



# BIBLE GEOGRAPHY

Louis Rushmore

**BIBLE**  
**GEOGRAPHY**

*By Louis Rushmore*

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# PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

In recent years, Social Studies have been de-emphasized because of the growing awareness of the deficiency of many American children in the fields of math and science. However, a deficiency in any field leaves a hole in one's over-all comprehension of life-issues. There is the saying that we are destined to repeat the mistakes of the past if we fail to take heed to lessons in history, and that is true.

However, there is also a need to know the cities, places and terrain of the world. In particular, we want to aid the Bible student in getting a clear mental image of the world of the Scriptures. *Bible Geography* is a tool designed to familiarize readers with the culture, history and geography of the cities and peoples we already know through the biblical accounts. Brother Rushmore has done an outstanding work in writing this book and providing the maps as illustrations.

It is our aim, also, to print two others of brother Rushmore's books, as companion volumes: *Digging up the Past* and *Biblical Companions: Geography, Archaeology, and Sacred History*. We are confident that those who study *Bible Geography* will have a desire to learn from these books as well.

While words and pictures on paper are excellent educational tools, we would hope that what you learn in these studies will create in you a desire to actually go to these "lands of the Bible" to see with your own eyes where Jesus walked, where Paul taught and where many of the familiar events of the Scriptures took place. As the world has grown smaller, seemingly, through jet travel, it has become increasingly possible for anyone with the desire to make such a tour of these famous geographical locations. What a memorable gift that would be to your spiritual life!

Betty (Mrs. J.C.) Choate  
Winona, MS  
February 6, 2008

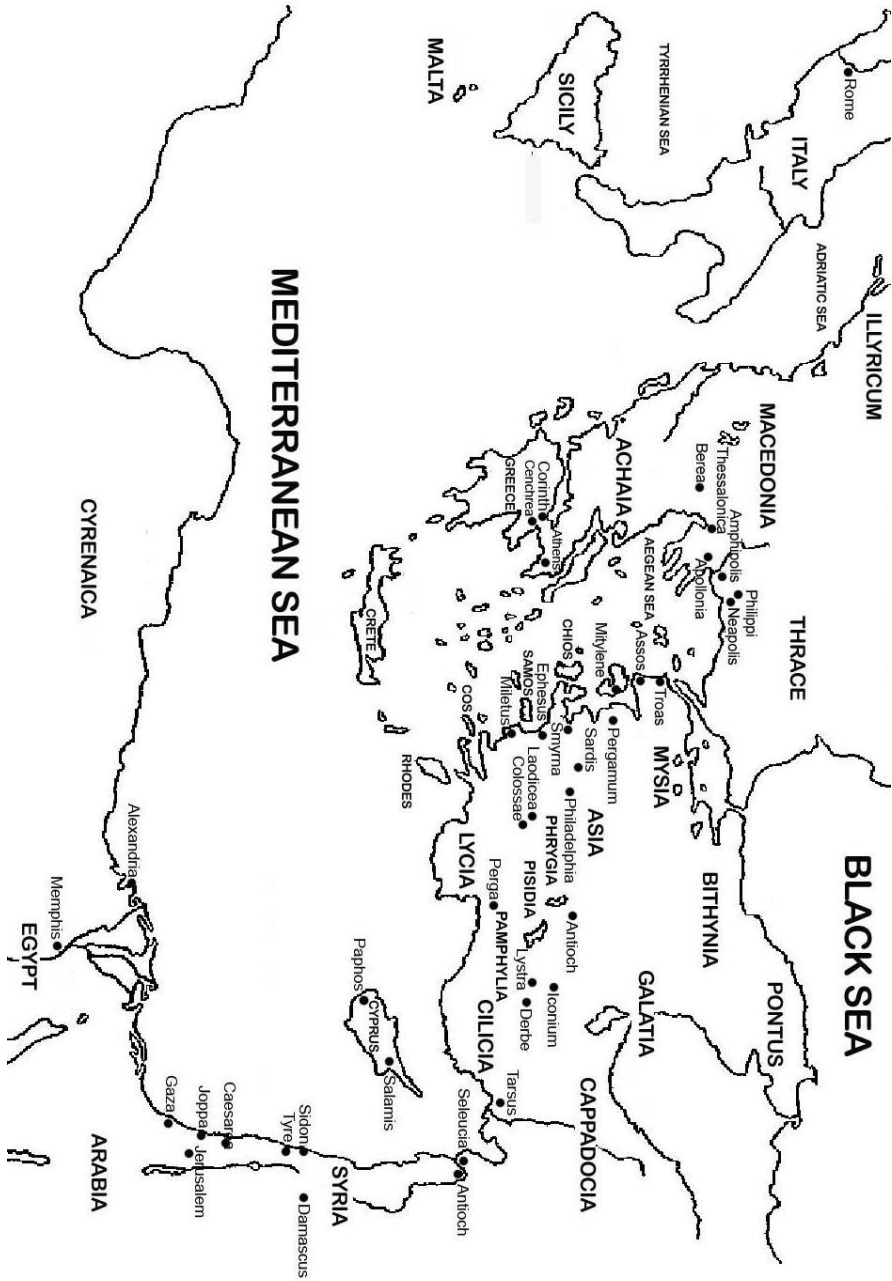
# PREFACE

The following material is suitable for a wide range of age groups. Therefore, some text appears **bold** to help students more easily locate answers to the questions at the end of each chapter. Further, other words appear in *italics* to indicate possible vocabulary words with which especially younger readers are not familiar. However, *Bible Geography* is particularly fitting for older youth and adult studies because the subject is sorely neglected, but one that can significantly enhance comprehension of Bible lessons.

The use of good classroom and individual student maps will greatly contribute to the efficiency of these lessons. All ages, even preschool through adult can learn more easily about Bible places by associating geographical locations with *funny names*. For instance, the island of Cyprus appears somewhat like an alligator with its mouth open. The Dead Sea looks like a big fish and the Jordan River is a snaky line. The Sea of Galilee looks like an upside down pear and Lake Merom (Hula) reminds one of a fried chicken wing. Mt. Carmel is the thumb on the sea coast. The gulfs of Suez and Aqaba appear as large and small rabbit ears respectively while the Red Sea looks like a rabbit; Mt. Sinai is the bump on the rabbit's head. The Nile River appears similar to a flower stem and blossom and the island of Crete looks like a person lying on his back. Italy is a boot and Silicia is a football being kicked by the boot. Corinth appears as a ball falling out of a horse's mouth. The Fertile Crescent is the shape of a rainbow.

I hope students using this material will both enjoy it and learn something about Bible Geography. Knowing something about Bible Geography helps link Bible facts and history together in a meaningful way without which often biblical information is little more than disjointed and curious data.

~ **Louis Rushmore**

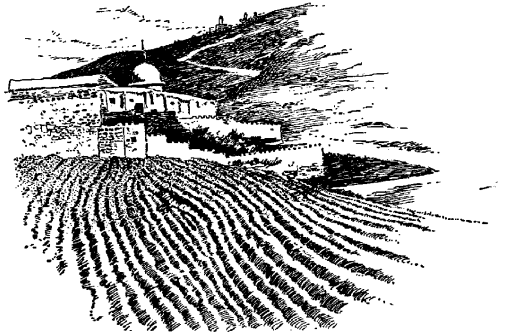


## CHAPTER 1

# A BIBLE LANDS OVERVIEW

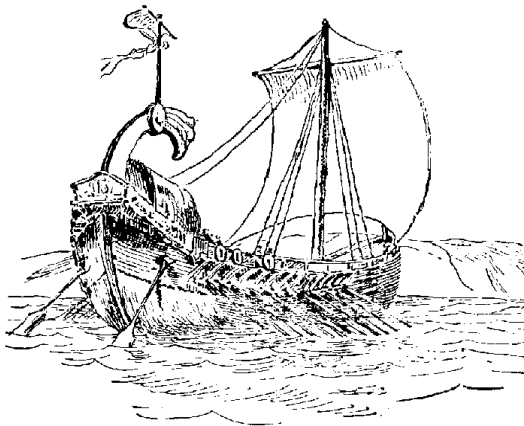
**Mount Ararat** stands at the northern most point of the Bible lands and **Mount Sinai** lies at the southern most tip. The city of Rome is at the western edge of the Bible lands and the Persian Gulf marks the eastern border. The Bible lands are about **2,200 miles from east to west and 900 miles from north to south** or about two-thirds the size of the *Continental United States*.

A strip of land *suitable* for farming and building cities extends from the Persian Gulf north to the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea, then south through Canaan and west to Egypt. Called the "**Fertile Crescent**," it is *primarily* watered by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. South of this rainbow-shaped farmland is desert; north are mountains. The earliest traces of human history were discovered in the Fertile Crescent near the Persian Gulf. Several centuries before the birth of Christ, the world powers that rose and fell and battled each other all fought over this land, the Fertile Crescent.



## LARGE BODIES OF WATER

Mediterranean Sea: Also called the Great Sea, the **Mediterranean Sea** is the largest body of water in the Bible lands; it is 2,300 miles long, 680 miles wide and over 14,000 feet deep. Bad weather and rough seas from November through February made shipping *extremely* dangerous in ancient times; therefore shipping was largely restricted to other months of the year. Since there are few harbors along the coast of Palestine, the *inhabitants* of the land over the centuries made little use of the Mediterranean Sea.



Persian Gulf: The **Persian Gulf** is 520 miles long or three times larger than Lake Superior. This body of water is 200 feet deep. As mentioned above, it *bounds* the Bible lands and the Fertile Crescent on the east. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers flow into the Persian Gulf.

Caspian Sea: The **Caspian Sea** is the largest body of water surrounded by land in the world; it is also the largest salt lake in the world. This lake is just over 700 miles from top to bottom, 130 to 170 miles wide and



3,200 feet deep. The Caspian and Black seas form a natural boundary between the continents of Europe and Asia.

**Red Sea:** The **Red Sea** is about 1,500 miles long, 180 to 250 miles wide and 1,500 feet deep. Its average temperature is 80 degrees. It has two ears, the **Gulf of Suez** (its northwestern ear) and the **Gulf of Aqaba** (its northeastern ear). Between the Red Sea's two ears lies the wilderness where the Israelites wandered for 40 years and Mount Sinai.

**Black Sea:** Along with the Caspian Sea, the **Black Sea** forms a natural boundary between Europe and Asia. It is 750 miles by nearly 400 miles and 7,350 feet deep. The Black Sea is the largest body of fresh water in the world. It is not mentioned in the Bible.

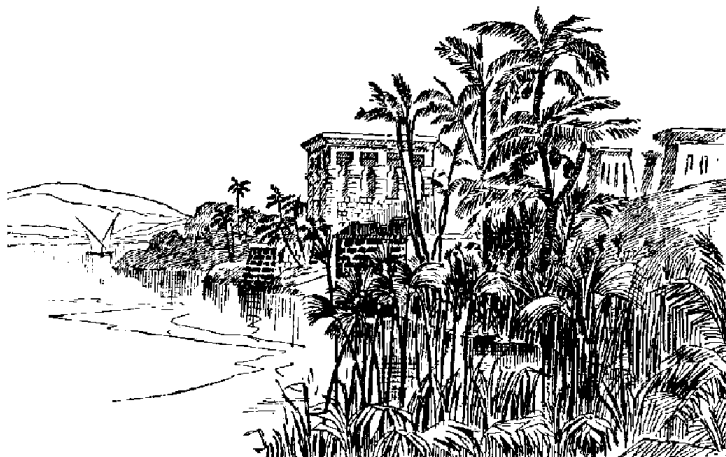
## MAJOR RIVERS

**Tigris River:** The **Tigris River** flows along side of the **Euphrates River**; they *merge* and flow 100 miles together southeast into the Persian Gulf. The combined rivers are called the Shatt al Arab. The Tigris River begins in the mountains and is 1,150 miles long. Important *ancient* cities such as Nineveh were built on its banks. The first Bible reference to this river identifies it as the Hiddekel River in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:14).

**Euphrates River:** The most important river in the Bible is the Euphrates River. It is also mentioned in Genesis 2:14 as one of the four rivers in the Garden of Eden. This *waterway* was sometimes called simply "the river" or the "great river." The Euphrates River was the northern boundary of the Jewish kingdom under the *reign* of King Solomon. One of the most famous cities on its 1,675 mile course was Babylon.

**Orontes River:** The Orontes River flows 250 miles north from near the northern boundary of Canaan to enter the Mediterranean Sea at the cities of Antioch and Selucia.

**Nile River:** The **Nile River** forms the longest river system in the world. The Nile River is over 4,000 miles long; it compares to the Amazon River in South America (3,900 miles long) and the Mississippi River (just under 4,000 miles long). The Nile River begins in the mountain lakes of Africa as two rivers, the White Nile and the Blue Nile, which merge along with



another river 1,600 miles from its source. Without the Nile River, Egypt would be just another useless desert; therefore, some have called Egypt "the gift of the Nile." Each year the Nile River flooded, providing much needed water and depositing rich soil washed from other places onto Egyptian fields.

## MOUNTAINS

**Mount Ararat:** **Mount Ararat** was the landing place of Noah's ark. It rises over

21,000 feet above sea level. This mountain lies between the Caspian and Black seas.

Lebanon Mountains: The **Lebanon Mountains** are two mountain ranges side by side just north of Canaan. Mount Hermon is one peak in these mountains. The famous Cedars of Lebanon grew on these mountains; these trees were an average of 52 feet around and 152 feet tall. Some of these trees were used to build Solomon's Temple.

Mount Hermon: Rising **9,200 feet**, Mount Hermon is snow covered year round. There are many other mountains in the Bible lands, some of which will be noticed when discussing specific areas.

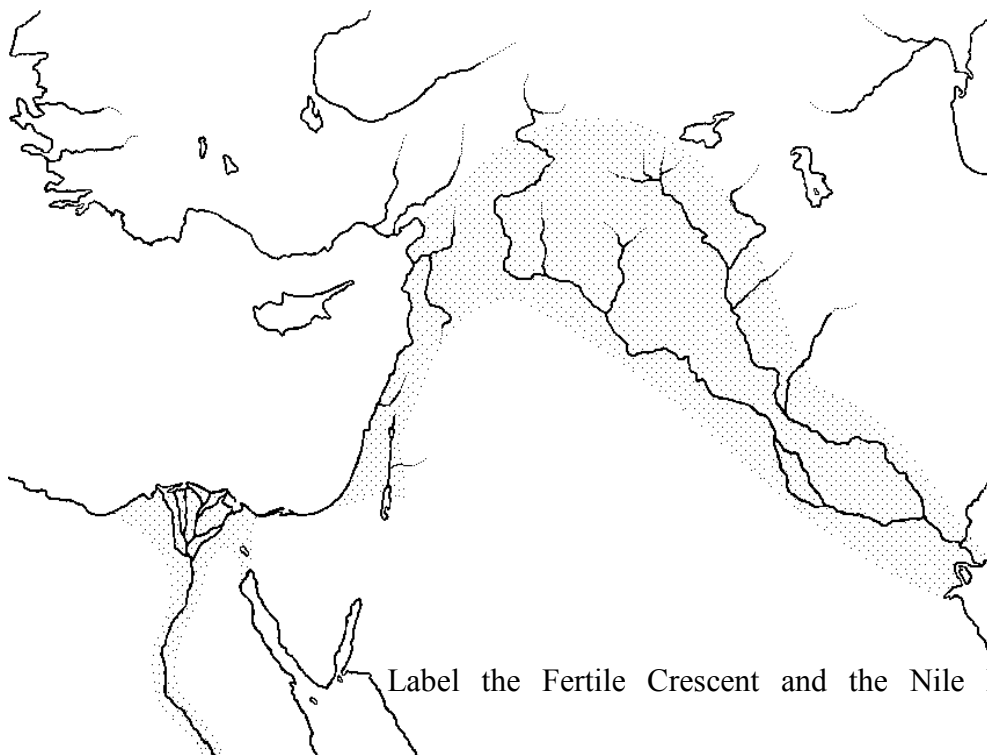
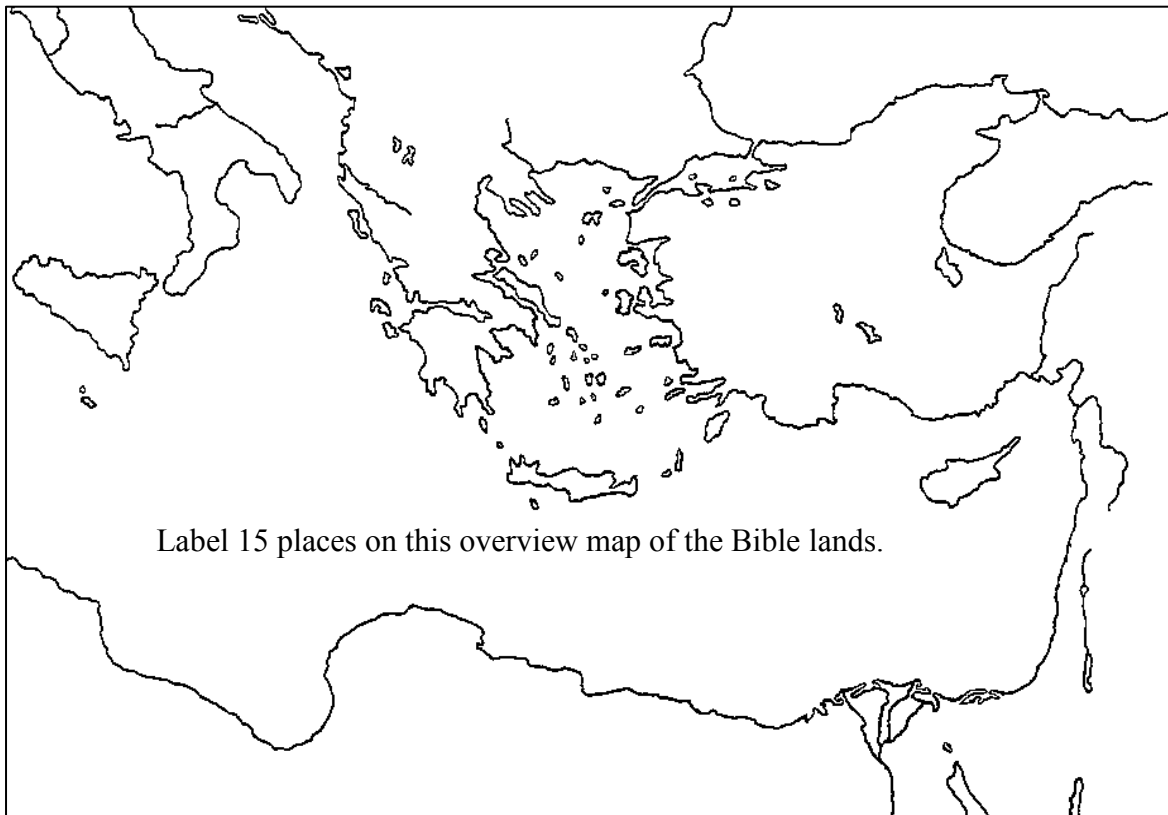


