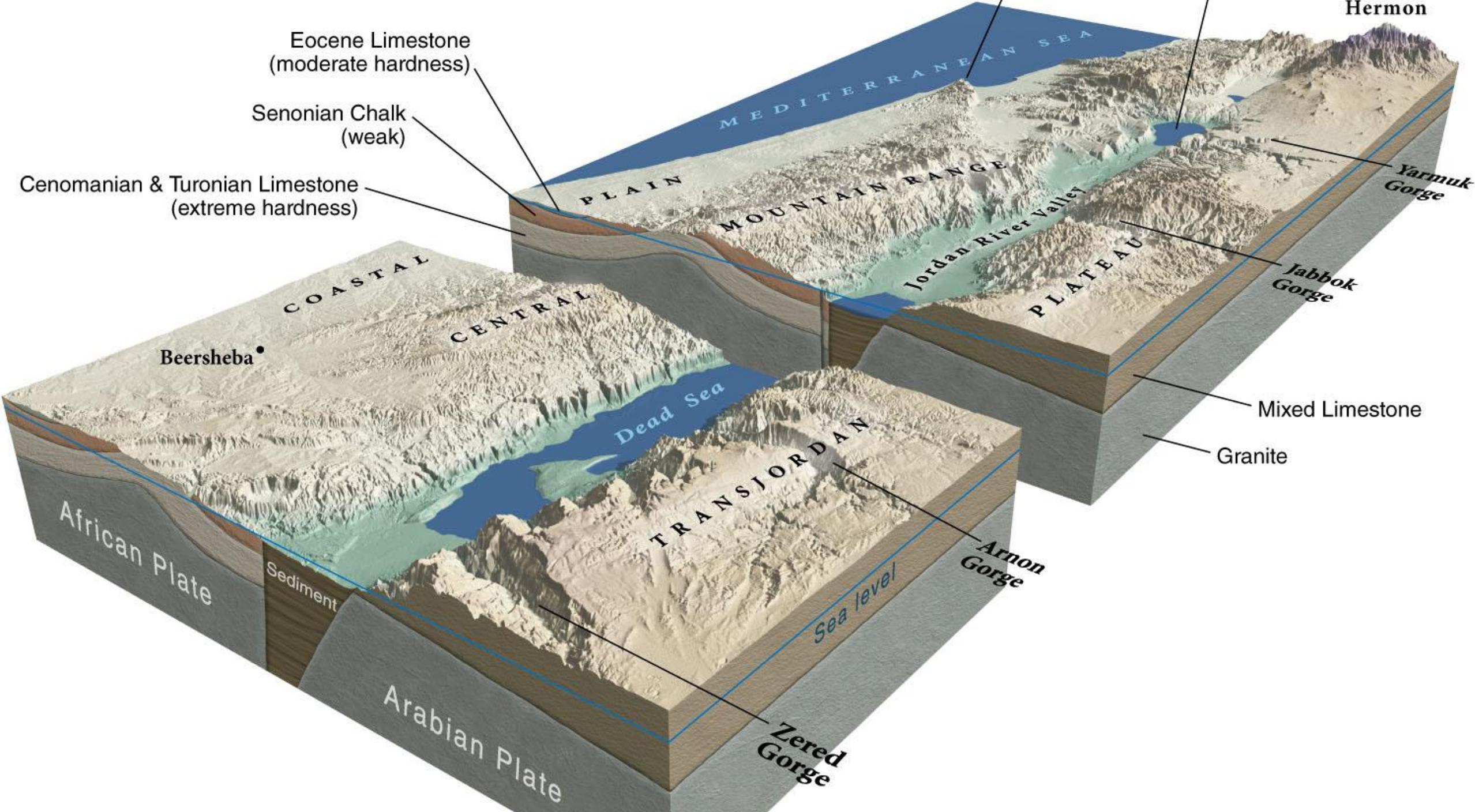


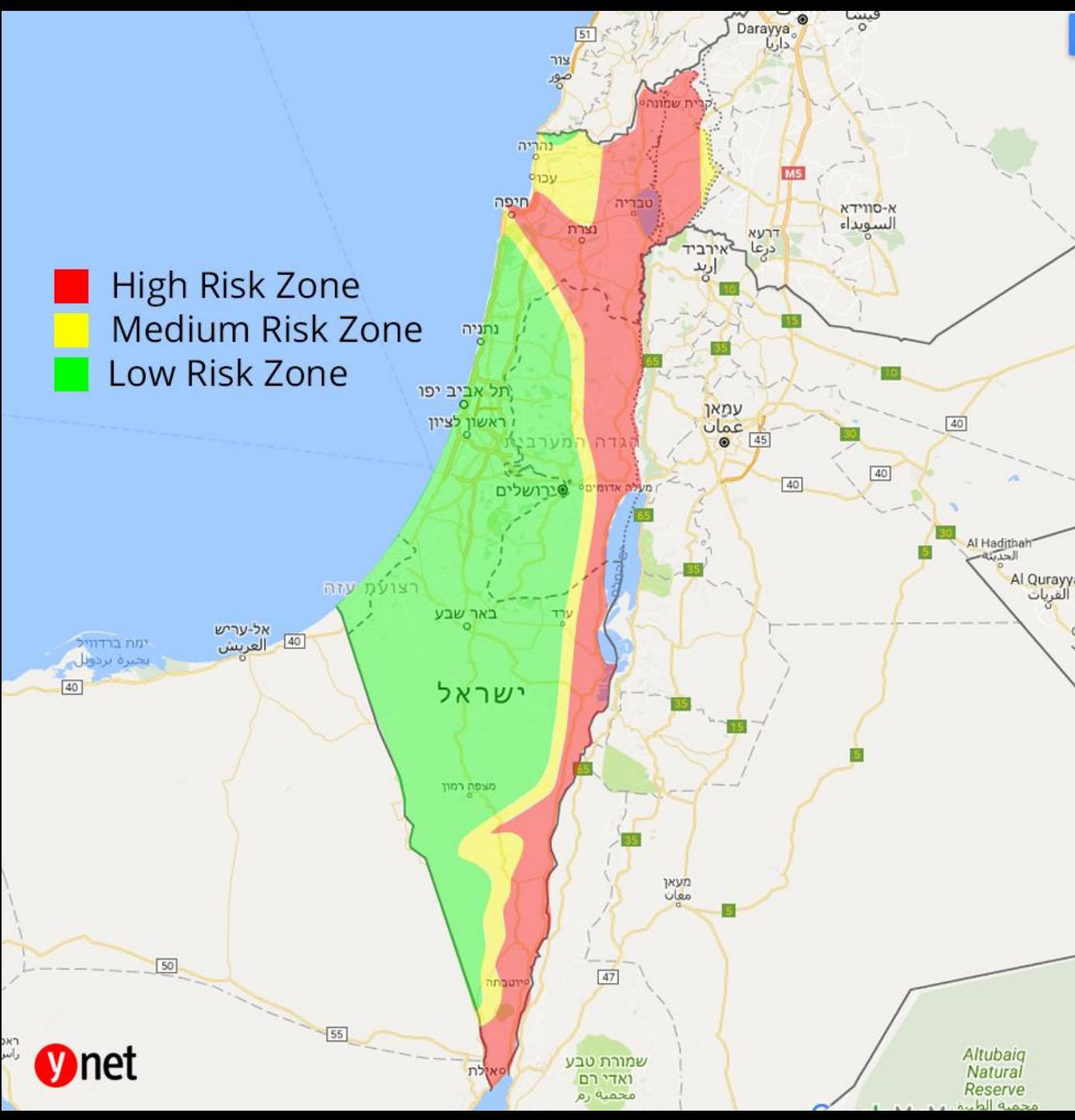
# Physical Geography

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion,  
which cannot be shaken but endures forever.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,  
so the Lord surrounds his people  
both now and forevermore.

(Psalm 125:1-2 NIV)











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# What do you mean by geography?

- Physical Geography—  
natural features and forces
- Human Geography—  
human use of, impact on, and  
response to physical geography

# Human Geography (Culture)

- Growing food
- Processing food
- Securing water
- Building homes
- Traveling
- Labeling locations
- Burial of family members







# Human Geography

Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

(Luke 19:62 NIV)





# What do you mean by geography?

- Physical Geography—  
natural features and forces
- Human Geography—  
human use of, impact on and  
response to physical geography
- Natural History—  
animals, insects, and plants









# Natural History

At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, “Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you.”

He replied, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will keep on driving out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’

Luke 13:31-32 NIV)







Herod cast as a low-threat predator  
who would not interfere in Jesus's  
plans.

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