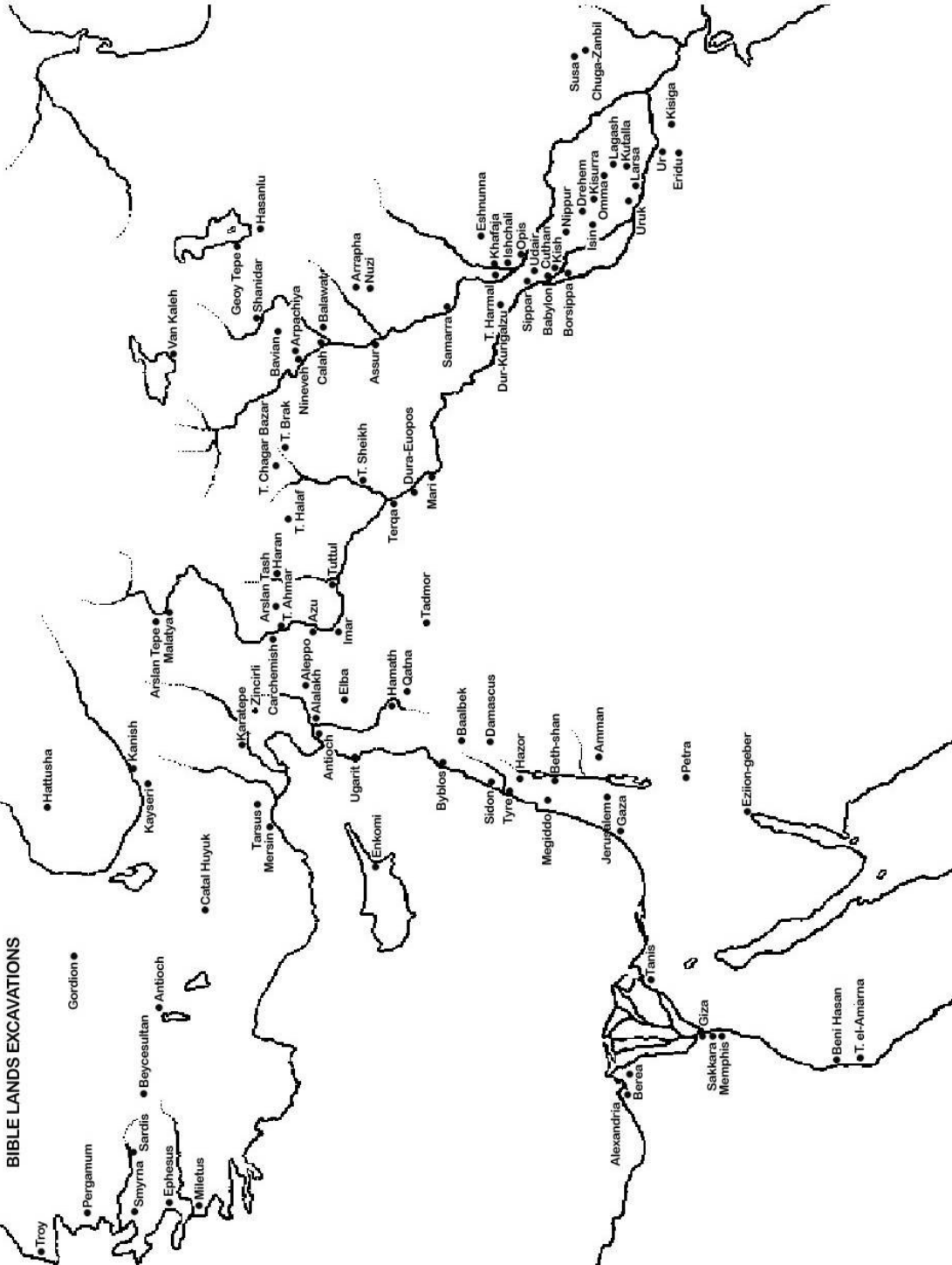
## KINGDOMS, CITIES AND LANDS

Some of the kingdoms and cities that ruled the Fertile Crescent were Armenia, Media, Persia, Sumer, Babylon, Assyria (Nineveh), Elam, Mesopotamia, Syria (Damascus), Phoenicia, Egypt and Canaan. Each of these kingdoms or cities occupied a different but neighboring place in the Fertile Crescent, though which ever nation was strongest at the time often ruled most or all the Fertile Crescent. The land of **Canaan** is of chief importance as we study the Bible lands; sometimes also called Palestine, it includes 6,600 square miles. Under the rule of King David the kingdom was expanded to 12,000 square miles; **King Solomon** ruled over 60,000 square miles.

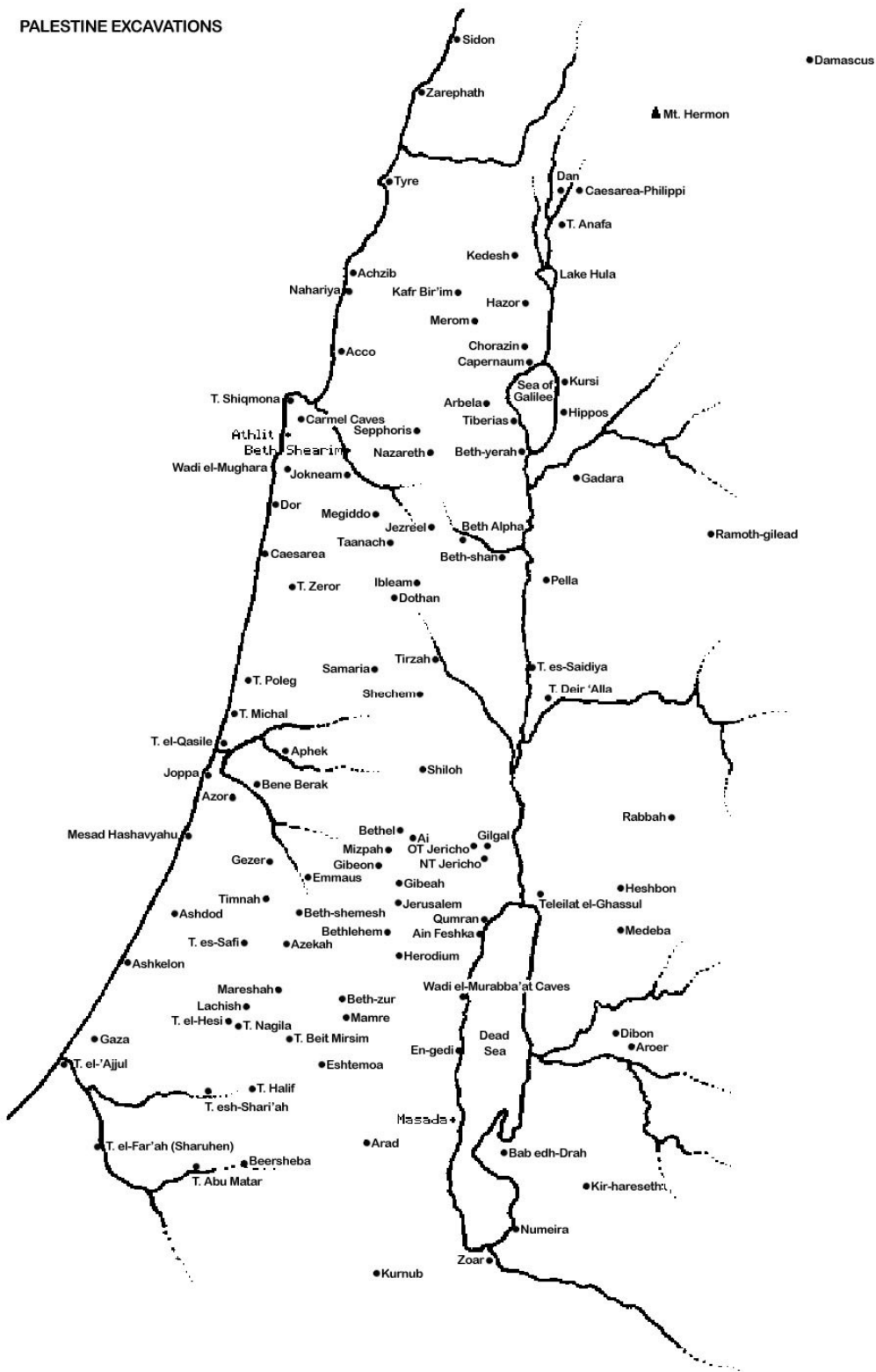
## QUESTIONS

1. What two mountains mark the northern and southern points of the Bible lands?
2. How many miles long and how many miles wide are the Bible lands?
3. What is the name of the rainbow-shaped strip of land between the desert and the mountains?
4. Name the five large bodies of water that border the Old Testament Bible lands.
5. Name the largest body of water in the Bible lands.
6. What lake (sea) is both the largest lake and the largest salt lake in the world?
7. What two bodies of water are on either side of the wilderness where the Israelites wandered for 40 years?
8. Name the largest freshwater lake in the world.
9. What two rivers come together and flow as one river into the Persian Gulf?
10. Name the longest river in the world.
11. On what mountain did Noah's ark come to rest?
12. What is the name shared by the two mountain ranges side by side just north of Canaan?
13. How high above sea level is Mount Hermon?
14. What is the name of the land that is of chief importance when studying the Bible?
15. Who ruled over more land, King David or King Solomon?





PALESTINE EXCAVATIONS



## CHAPTER 2

# BIBLE ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology could be defined as “digging up the past.” Bible archaeology is when something unearthed is about the Bible, something mentioned in the Bible or Bible times. “Digging up the past” can help people today better understand several Bible related subjects: (1) Is the Bible an ancient writing? (2) Did the Bible really tell of events long before they happened? (3) What was life like in Bible times? Bible archaeology proves that the Bible is very old and is truthful. It also reveals how those to whom the Bible was originally given understood those messages.



## THE BIBLE: AN ANCIENT WRITING

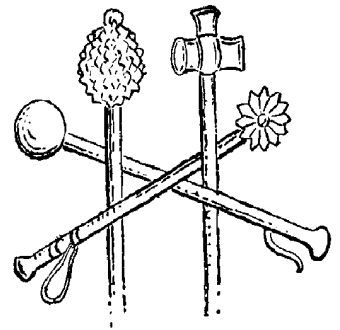


Archaeology shows that people have always used some form of writing. In the earliest writings, pictures told of man’s deeds. This type of writing was used before the great flood of Noah’s day; archaeologists have found stone tablets with picture writing that were written before the flood. Cities and palaces of the ancient world even maintained their own libraries with tens of thousands of *inscribed* tablets and stones. Evidence proves that the Bible could be written at

the time in history and by the people it claims. Other archaeological discoveries confirm the truthfulness and *accuracy* of the Bible. There is every reason to believe the Bible is an ancient writing handed down by God.

## WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

The **Tigris and Euphrates river valleys** were home to the first people on earth. The ruins of man’s **earliest cities** lie in this part of the world. These cities were made of **brick**. **Garbage and broken bricks** from destroyed buildings were used repeatedly as foundations to rebuild. Hundreds (even thousands) of years of destruction and rebuilding made a *unique parfait* of human history; each layer of earth holds



clues to everyday life at the same *site*, but in different times and sometimes by different peoples. Twenty different cities may rest on the same place and rise 100 feet from the original level of the city. **Broken pottery, tools, weapons, dried seeds and writings** in every layer of earth tell something about the people who used those items.

## THE BIBLE: FAITHFUL HISTORY BOOK

Some people began to doubt the truthfulness of the Bible; instead, they came to believe it is only a collection of stories and not true. However, **archaeology has unearthed ancient cities and references to kingdoms previously unknown to modern man except in the Bible**. Archaeology does not disprove, but unintentionally shows that the Bible is true in every case where both archaeology and the Bible speak about the same thing.

## THE BIBLE: FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS

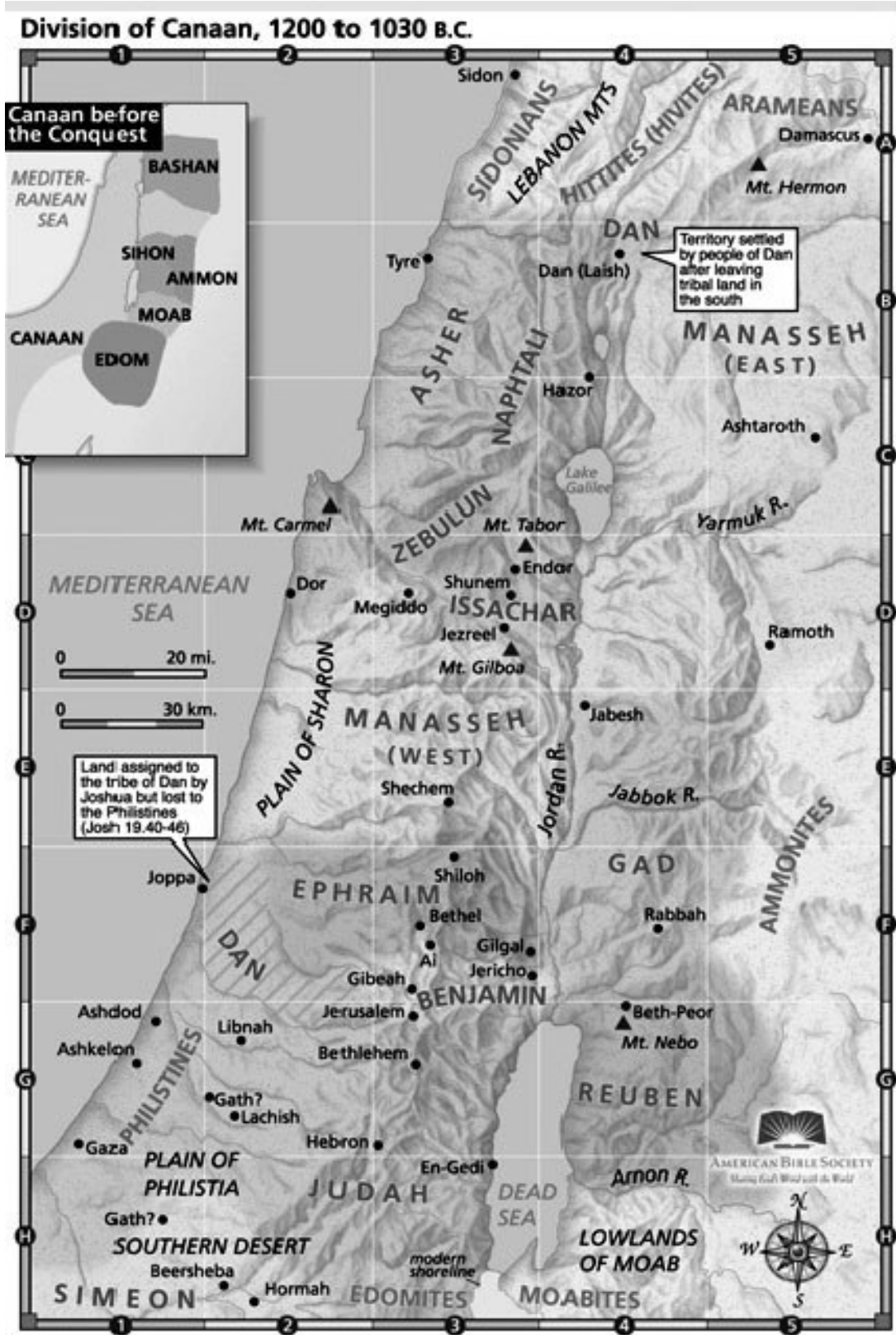
The Bible is much more than simply a thorough and reliable history book. It is an ancient volume that has been carefully preserved; writers called scribes made copies of the Bible throughout the generations of man's existence. The Bible also told of events (such as then future kingdoms and kings) which were to come; these prophecies did come true and prove the *divine source of the Bible*. From every examination, the Bible is reliable.

## COMPANIONS: GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE

Bible Geography, Bible Archaeology and the Bible are friends; they tell the same story, only better than were it told by one of them alone. The study of the Bible comes alive when the people and events studied can be placed in their physical settings. Geography teaches about the lands and places where ancient people lived and famous events occurred; archaeology reveals HOW people lived in those places in those times and how Bible illustrations and messages were understood. All this helps the student today better understand God's Word; after all, we should simply want to understand the Bible as it was intended to be understood by those to whom it was originally spoken or written. This study will often introduce archaeological discoveries at various points as Bible events are linked to Bible geography.

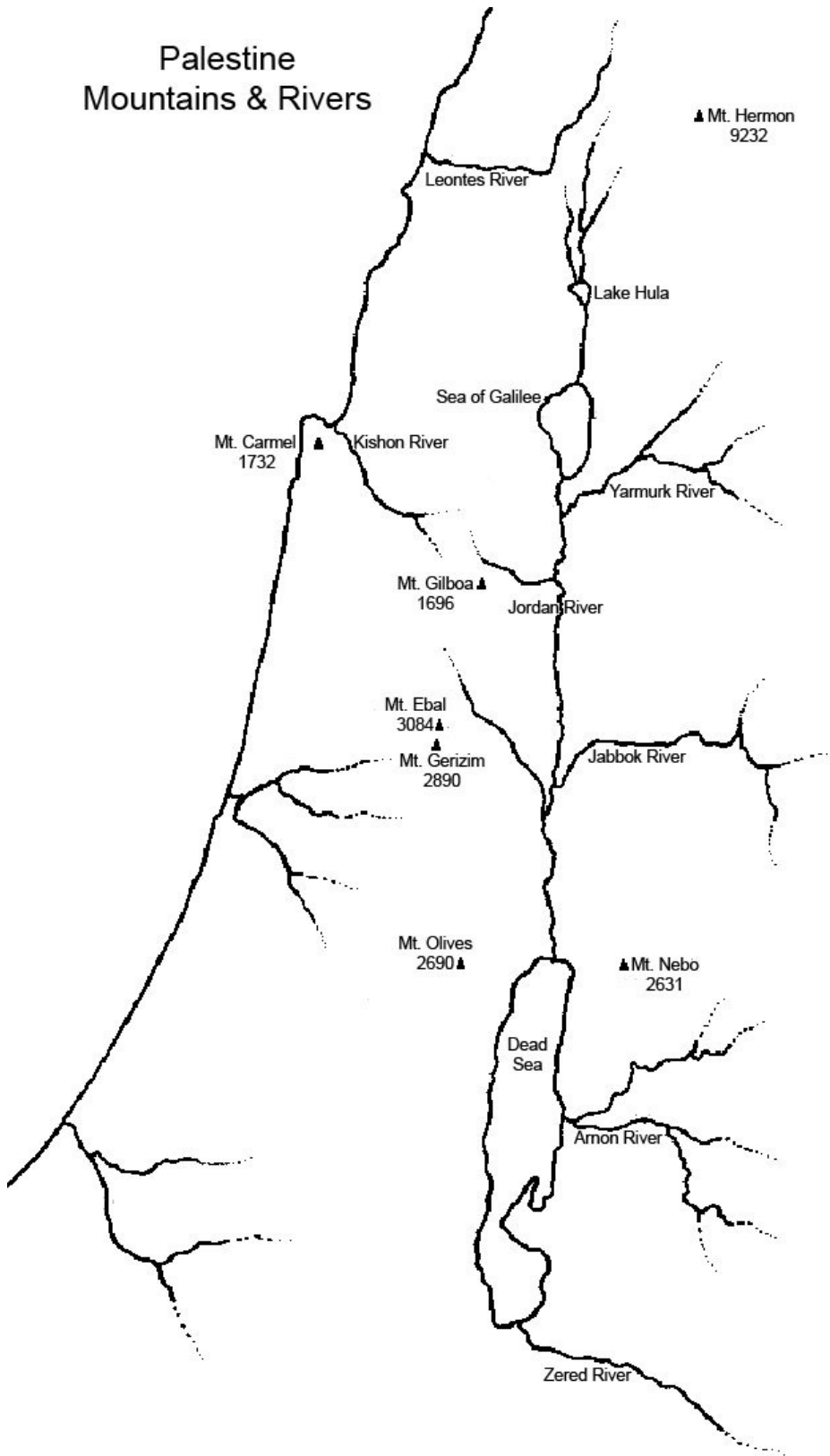
## QUESTIONS

1. Define "archaeology."
2. What is different about "Bible archaeology"?
3. Name the earliest type of writing.
4. Where did men build the first cities?
5. From what were the first cities made?
6. What was used for a foundation when new cities were built at the site of a former city?
7. Name some of the items found in the earth through archaeology.
8. How has archaeology helped people believe the Bible is true?
9. How can we know the Bible came from a divine source?





# Palestine Mountains & Rivers



## CHAPTER 3

# LAND OF PALESTINE

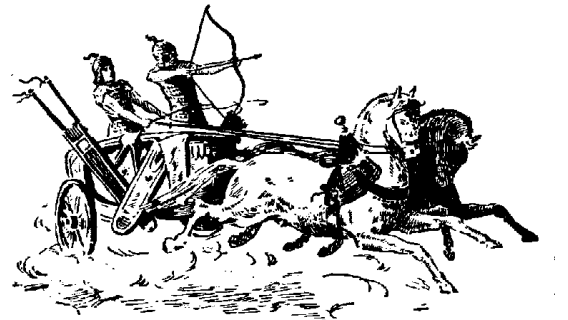


square miles. Later, under the rule of King Solomon, Israelite rule was expanded to include 60,000 square miles.

## THE FACE OF THE LAND

Coastal Plain: Along the Mediterranean coast of Palestine is a *coastal plain* except for where Mount Carmel stands. Between Mount Carmel and the city of Joppa the coastal plain is six to 12 miles wide and is called the **Plain of Sharon**; Jaffa Orange trees grow there. From Joppa south to Egypt the coastal plain is called the Plain of Philistia, named after the Philistines who once lived there. North of Mount Carmel the coastal plain is called the Plain of Accho. East of Mount Carmel, the **Plain of Esdraelon (or Valley of Jezreel)** links the coastal plain with the Jordan River Valley. The Plain of Esdraelon is a crossroads between places north, south and east; it is an important intersection in the fertile crescent. Therefore, it has been the *scene* of *countless* military battles over the centuries.

Shephelah (low hills): Low hills between the coastal plain and the Central *Range* of mountains are called the **Shephelah**. They formed a natural fence between the Philistines



and the nation of Israel. When the Philistines were stronger, they lived in these hills, but when Israel was stronger, Israel lived there. The Philistine *stronghold* was in the coastal plain, and the stronghold of Israel was in the mountains.

Central Range: Between the low hills (Shephelah) and the Jordan River Valley were mountains, the Central Range. These mountains were the primary dwelling place of Israel and vary in height above sea level from 1,800 to 4,000 feet.

Negeb: The Negeb is desert country. In the rainy season plants thrive. However, in the hot summer it is dry and *barren*. The most *prominent* city there is **Beersheba**, the southern most city of Palestine.

Jordan River Valley: From south of the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea the Jordan River Valley varies in width from two to 12 miles. On either side of the valley are steep cliffs. The mountains west of the Jordan are higher than those east of the river. Winding like a snake, the Jordan River weaves through *semi-tropical* jungle that once was the home of lions.



## WATERWAYS OF PALESTINE

Jordan River: The Jordan River has its *source* near the city of Dan and Mount Hermon. From there it flows 40 miles to Lake Hula (or Lake Merom), 15 miles further to the Sea of Galilee and 65 more miles to the Dead Sea. However, because it winds like a snake, the water actually travels about **200 miles** instead of the 120 miles between its source and the Dead Sea. It is five to 12 feet deep and 80 to 180 feet wide. In its travels it drops down hill 22 feet per mile for an overall drop *exceeding* 3,000 feet. It is no wonder the Jordan River drops so sharply since it feeds the lowest body of water on the face of the earth, the Dead Sea.

Lake Hula (Lake Merom): Twelve miles from the city of Dan and 40 miles east of the Mediterranean Sea, Lake Hula was about 11 feet deep. It and the swamp land around it has been drained in recent years.

Sea of Galilee: The pear shaped body of water south of Lake Hula has been called various names: Galilee, **Chinnereth, Genesareth, Tiberias**. It is up to 12½ miles long and seven and a half miles wide. The surface of the Sea of Galilee is 700 feet below sea level; the lake averages 12 feet deep but its deepest depth is 165 feet. Winds *funneling* through



the Jordan River Valley from the north can quickly whip calm seas into threatening waves; remember an *instance* when Jesus and his *apostles* faced such a dangerous adventure on the Sea of Galilee (Luke 8:22-24).

Dead Sea: The surface of the Dead Sea, also known as the Salt Sea, is the lowest body of water on the face of the earth. Its surface is about **1,300 feet below sea level** and the Dead Sea is another **1,300 feet deep**. The Dead Sea is 48 miles long by up to 10 miles wide. Being very hot in the area of the Dead Sea, water evaporates rapidly; the only natural escape for water in the Dead Sea is evaporation. Twenty-five percent of the water content is solid material, including a heavy *concentration* of salt.

Wadis: Several often dry brooks that fill during the rainy season are called wadis and flow into both the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, too.



## MOUNTAINS

Lebanon Mountains: The Lebanon Mountains run north and south on the west side of the Jordan River near its source. They average 7,000 feet above sea level; their highest peak is 10,200 feet.

Mount Zion: Mount Zion was originally one of the four hills on which the city of Jerusalem was built. Later, the name “Zion” was applied to the other hills as well and to the city of Jerusalem.

Mount Nebo: **Mount Nebo** is 12 miles east of the mouth of the Dead Sea. It was here that Moses died and was buried by God.

Mount Carmel: Like a thumb on the sea coast, **Mount Carmel** rises 500 feet as it juts out toward the Mediterranean Sea. Its highest peak is over 1,700 feet. Here Elijah *confronted* the prophets of Baal; Elijah called down fire from heaven to *consume* the sacrifice, altar and water in the ditch around the altar (1 Kings 18:17-40).

Mounts Ebal and Gerizim: Mount Ebal (over 3,000 feet high) and Mount Gerizim (almost 3,000 feet high) are in Samaria. It was here Joshua had the law of Moses read before all the people after their conquest of Canaan. The cursings of the law were read from **Mount Ebal**; the blessings of the law were read from **Mount Gerizim**.

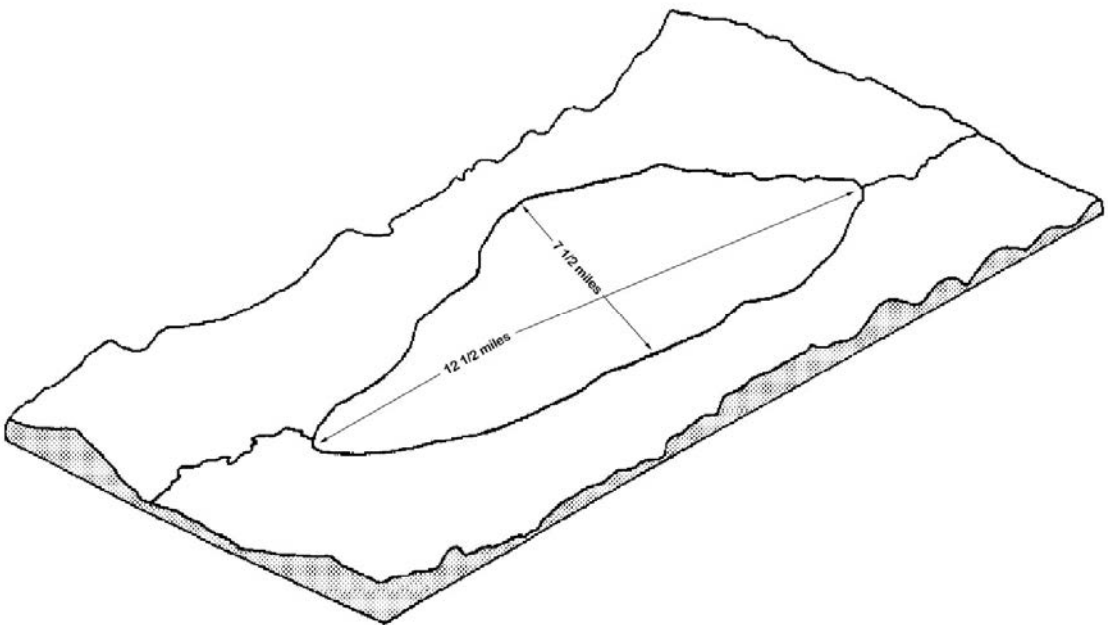


Mount Hermon: Mount Hermon stands about **9,200 feet** and is in the Anti-Lebanon Mountains on the east side of the Jordan River. Snow remains on its peaks all year round.

## QUESTIONS

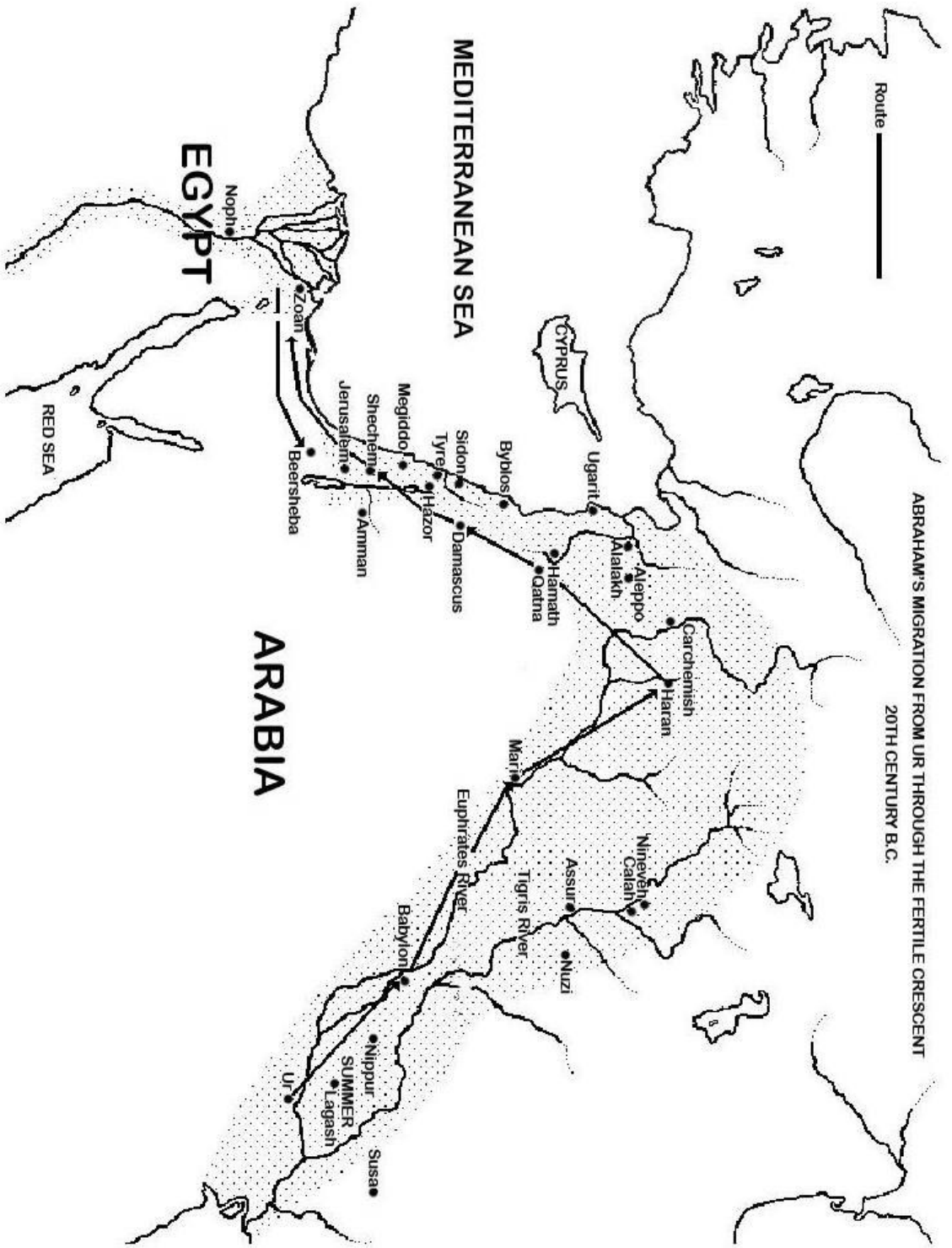
1. Which is bigger, Canaan or Palestine?
2. What is the name of the coastal plain between Mount Carmel and the city of Joppa?
3. Name the important plain east of Mount Carmel that is the crossroads of the Fertile Crescent.
4. What is the name of the low hills between the coastal plain and the Central Range?
5. What is the name of the southern most city in Palestine?
6. It is about 120 miles from the source of the Jordan River to the Dead Sea, but how far does the water actually travel?
7. The Sea of Galilee has been called by at least three other names too; what are they?
8. How far below sea level is the surface of the Dead Sea? How deep is it?
9. Where did Elijah confront the prophets of Baal?
10. Name the mount of “cursing.” Name the mount of “blessing.”
11. How high is Mount Hermon?
12. On what mountain peak did Moses die?

Label the lake and the river on this relief map.



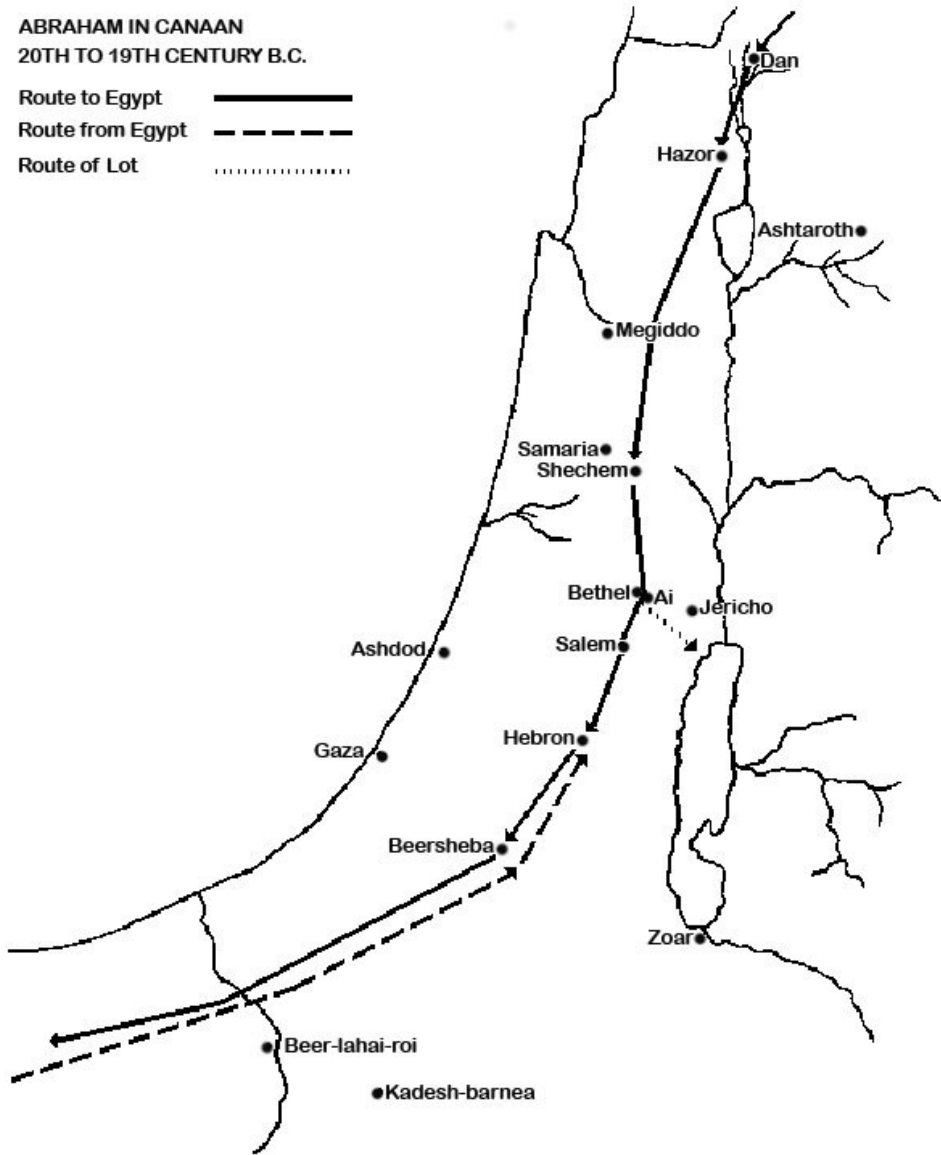
Label 23 places that are mentioned in chapter three. Try to do this from memory.





ABRAHAM IN CANAAN  
20TH TO 19TH CENTURY B.C.

Route to Egypt —————  
 Route from Egypt - - - - -  
 Route of Lot .....  
 .....





## CHAPTER 4

# PATRIARCHY

“Patriarchy” is a *compound* word meaning “**father**” and “**rule.**” This word represents the first period of man’s religious history and describes how God first *governed* mankind—through the fathers of their *respective* families. God ruled through the fathers who in turn ruled their families.

Patriarchy was, therefore, a **family**-type religion. Judaism, which was given to Israel (the Jews) in the time of Moses, was a **national**-type religion; and, the Gospel of Christ which we have today is a **universal**-type religion. For many years Judaism and Patriarchy were both in force, one for the Jews and the other for non-Jews. However, now the **Gospel** is the only religion given by God for all men everywhere.

Under Patriarchy, God spoke directly to the heads of families. The first family to whom God spoke was that of **Adam** and **Eve**. After God created all things, including the first couple, and placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, he gave them instructions. (1) **Populate the earth**, (2) **Exercise rule over the earth** (Genesis 1:28), (3) **Care for the Garden of Eden** and (4) **Not to eat the fruit of a certain tree** (Genesis 2:15-17).

It is *apparent* that God continued to give instruction to Adam and his family even after Adam and Eve were *expelled* from the Garden for their sins. Among other evidences, through Abel one sees the sacrifice of animals which God required throughout Patriarchy, Judaism and in a sense in the Gospel Age too (through the death of Christ on the cross). (Abel worshipped according to faith, which faith results only from the Word of God, Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17.)

## THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Though no one knows exactly where the Garden of Eden was located, it appears certain it was in the Fertile Crescent not far from the Persian Gulf. Four rivers, two of which can still be found today, watered Eden (Genesis 2:10-14).

Hiddekel (Tigris) River: The **Tigris River** has its source high in the Taurus Mountains. This river was also known as the **Hiddekel**. It flows southeast 1,150 miles before merging with the Euphrates River. From this *junction*, they flow together to the Persian Gulf about 100 miles away.

Euphrates River: The **Euphrates River** begins high in the mountains of modern Turkey and travels 1,675 miles southeast before joining the Tigris River. Known from that point onward to the Persian Gulf as the **Shatt al Arab**, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers flow as one the final **100 miles**.

Not only were these two rivers the primary sources of water for the Garden of Eden, they also contributed most of the water responsible for the so-called “Fertile Crescent.” This rainbow shaped piece of land *extended* from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea; north of it are mountains; south of it is desert.

On the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers the first *civilizations* were established. Man's earliest history has been unearthed through archaeology in this part of the world.

## THE GREAT FLOOD

Noah was born a little over 1,000 years after the creation. Six hundred years later, **Noah, his wife, three sons and their three wives** and a sampling of all animal life escaped the world of sin on the ark. Between the creation and the Great Flood, mankind became very wicked. God destroyed the world with a universal flood because of man's great **wickedness** and much **violence** by both man and beast (Genesis 6:6-13). God showed displeasure toward both man and animal life (Genesis 6:7).



Some students of the Bible believe dinosaurs roamed the earth between Creation and the Flood. The violence and corruptness attributed to both man and animals and God's displeasure toward both is *consistent* with the existence of dinosaurs during this period. Archaeology *confirms* the *co-existence* of dinosaurs and man *despite* denials by *evolutionists*. Also of possible significance, some reptiles continue to grow as long as they live. Since life spans were several hundred years long before the flood, dinosaurs may have been nothing more than oversized reptiles. Archaeology reveals at least some dinosaurs died in a *catastrophe* (such as those found frozen). The universal Flood was a sufficiently large catastrophe to destroy all dinosaurs as well as all other animal life along with mankind.

Mount Ararat: Finally, the flood began to decline and the ark came to rest in the mountains of **Ararat** (Genesis 8:4). The international boundary of the former Soviet Union and Turkey crosses through these mountains which lie between the Caspian and Black Seas. The exact location of the ark is still unknown.

## FAMOUS PATRIARCHS: Abraham

Several generations after the Flood, God called on a righteous man named Abram; later God renamed him Abraham. God instructed Abram to leave his home; he became a wanderer between his former home near the Persian Gulf and Egypt.

Ur of the Chaldees: **Ur** was a chief city on the Euphrates River in the Fertile Crescent a little over a hundred miles from the Persian Gulf. It was here that Abram was born and reared (Genesis 11:27-30).

Haran: **Terah** moved along with his son and daughter-in-law, Abram and Sarai, and his grandson, Lot, to Haran. This city was on a *tributary* to the Euphrates River about 60 miles north of the Euphrates. Haran was in northern Mesopotamia (land between the rivers).

Terah planned to travel later to Canaan but died in **Haran**. While at Haran, God instructed Abram to leave Haran and his father's house; so, Abram, his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot gathered their possessions and departed.

**Mesopotamia**: Mesopotamia means **land between the rivers**; the rivers meant are the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Mesopotamia included the right half of the arch that makes the Fertile Crescent. Ur was at the southeastern edge of Mesopotamia, whereas Haran is still at the northwestern edge. This stretch of land and often the larger Fertile Crescent too were controlled at various times by many different peoples (including Babylon and Assyria). Abraham sent his servant to **Mesopotamia** to bring back Rebekah to marry Isaac (Genesis 24:10).

**Canaan**: After the death of Terah, God sent Abram to Canaan. He took with him Sarai, Lot, great possessions and many servants (Genesis 12:1-5). Canaan was the land of Palestine **west** of the Jordan.

**Shechem (Sichem)**: The Lord appeared to Abram in Shechem in Canaan (Genesis 12:6). It was a walled town in the hill country later given to the tribe of Ephraim. Shechem was in the valley **between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim**.

**Bethel**: Abram camped near the town of Bethel (Genesis 12:8). This city was about **12** miles north of **Jerusalem**.

**Egypt**: Because of **famine in Canaan**, Abram went to Egypt (Genesis 12:10). Upon entering **Egypt** Abram and Sarai agreed to lie, saying Sarai was Abram's sister (verses 11-13). Sometimes the servants of God also sin, for which they must repent.

**Sodom**: Abram and Lot returned from Egypt to Bethel, but the land could not support the herds of both men. Lot chose the **choice land** near the evil city of Sodom (Genesis 13:5-13). Sodom, later destroyed by God, is thought to lie in ruins under the southern end of the Dead Sea.

**Dan**: **Lot** was taken captive when the city of Sodom was *plundered* (Genesis 14:14). **Abram** armed himself and his servants and pursued Lot's captors first to the city of Dan. This city marked the northern boundary of Canaan after its *occupation* by Israel many years later.

**Damascus**: Abram followed the *captors* to the city of Hobath near the city of Damascus (Genesis 14:15). **Damascus** is on what were anciently called the **Abanah and Pharpar rivers**. It lies at the junction of major trade routes in the Fertile Crescent. Here Lot was freed.

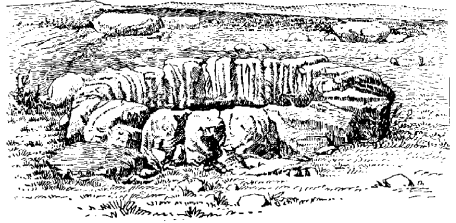
**Salem**: Upon his return after these battles, Abram met **Melchizedek** king of Salem (later called **Jerusalem**, Genesis 14:18). It was the home of the Jebusites until the time of King David when it was captured and made the capital of Israel.

**Hebron**: The Plain of Mamre, later known as **Hebron**, became home to Abram (Genesis 13:18; 18:1). Hebron was in the hill country of Judah. It was David's capital for the first seven years of his reign. Abraham bought a burial plot near Hebron.

**Gerar**: **Gerar** was a city in southern Canaan *inhabited* by Philistines. It was here Abraham told the lie again about Sarah not being his wife (Genesis 20:1-2).

**Beersheba:** This city is the southern most city in the land of Canaan (Judges 20:1). It was at **Beersheba** that Abraham dug a well and planted a grove of trees (Genesis 21:25-34).

**Mt. Moriah:** God called upon Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice at **Mt. Moriah** (Genesis 22:1-2). Mt. Moriah is one of the four hills on which Jerusalem was built.



Abraham received promises of God which were more fully realized by his *descendants*. Abraham himself owned only the Cave of Machpelah at Hebron which he purchased for a burial site. Finally, at the age of **175**, Abraham died and was buried with Sarah who had *preceded* him in death.

Hebrews 11:8-17 praise Abraham as a man of faith. James 2:23 says Abraham was the **“Friend of God.”**

## QUESTIONS

1. Patriarchy is a compound word meaning what?
2. Patriarchy was a \_\_\_\_\_-type religion; Judaism was a \_\_\_\_\_-type religion; and, the Gospel is an \_\_\_\_\_-type religion.
3. What is the **ONLY** religion given by God for **ALL MEN** everywhere today?
4. Whose family was the first to whom God spoke under Patriarchy?
5. What four instructions did God give the first couple in the Garden of Eden?
6. What two rivers that were in the Garden of Eden can still be found today?
7. What is another name for the Tigris River?
8. After the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers merge, they travel for how many miles to the Persian Gulf and bear what name?
9. How many people were on the ark?
10. God destroyed the world with a universal flood for what two reasons?
11. Did the water of the Great Flood cover the whole earth?
12. The ark came to rest after the flood where?
13. What was the name of Abraham’s hometown?
14. Name Abraham’s father and where he died.
15. What does Mesopotamia mean?
16. Rebekah, Isaac’s wife, was from where?
17. On what side of the Jordan River was Canaan?
18. Where was Shechem?
19. Bethel is how many miles north of what city?
20. Why did Abraham go to Egypt?
21. Why did Lot choose to live near (and finally in) Sodom?
22. TRUE or FALSE? Abraham and Lot took a vacation in Dan?
23. On what two important rivers was the city of Damascus built?
24. Major trade routes in the Fertile Crescent crossed at what city in chapter four?
25. What is another name for the city of Salem?

26. Who was the king of Salem?
27. What city became home to Abraham and was where he bought a burial site?
28. Twice Abraham lied about Sarah being his wife; where was he the first time he told this lie? In what city was Abraham the second time he told that lie?
29. At what city did Abraham dig a well and plant a grove of trees?
30. On what mountain was Abraham told to offer Isaac as a sacrifice?
31. How old was Abraham when he died?
32. “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the \_\_\_\_\_”  
(James 2:23).

PATRIARCHS IN CANAAN  
20TH TO 18TH CENTURY B.C.



## CHAPTER 5

# PATRIARCHY (CONTINUED)

### FAMOUS PATRIARCHS: ISAAC

The birth of Isaac, his journey to Mt. Moriah with Abraham (where Abraham intended to sacrifice him as God commanded) and Isaac's marriage to Rebekah were noticed while discussing Abraham's life. Sometime after the death of Abraham, twin sons were born to Isaac and Rebekah. **Esau, the first born**, grew to be a **hunter** (Genesis 25:27). **Jacob, the second son**, was a smart man who sometimes tricked his brother, father-in-law and other people. He became a **shepherd**. Once Jacob sold food to this hungry brother who was returning from the field. The price of that meal was Esau's birthright (the privilege of the first born child to inherit great possessions and blessings). The promises God made before to Abraham were repeated to **Jacob**, whose name God later changed to "Israel."

Isaac journeyed to Gerar. This city belonged to the Philistines and was home to **Abimelech**, King of the Philistines. While in this city Isaac told the same lie Abraham and Sarah told twice before; Isaac and Rebekah pretended to be brother and sister.

After leaving Gerar, Isaac traveled to Beersheba. Isaac's journeys were guided by God. While at **Beersheba**, God also made the same promises to Isaac that he made to Abraham (Genesis 26:3-4, 24). These promises were not only about **land and many descendants** (children and their children, and so on) but included **the coming of Jesus Christ** through whom the whole world could be blessed.

When Isaac was old and blind, he told Esau to hunt deer and prepare the meat for him, after which he would give Esau a blessing and his inheritance as the first born child. However, Rebekah, Isaac's wife, and their son, Jacob, tricked Isaac while Esau was away hunting. **Jacob wore some of Esau's clothes and covered his hands and neck with goat skins** to make Isaac believe Esau had returned. Instead of venison, Rebekah prepared a meal of goat. Through this deception Jacob received the blessing and inheritance intended for Esau. Many years later, after the anger between Jacob and Esau ended, Isaac died at the age of **180** years old at **Hebron**.

### FAMOUS PATRIARCHS: JACOB

Afraid for his life, Jacob fled from his angry brother, Esau. Jacob was also instructed by his mother and father to go to Haran (where other family members lived) to find himself a wife. While on his journey, God spoke to him in a dream at the city of **Bethel**. It was there God repeated the promises first made to Abraham to Jacob also (Genesis 28:13, 14).

Jacob lived the next twenty years in Haran working for Laban (Genesis 31:38). During that time he became wealthy, married Laban's daughters Leah and Rachel, and through his wives and two servant women he also married had twelve sons and one daughter

**(Dinah)**. Later, Rachel died while giving birth to Jacob's last son, **Benjamin** (Genesis 25:16-20). **Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin** became the fathers of tribes of Israel bearing their names (upon leaving Egyptian slavery hundreds of years later). **Joseph** bore two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, who also became fathers of tribes in Israel. **Levi** became the father of the priestly tribe which was scattered throughout the other tribes after they settled in Canaan.

After leaving Haran, Jacob returned to Canaan. Esau no longer hated his brother for the trickery he committed and warmly greeted Jacob. Jacob settled near Shechem; later he lived at Bethel, Bethlehem, Hebron and finally Egypt. Jacob's wife, Rachel, died at **Bethlehem**. Jacob's son, Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers who were tending sheep at **Dothan**.

Several years later Joseph rose from slave and prisoner in Egypt to second highest ruler of that nation. When famine again occurred in Canaan, Joseph brought Jacob and his brothers to Egypt where their descendants remained for hundreds of years. Joseph gave the land of Goshen to his family; it was among the best land in Egypt.



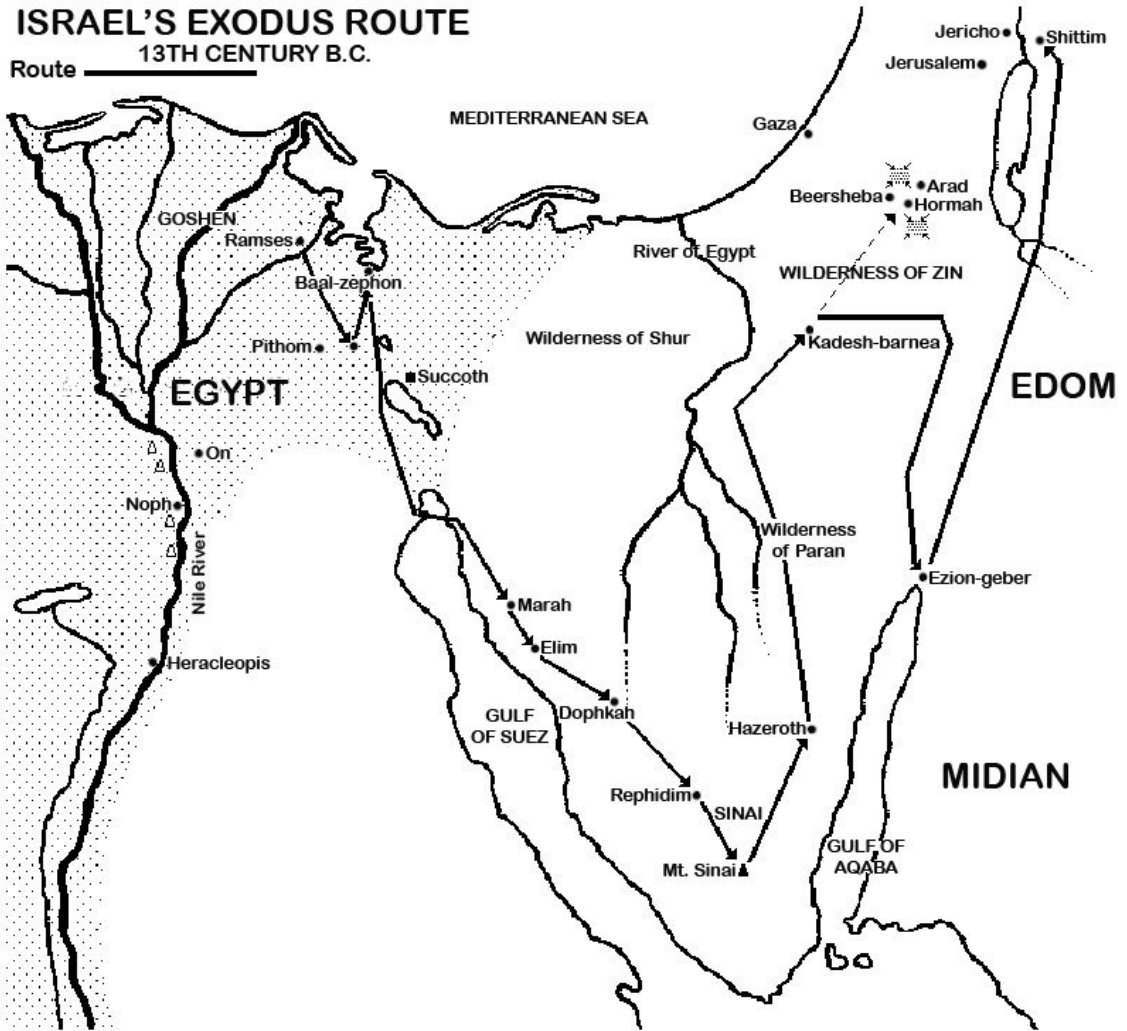
## QUESTIONS

1. The twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah were whom?
2. Which son was born first?
3. Which son was a hunter? Which son was a shephard?
4. Which son's name was changed by God to Israel?
5. Who was the king of the Philistines in Isaac's day?
6. The promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were about what three things?
7. How did Jacob trick his father Isaac into believing he was his brother Esau?
8. Isaac was how many years old when he died at what city?
9. Where was Jacob when God spoke to him in a dream and repeated the promises first made to Abraham?
10. Name the children of Jacob.
11. In what city did Rachel die?
12. What happened at Dothan?



# ISRAEL'S EXODUS ROUTE

Route 13TH CENTURY B.C.



## CHAPTER 6

# THE JEWISH EXODUS

## THE LAND OF EGYPT

Egypt represents one of the oldest civilizations; its people are descendants from Noah's son, Ham. The nation touches the Mediterranean Sea and is nestled in the Nile River Valley. Without the Nile River, Egypt would be desert like the deserts east and west of the country. Therefore, Egypt has been called "**the gift of the Nile.**"

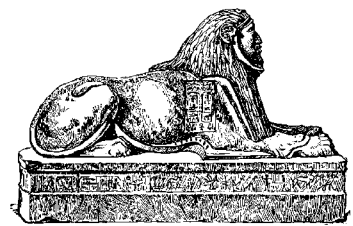
The Nile River is the **longest river in the world**, and unlike most rivers, **flows north**. Since higher ground in Egypt is in the southern part of the country, Upper Egypt is in the southern part of the nation and Lower Egypt is in the northern part. The whole country is about the size of the state of New Hampshire (9,600 square miles).

The mouth of the Nile River divides into several branches as it enters the Mediterranean Sea. The two largest branches are called the **Pelusiac** (on the east) and the **Canopic** (on the west). Southeast of the Pelusiac lies the land of Goshen which Joseph gave to Jacob, his brothers and their descendants.

The branches of the Nile River entering the Mediterranean Sea created the rich Nile Delta. It was here that for centuries the Nile River **deposited the fertile soils** it gathers from its long course from central Africa. Goshen and its Jewish inhabitants enjoyed the rich farmland of the Nile Delta.

The Egyptian people were short, dark complexioned, having deep-set eyes, large cheek bones, thick lips, short nose and straight black hair. Their language was similar to Hebrew. Egyptian writing is called **hieroglyphics**, a form of picture writing.

Most of what is known about Egypt of long ago has been unearthed through archaeology. Especially revealing have been the exploration of the great **pyramids** built in the desert. The desert climate preserved writings and other objects that would have decayed in many other parts of the world. One of the most striking notes about the Egyptians was their engineering skills by which they constructed mammoth pyramids and the Sphinx.

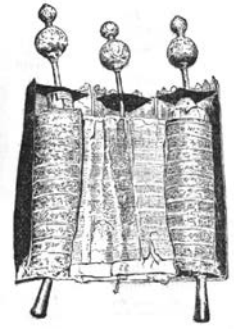


Sphinx of Zaan

Once, Egypt was a world empire. At other times it was governed by foreign kings (pharaohs). It was one of these foreign rulers who appointed Joseph to second highest authority in all Egypt. Later, when Egyptians again ruled themselves, the Hebrews were hated and made slaves.

**Memphis** was the capital of ancient Egypt. The word "Memphis" means "city of good abode." It lies ten miles south of Cairo. The chief city of Goshen was **Rameses**; it was a store city built by Hebrew slaves.

Alexandria was a great shipping port and an important cultural city. It was built by Alexander the Great. It was here that a large Greek-speaking Jewish colony flourished centuries after the Hebrew exodus from Egyptian slavery. The **Septuagint**, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, was produced in **Alexandria**.



## THE EXODUS



The enslavement of the Hebrews, the birth of Moses and the ten plagues 80 years after Moses' birth preceded the dramatic exodus of the Hebrew people from Egypt. God miraculously caused the Red Sea to part, providing them a route of escape from the pursuing Egyptian army. When the Egyptians tried to follow the Hebrew people, God caused the walls of water to collapse and drown the soldiers.

Crossing the Red Sea, the Jews (as they were called much later) entered the **Sinai Peninsula**. There they wandered for forty years because of lack of faith in God. The Sinai Peninsula is the triangular piece of land between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba. It is a wilderness or desert; five individual wilderness areas are named (Shur, Etham, Sin, Paran and Zin). Mountain plateaus rise from 2,000 to 2,500 feet in this area. There is little water or vegetation.

The most important single mountain in the Sinai Peninsula was **Mount Sinai**. Moses twice received the ten commandments on tables of stone from God. At the foot of this mountain the children of Israel made a golden calf and worshipped it. This angered both Moses and God. The exact site of Mount Sinai is unknown today; at least three peaks are thought by various people to be the original Mount Sinai.



Moses had lived on the Sinai Peninsula for forty years in self-imposed exile after fleeing Egypt when he killed a taskmaster. The Amalekites also lived there and once fought with the nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 25:17-19; Exodus 17:8-16).

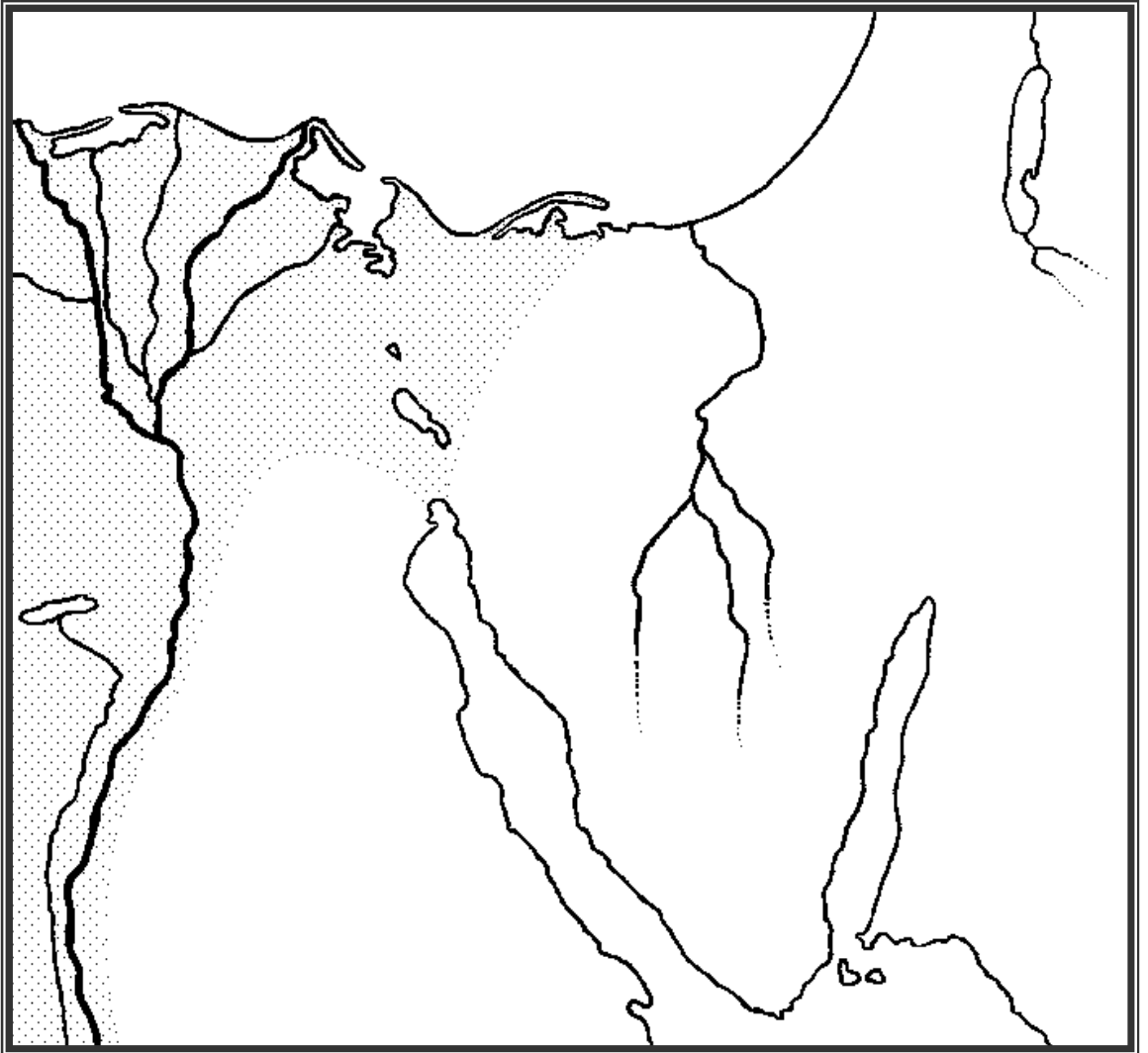
The nation of Edom, descendants of Esau, occupied the land southwest of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. The land is mountainous. The city of Petra was a fortress carved out of rock in Edom. En route to Canaan, the Israelites asked permission to travel

through Edom, but were refused. Because of their **ancestral relationship to the Edomites**, Israel was not allowed to fight Edom. Therefore, the Jews went around Edom and came up on the east side of the Dead Sea.

This route did result in confrontation between the Hebrews and the Amorites and the Moabites. Arriving on the east side of Canaan, two and a half tribes decided to settle the land there (**Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh**). Here also Moses died and was buried by God on **Mount Nebo**; Moses was not allowed to enter Canaan because of an occasion of rebellion against God. Aaron, Moses' brother and high priest, had died already. Only **Joshua and Caleb** remained of the men twenty-one years or older who left Egyptian slavery forty years earlier. The rest died in the wilderness and were not permitted to enter Canaan because of their disbelief in and rebellion against God. The massive nation of the Hebrews just east of the Jordan River was a new generation.

## QUESTIONS

1. Egypt has been called what?
2. Two things are especially different about the Nile River from most other rivers; what are they?
3. The Nile River has two main branches as it empties into the Mediterranean Sea; name them.
4. What is a delta?
5. What was Egyptian writing called?
6. For what are the ancient Egyptians best remembered?
7. Name the capital of ancient Egypt.
8. Name the chief city of Goshen.
9. At what city was the Greek translation of the Old Testament made?
10. What is the name of the Greek translation of the Old Testament?
11. What is the name of the land where the Israelites wandered for forty years?
12. Where did Moses receive the Ten Commandments?
13. Why did the Jews not attack the country of Edom when that nation refused to allow them to cross through their country?
14. Which tribes decided to stay on the east side of the Jordan River?
15. Where did Moses die?
16. Name the two men who left Egypt and survived the wilderness wandering to enter Canaan.

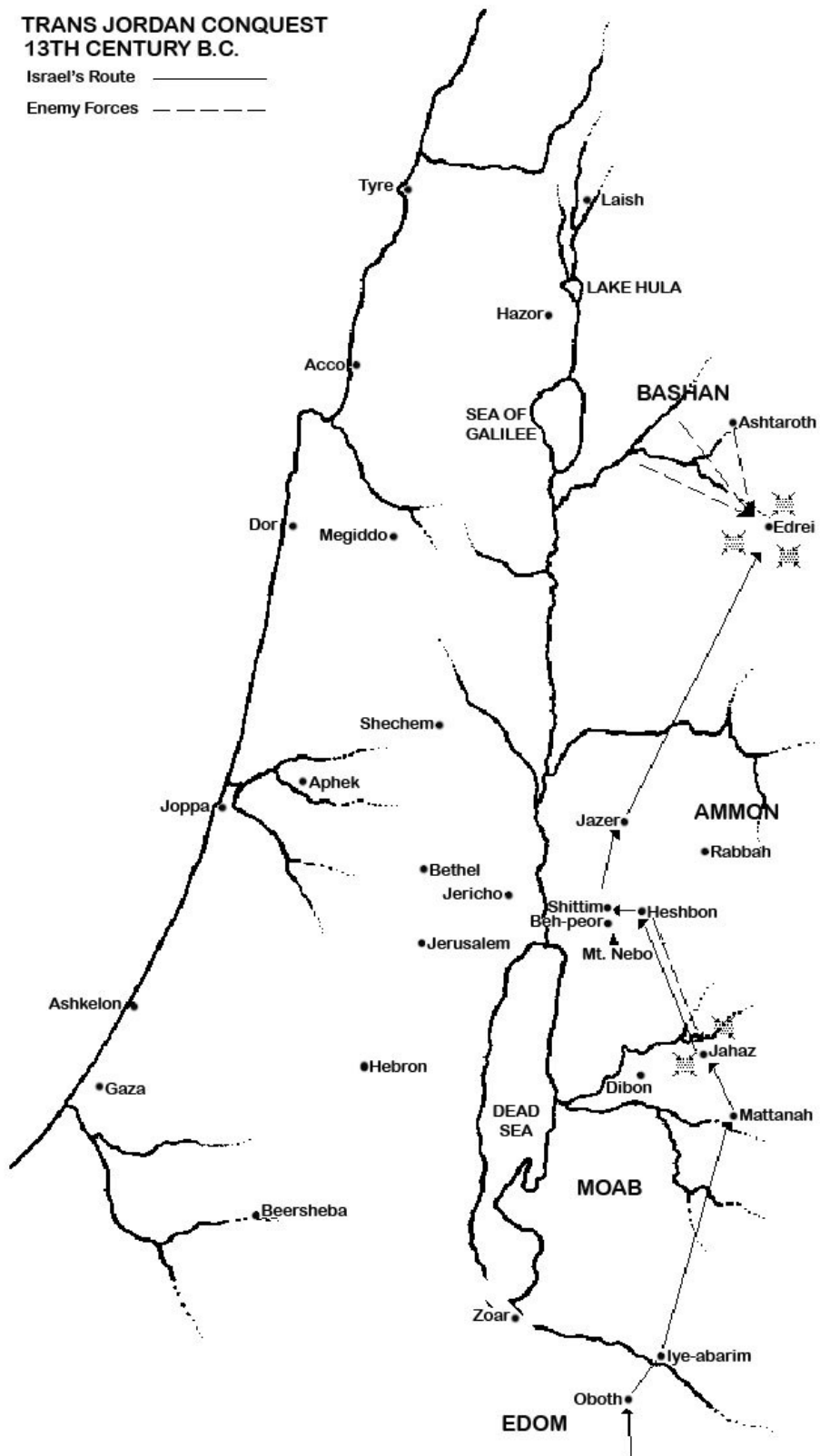


Label 15 places that are mentioned in Chapter Six.

TRANS JORDAN CONQUEST  
13TH CENTURY B.C.

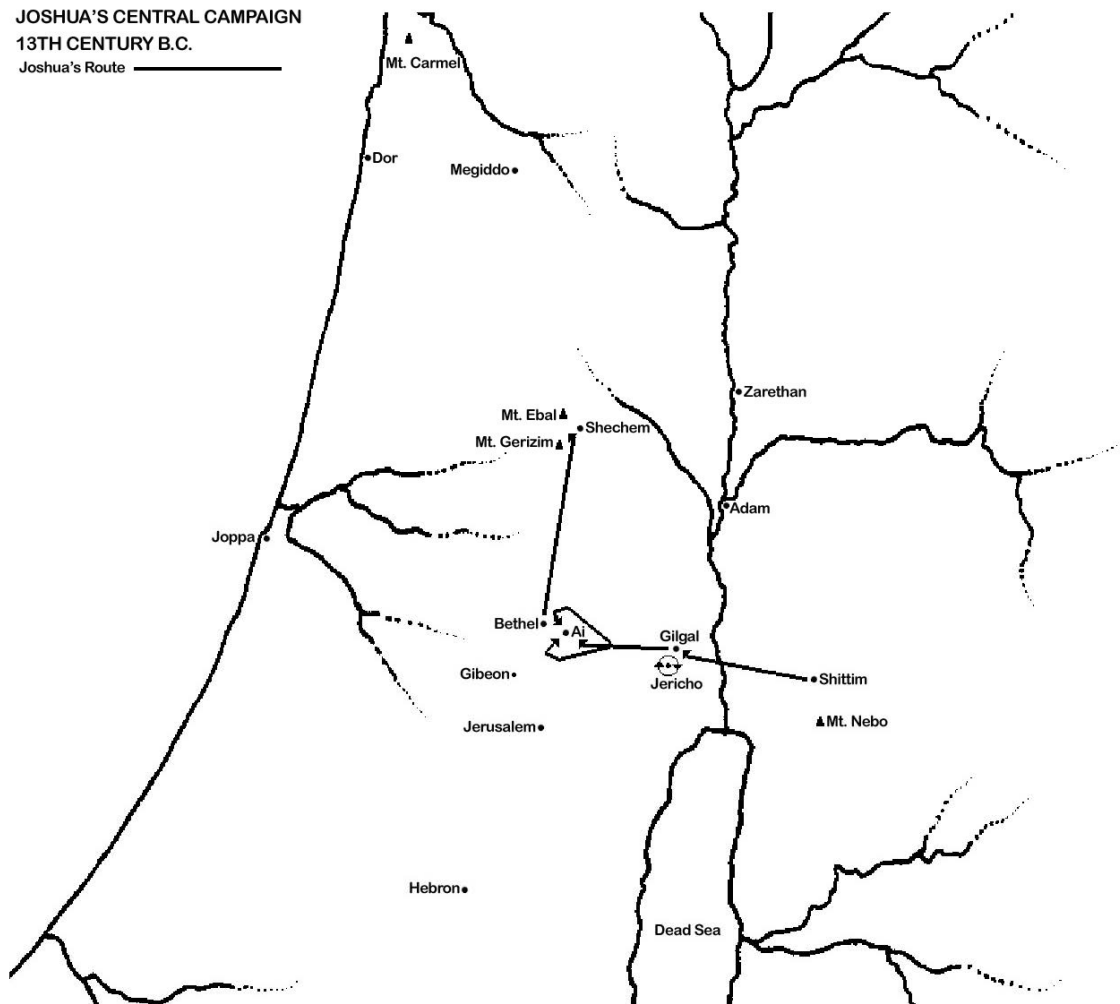
Israel's Route —————

Enemy Forces - - - - -



JOSHUA'S CENTRAL CAMPAIGN  
13TH CENTURY B.C.

Joshua's Route —————

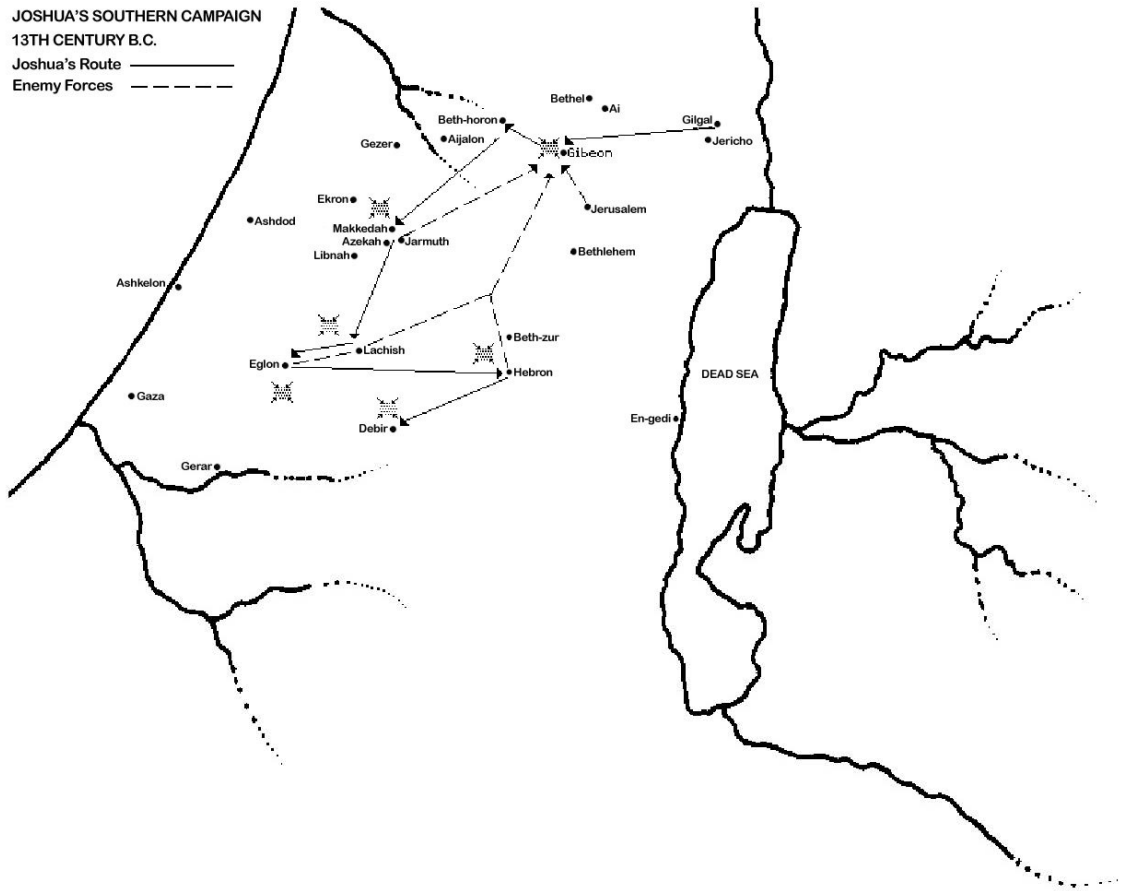


JOSHUA'S SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN

13TH CENTURY B.C.

Joshua's Route —————

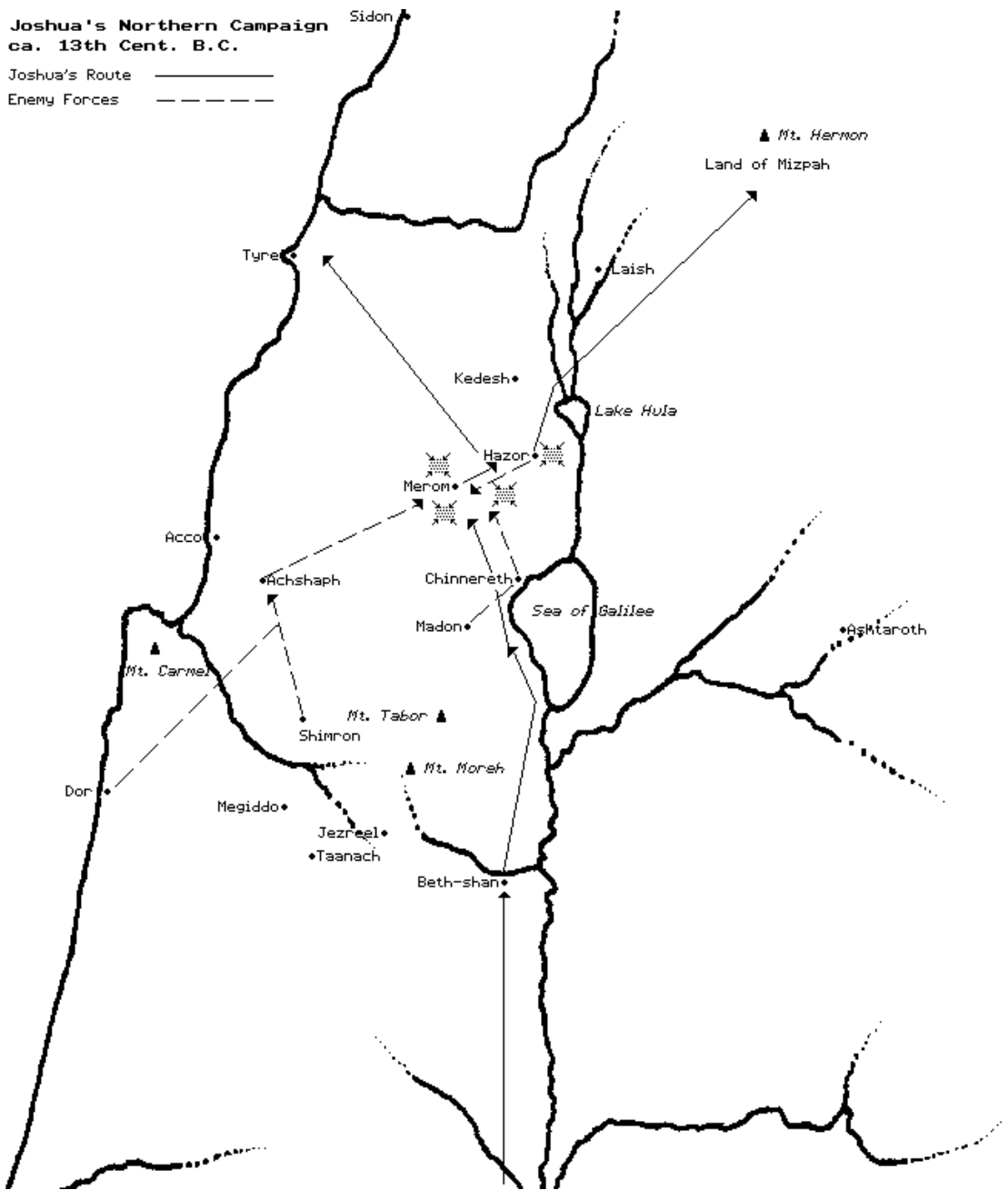
Enemy Forces - - - - -





**Joshua's Northern Campaign  
ca. 13th Cent. B.C.**

Joshua's Route —————  
Enemy Forces - - - - -



## CHAPTER 7

# CONQUEST OF CANAAN

## THE CONQUEST OF THE TRANSJORDAN

Before the death of Moses, the nation of Israel conquered the land east of the Jordan River. This territory was called the **Trans-Jordan**; the first part of the word, “trans,” means “across.” Thus, “Trans-Jordan” means the land across the Jordan River from Canaan. Two and a half tribes were allowed to settle here after they agreed to help the other tribes conquer Canaan.

## THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

After the death of Moses, Joshua led the Israelites across the Jordan River. Once over the river, they camped at **Gilgal**; they used this site east of the city of Jericho from which to launch their attacks on Canaanite cities.

The first city attacked by Israel was the walled **Jericho**. The people marched around the city seven days; on the last day they all shouted or blew trumpets. The walls fell flat. Jericho was destroyed and burned.

The city of Jericho is about 16 miles east of Jerusalem and about 800 feet below sea level. Jerusalem is on a mountain about 2,500 feet above sea level. This is a drop of about 3,300 feet between the two cities.

The city of **Ai** was attacked next. However, Achan kept some of the captured things from Jericho for himself. Therefore, God allowed them to be defeated. After Achan’s sin was discovered and he was punished, Israel later defeated the city of Ai.

*Representatives* from the city of **Gibeon**, six miles north of Jerusalem, pretended not to be *inhabitants* of Canaan. Joshua was tricked into making an agreement with that city whereby Israel would not attack it. After the lie was discovered, Joshua still kept the agreement but made that city servant to Israel.

Even when the cities of Canaan joined to fight Joshua and his people, God permitted the people of God to win. First, Joshua led his army against the southern cities when they attacked the city of Gibeon. God caused a hailstorm to kill the fleeing armies of Israel’s enemies. Among the cities conquered were Eglon and Hebron.

Northern cities also banded together to resist the oncoming people of God. However, they too were defeated near Lake Merom. Not all the inhabitants of Canaan were defeated; for centuries the enemies that remained troubled Israel. For instance, the coastal plain was kept by fierce people, the **Philistines**. The tribe of **Dan** was given the land still occupied by the Philistines. For this reason, some people from the tribe of Dan looked for some other place to live. They traveled north and conquered a city that they renamed, Dan. The Book of Judges records several battles fought over the course of about 300 years against some of the peoples left in Canaan.

God commanded Israel to conquer the people of Canaan because they were wicked. They did not believe in or worship God. If God had allowed the *heathen* people to remain in the land, their bad influence on Israel would have led God's people into sin, too. Israel failed to conquer all the people, and they did lead the people of Israel to worship idols and commit many other sins. Israel failed to do what God commanded them in especially three areas: (1) not killing all the wicked heathen, (2) worshipping *idols* and (3) allowing their children to marry the wicked people.

When the land of Canaan was divided among the tribes, there was no place for the tribe of **Levi**. The Levites were given 48 cities scattered throughout the tribes.

Many years later, the Jews asked for a king and **Saul** was chosen by God to be king. Following him, **David** was made king. After David, **Solomon** was appointed king. The next king ruled harshly and caused the kingdom to split into the northern and southern kingdoms. The name "Judah" came to represent the southern kingdom, and the northern kingdom was called "Israel." The ten northern tribes of Israel were wicked and grew more wicked year after year. Finally, God caused the heathen kingdom of **Assyria** to defeat Israel and take her people away as slaves. Sadly, the southern kingdom of Judah later was also defeated and taken away into slavery because of great sin; God caused the nation of **Babylon** to war against Judah. After several years in slavery, God permitted some of the Jews to return to Canaan and rebuild their cities.

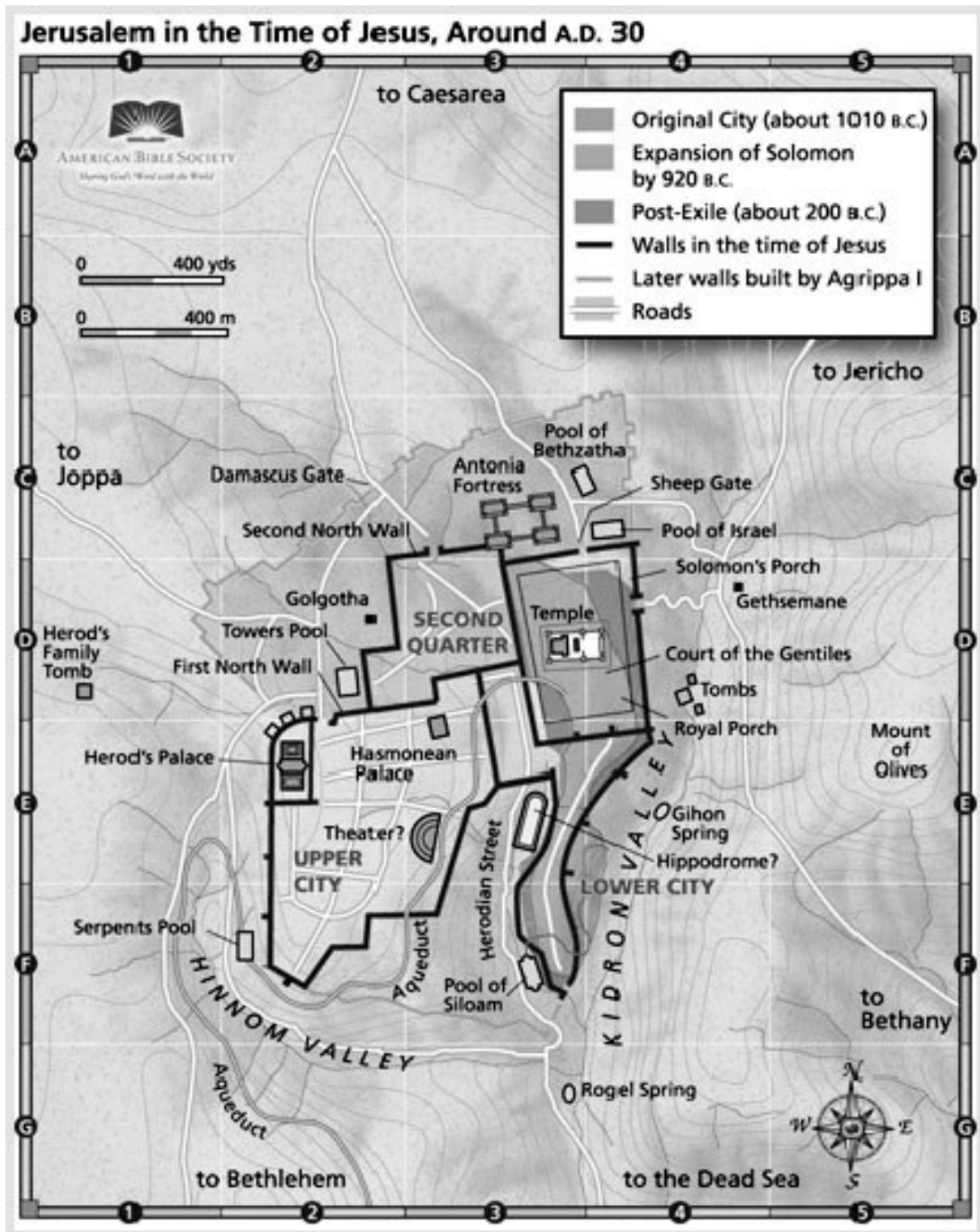


Hundreds of years later the Roman Empire ruled Canaan. It was during this period Jesus Christ was born. Over the years, some of the cities changed names. Often cities were destroyed in war and new cities were built upon the ruins of the former cities. Today, many of the cities of ancient Bible history are cities in which people today live. Other cities have been abandoned and are being re-discovered through archaeology, "digging up the past."

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## QUESTIONS

1. What is the land east of the Jordan called?
2. Where did the Israelites camp while attacking the cities of Canaan?
3. Name the first city attacked.
4. Name the second city attacked.
5. Name the city whose people tricked Israel.
6. What heathen nation lived on the coastal plain?
7. Which tribe of Israel was given the coastal plain but unable to live there?
8. Which tribe of Israel was given 48 cities scattered throughout the tribes?
9. Name the first three kings of the people of Israel.
10. What two heathen nations were allowed to make slaves of God's people?



## CHAPTER 8

# JERUSALEM

## INTRODUCTION

The city of Jerusalem is about 30 miles east of the **Mediterranean Sea** and 14 miles west of the northern end of the **Dead Sea**. It is five miles north of **Bethlehem**, the birth place of Jesus, and 120 miles south of **Mount Hermon**. Followers of **Islam, Judaism** and **Christianity** revere Jerusalem. For both religious and political reasons, Jerusalem continues to be the *site of unrest* and deadly battles. **Jesus Christ was crucified** outside the walls of Jerusalem on a cross between two thieves. Jesus rose from the grave three days after his death. Fifty days after his death, the Holy Spirit *empowered* Jesus' apostles to preach the Gospel and **the church began**. That day about 3,000 souls were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins and added to the church (Acts 2).

## A CITY OF SEVERAL NAMES

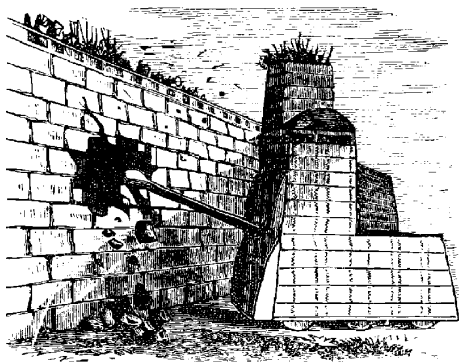
Throughout history the city of Jerusalem has worn many other names too. Biblically, this city was first known as Salem (Genesis 14:18); it was here that the priest and king, Melchizekek, lived in Abraham's day. Before its conquest by King David's armies, it was called Jebus (Judges 19:10). Though additional biblical and political names have been variously *assigned* to the city, it is enough for the student of this study to remember the names **Salem, Jebus and Jerusalem**. The several different names for Jerusalem resulted from its possession by many different peoples; often when Jerusalem was conquered, its new owners gave it a new name. Finally, after bearing several names over the centuries, the name Jerusalem was *restored* to the city. It is by this name (Jerusalem) the city is known today.

## A CITY OF MANY HILLS AND VALLEYS

Jerusalem rests on top of four *prominent* hills: **Mount Zion, Mount Moriah, Hill of Ophel and Hill of Acra**. It was on Mount Moriah Abraham was directed by God to offer his son, Isaac. Much later, the temple was built here. Sometimes Scripture refers to the city of Jerusalem as Mount Zion (Isaiah 2:2-3).

These hills are peaks in the Central Range of mountains that run through the middle of Canaan from north to south. Jerusalem rises about **2,500** feet above *sea level*. The city of Jericho, 16 miles



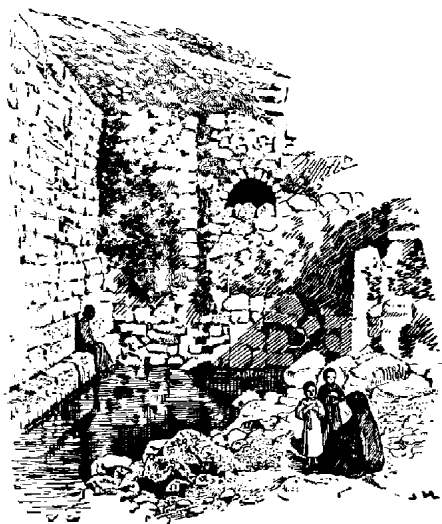
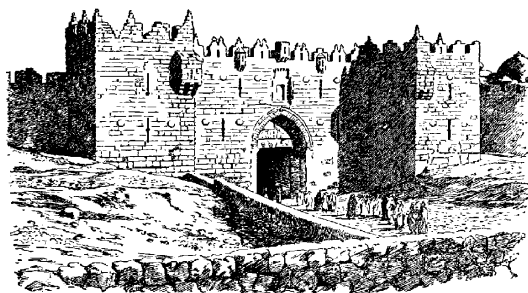


Valley of Jehoshaphat); in it is the **Kidron Brook**. *Intersecting* these two valleys and coming southward from the center of the city was the **Tyropeon Valley**. Across from the Kidron Valley was the **Mount of Olives** from which Jesus *ascended* back to heaven.

## A WALLED CITY

A series of walls surround the city of Jerusalem. It was usual in ancient times to build walls around cities to protect their *inhabitants* from the dangers of **wild animals and enemy armies**. As cities grew in size, new walls were built to include new areas of the city, too.

The walls of Jerusalem have kept many armies out and unable to conquer it. The Israelites were unable to possess it until the time of David, though Joshua hundreds of years earlier led a *conquest* of Canaan. Once, Jerusalem's walls prevented Assyria from taking the city. However, **Babylon** and **Rome**, at different times in history, did destroy Jerusalem, in spite of its walls. Between the conquest of Jerusalem by those two nations, **Nehemiah** led the Jews to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.



## A CITY OF MUCH WATER

Jerusalem does not receive its rainfall equally distributed over the course of a year; most of its rain falls during three months of **winter**. However, *numerous* natural and manmade pools in and around the city collect and store enough water for the whole year. Some of the more widely known pools are: **Bethesda, Lower Gihon, Upper Gihon, Hezekiah and Siloam**. Additionally, many large buildings have *cisterns* beneath them to collect rain water.

The pool biblically known as the **Pool of Bethesda** is the only known natural year round fountain around Jerusalem. It is in the eastern side of the Hill of Ophel and is supplied by an unknown

underground source. The stream entering this pool is not constant, but flows only two or three times daily. Some people in Jesus' day believed the disturbance of the water by the start up of this inward flow was caused by an angel. They believed anyone in the water during this time would be healed of his diseases (John 5:1-4).

The **Pool of Hezekiah** fills from the Pool of Upper Gihon through a *conduit* running between the two pools. The conduit and Pool of Hezekiah were built by King Hezekiah to ensure an *adequate* water supply in Jerusalem when the city was being attacked and its people could not leave the city to obtain water. Upper Gihon is outside the city, whereas the Pool of Hezekiah is inside the city.

The **Pool of Siloam** is at the foot of the Hill of Ophel. This is the pool to which Jesus sent a blind man (John 9:7). Water from another pool flows into Siloam before flowing into the Kidron Valley.

## CONCLUSION

Because Jerusalem was built on top of a mountain, most of the buildings are made from **stone** *extracted* from the mountainside. This city has been the center of attention for religious and political reasons for centuries. Jerusalem, therefore, is a *unique* city; it is an ancient, walled, mountain, capital city.

## QUESTIONS

1. The city of Jerusalem is about 30 miles east of what large body of water and about 14 miles west of what other body of water?
2. The city of Jerusalem is about five miles north of what famous city?
3. The city of Jerusalem is about 120 miles south of what mountain?
4. What three religious faiths treasure Jerusalem?
5. Name two important events that occurred at Jerusalem.
6. Give three names by which the city of our study was known.
7. Name the four hills on which the city of Jerusalem is built.
8. How many feet above sea level is the city of Jerusalem?
9. Name three valleys in the city of Jerusalem.
10. Name the brook in the valley east of the city of Jerusalem.
11. From what mountain did Jesus ascend back to heaven?
12. Name two things from which the walls of ancient cities were intended to protect their inhabitants.
13. Name two cities whose armies did capture the city of Jerusalem in spite of the walls around it.
14. What Jewish leader led the Jews to rebuild the fallen walls of Jerusalem?
15. During which season of the year does Jerusalem receive most of its annual rainfall?
16. Name five of the pools in and around the city of Jerusalem.
17. Name the only known pool in Jerusalem that always has water all year long.
18. Which pool was built by a king to bring water into Jerusalem in case an enemy army attacked the city?
19. To which pool did Jesus send a blind man?
20. Out of what building material are most of the buildings in Jerusalem built?

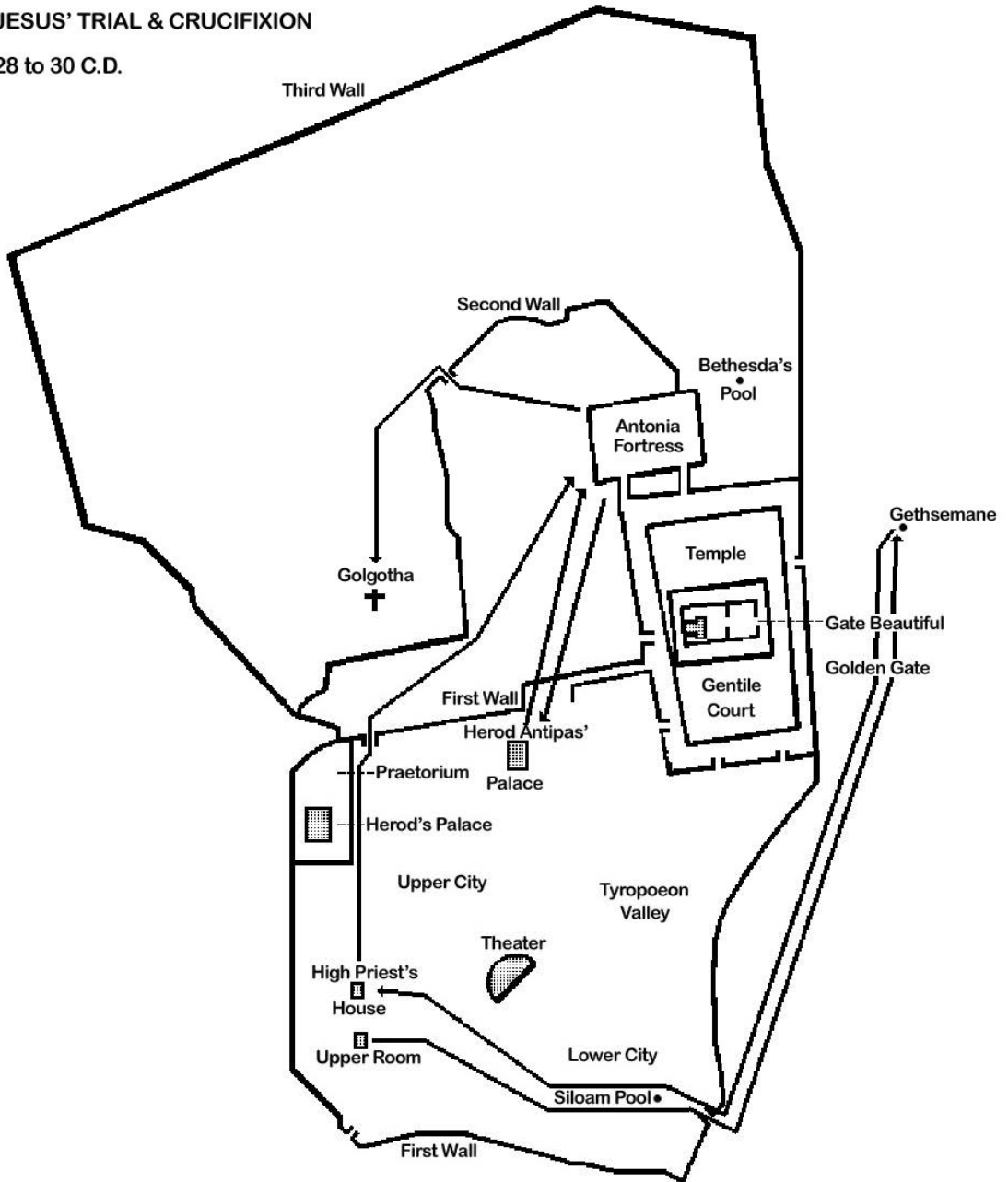
**Palestine in the Time of Jesus, A.D. 6 to 30**





JESUS' TRIAL & CRUCIFIXION

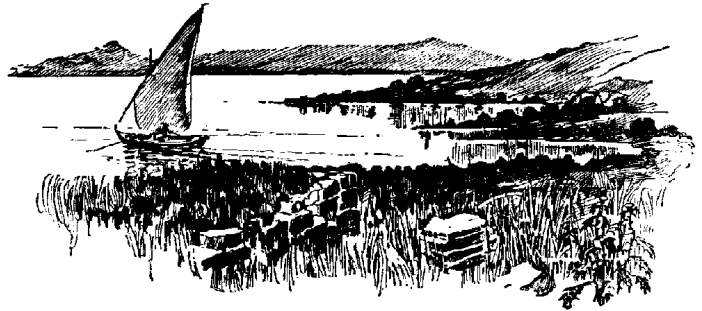
28 to 30 C.D.



## CHAPTER 9

# THE TIME OF CHRIST

Many cities, rivers, lakes and seas, and mountains had the same names during the life of Jesus Christ as they did hundreds of years before. For instance, the names for the city of Jerusalem, the Jordan River, the Mediterranean Sea and Mount Hermon were unchanged. Other sites *previously* noted in this study, though, changed names by the time Jesus was born. Remember that the Sea of Galilee was at various times called by other names, too. The names of the tribes also disappeared from Palestine and were replaced with the names Judaea, Samaria and Galilee. Still other places had the same names before and during the life of Christ, but are *emphasized* here because of their importance to the *ministry* of Jesus.



## ROMAN PROVINCES IN CANAAN

The Roman Empire ruled the known world during the life and ministry of our Lord, and was divided into provinces, similar to states. In Canaan, three provinces were west of the Jordan River; they were **Judaea** on the south, **Samaria** just north of Judaea and **Galilee** the northern most of these three. East of the Jordan River were two provinces, **Peraea** and **Decapolis**. The provinces west of the Jordan are of primary importance when studying the life of Christ.

Judaea was the largest province west of the Jordan River. This land was *formerly occupied* by the tribes of Judah, Dan, Benjamin and Simeon. The Jews living in Judaea felt *superior* to their Jewish brethren in Galilee. It was in **Judaea** (especially in Jerusalem) that Jewish educational and *cultural* opportunities were most available.

Samaria was *inhabited* largely by *descendants* of Jews and Gentiles who *intermarried* following the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel by the nation of Assyria. The Jews hated the Samaritans. The chief city in the province of **Samaria** was the city by the same name. Mounts Ebal and Gerizim and Jacob's Well where Jesus talked with the Samaritan woman are in the province of Samaria, too. Instead of worshipping in Jerusalem, the Samaritans built a temple on **Mt. Gerizim** and worshipped there.

Galilee *extended* from south to north from Samaria to Phoenicia and was bounded by the Mediterranean Sea on the west and the Jordan River on the east. Lower Galilee's fertile plains produced grain, whereas Upper Galilee's mountains were noted for olive trees. Jews of Judaea thought they were more holy than Galilean Jews because Galilee

was between Samaritans on the south and Gentiles on the north; the Jews *despised* both Samaritans and Gentiles.

Jesus was *reared* in Nazareth of Galilee. Further, eleven of the original twelve apostles were Galileans; only **Judas** was not from Galilee. Cana of Galilee was the city in which Jesus began his ministry by turning water into grape juice. Capernaum, a Galilean city on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, became the Lord's home during his earthly ministry. Much of Christ's ministry took place in Galilee.

## IMPORTANT CITIES

Bethlehem, like Jerusalem, rests *on top of* the Central Mountain Range. The city of **Bethlehem**, only five miles south of Jerusalem, is best known as the birth place of Jesus Christ. Micah 5:2 *prophesied* the *Messiah* would be born there. Hundreds of years earlier the Old Testament character Ruth lived in Bethlehem. Samuel *anointed* David in this city.

Nazareth was an *obscure* town of Galilee about 80 miles north of Jerusalem. What little notice was paid to this town was *uncomplimentary*. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth *before* their travel to Bethlehem for *taxation*, and they returned to this town later. **Nazareth** was the boyhood home of Jesus.



Our Lord's first two miracles were performed at **Cana** in Galilee. First, Jesus turned water into wine (John 2:1-11) and *subsequently* he healed the son of a nobleman, though the man's son was in Capernaum (John 4:45-54).

**Capernaum** was on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee and the frequent residence of Jesus during his earthly ministry (Matthew 9:1; John 6:48). The apostles Matthew and Peter also lived in this city (Matthew 9:9; Mark 9:35).

Nain is a city in Lower Galilee and the place where Jesus healed a widow's only son (Luke 7:11-16). **Bethsaida** is another city Jesus frequented. This city is at the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was once the home of Peter, Andrew and Philip (John 1:44; 12:21). Here Jesus healed a blind man (Mark 8:22-26) and outside town miraculously fed five thousand people (Matthew 14:13-21).



**Caesarea Philippi** lies at the base of Mount Hermon, northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Some students of the Bible cite this city as the place of the Transfiguration of Jesus.

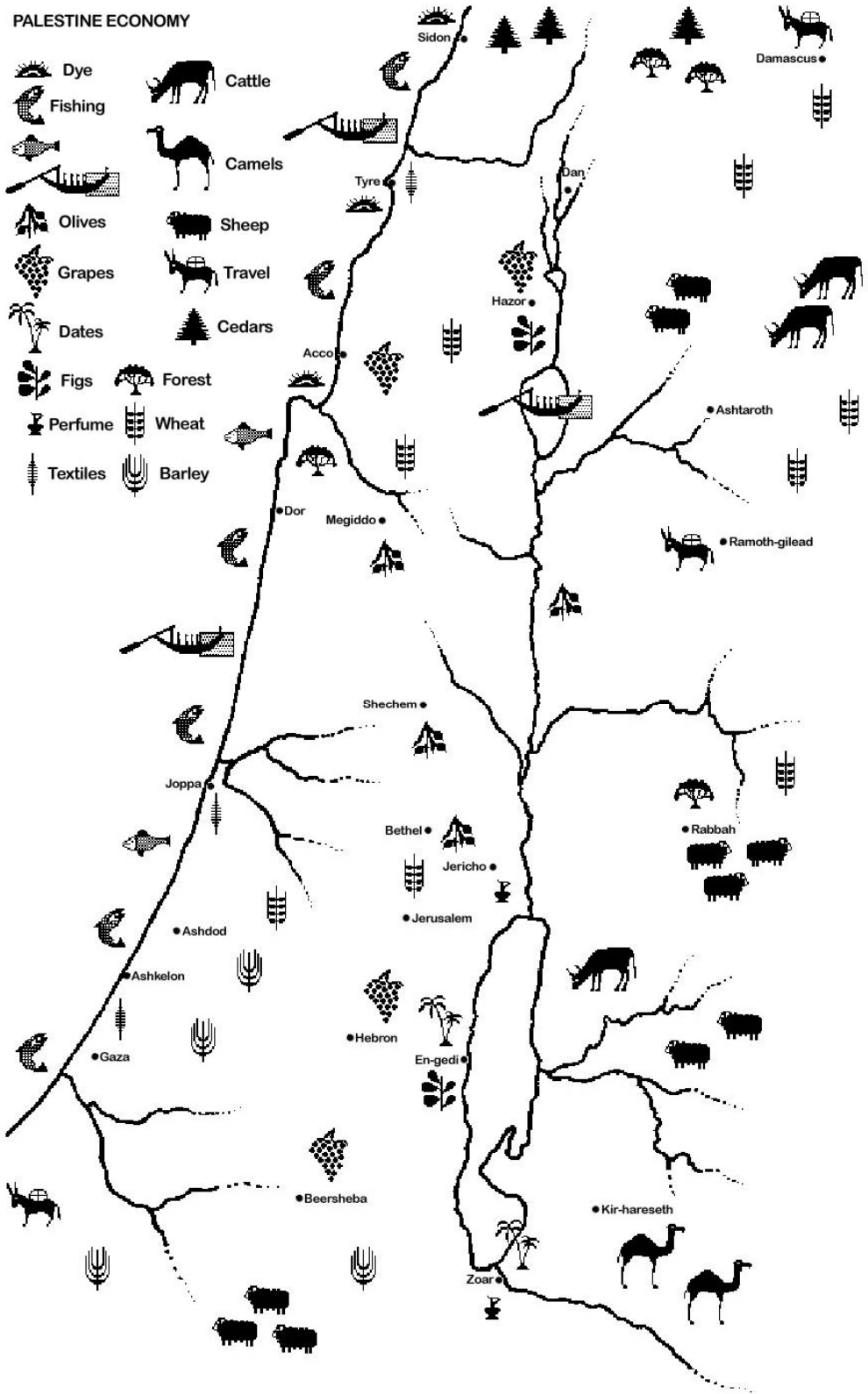
The city of **Bethany**, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, is where Lazarus and

his sisters Mary and Martha lived. It was here that Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave, and from this city Jesus departed to make his final entry into Jerusalem. After Jesus' resurrection, he made his Ascension to heaven from **Mount Olives**, near Bethany. Our Lord visited several additional cities during his earthly ministry. However, mention of them is reserved for a more detailed examination of the ministry of Christ.

## QUESTIONS

1. Name the three Roman provinces west of the Jordan River.
2. Name two Roman provinces east of the Jordan River.
3. In which Roman province were the most educational and cultural opportunities available?
4. Name the chief city in the province of Samaria.
5. Where did the Samaritans choose to worship?
6. Which one of the original twelve apostles was not a native of Galilee?
7. Name the birthplace of Jesus.
8. What city was the boyhood home of Jesus?
9. In what city did Jesus perform his first miracle?
10. Name the city that became Jesus' adult home.
11. Outside what city did Jesus feed 5,000 people?
12. At what city is the Transfiguration of Jesus thought to have occurred?
13. In what city did Jesus raise Lazarus from the grave?
14. Name the site from which Jesus ascended back to heaven.

PALESTINE ECONOMY



## CHAPTER 10

# BIBLE-TIMES' CULTURE

## CLOTHING

Among *noticeable* differences in *culture* from Bible times to the present is the clothing worn then *versus* now. The clothes worn by men and women were similar; often they wore a wool tunic, a loose fitting gown, extending to the knees or even to the ankles and secured with a belt. Another robe-like garment was worn over this. **These clothes concealed the human form and provided protection from the weather.** Clothes were considered prized possessions and were sometimes used as collateral (Prov. 20:16).

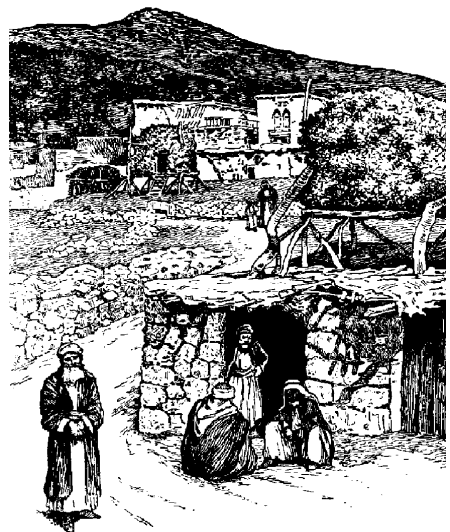


Both men and women also wore leather sandals which were designed more for practical use than appearance. The enclosed heel of the sandal was held in place by a piece of leather *encircling* the ankle before attaching to the front of the sandal, between the first and second toes. Since roads were unpaved and dusty and people wore sandals, the custom developed that a well mannered *host* provided his guest with **water and towel to wash his feet** upon entrance to his home. A greater measure of hospitality included having a servant wash the feet of guests, whereas a *demonstration* of humility was possible when the host himself washed the feet of his guests. To “shake off the dust of your feet” (Matt. 10:14) is understood more easily, knowing the type of footwear worn in Bible times along dusty roads. See Genesis 18:3-5; Luke 7:37-38, 44 and John 13:4-14 concerning this custom.

In ancient times, jewelry was worn by men and women. These adornments included earrings, necklaces, rings, bracelets and nose jewels.

## BIBLE-TIMES' HOMES

The simplest homes found in small villages were made of a *combination* of mostly stone and sun dried mud brick. With walls and pillars of stone, wooden beams over top of these were themselves *overlaid* with pieces of wood, brush and clay. Inside, the ceiling was about six feet high (lower where the beams crossed). Two rooms of unequal portion did not afford either privacy or personal space. Built for shelter rather than luxury, these homes were without furniture except for stone stools. The principle light came from oil lamps. Though rainwater was directed from a cistern to inside the house, cooking was



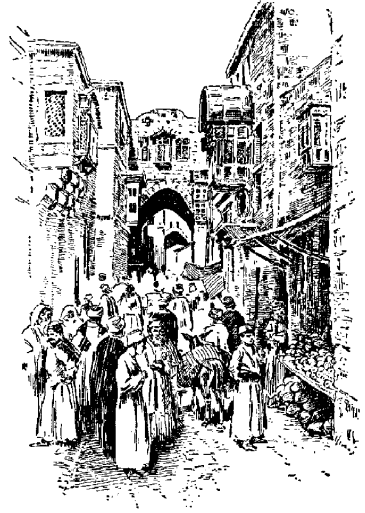
largely performed outside. Toiletry needs were also taken care of outside, some distance from the dwelling. No matter how humble a man's home, on the inside hospitality became the honor and responsibility of the host.

*Patriarchs* and other *nomads* often dwelt in tents instead of permanent houses. Larger villages and cities, particularly among wealthier citizens, boasted somewhat more *elaborate* homes. Especially in the cities, buildings often were built on to each other and a second story might overhang the narrow streets. Since Canaan is mountainous and rocky in many places and trees are less abundant, **stone** is the chief building material for building construction throughout the area.

## CITY LIFE IN CANAAN

Walled cities offered their citizens a measure of protection from wild animals, bands of robbers and unfriendly *foreign* powers. These walls were as much as 30 feet thick and 50 feet high and made of stone. Rising from the walls were towers as well.

The busiest place in the city of Palestine was the gate or **gates**. It was here **the elders transacted legal matters, travelers arrived and departed, and much commerce transpired**. The gate was also of strategic military importance, both to defenders and potential attackers. Therefore, many cities used a six-chambered gate to *complicate* its *siege* by an *invading* army and *enable* a better defense. These *chambers* were used in peacetime as meeting rooms.



## ANCIENT AGRICULTURE

Cattle, sheep and goats were a *primary resource* of ancient agriculture, especially among nomadic people, such as the Patriarchs. **Without fences** and other *restrictions* to prevent roaming, herdsmen tended these animals and **led them from place to place to graze**. Sometimes it was necessary to take animals several miles away from the main camp to find enough grazing land. Animals were also allowed to feed in harvested fields; this was an efficient use of any grain missed during harvesting and fertilized the fields, too. Abraham, Lot and Jacob tended their herds and flocks in Canaan (Gen. 13:1-12; Gen. 37:1-17).



Besides grazing land, herds and flocks also need access to an adequate water source. In Canaan, then, wells were extremely important to the success of raising cattle, sheep and goats. The Patriarchs, as nomads, sometimes experienced **disputes over water rights** with

the settled people of the land (Gen. 26:12-22).

While nomadic people did not often sow and harvest grains, settled populations became proficient in harvesting grains, figs and grapes. The primary food of both nomads and settlers was **bread**. This bread was flat cakes of dough baked on hot stones or in mud-brick ovens. Fruits, nuts, milk and sometimes sheep, goats and cattle comprised the Bible-times' diet. The flocks and herds, however, were often only the source of food on special occasions, such as when entertaining guests.



Crops in Canaan were usually *coaxed* from hillside terraces, due to the hilly and mountainous lay of the land. **Wheat** and **barley** were the most common grains. Lacking modern farm equipment, oxen pulled wooden plows sometimes with a metal blade attached; a plow might be nothing more than a correctly shaped tree limb. Seed was then sowed by hand and tamped by foot or the tread of the oxen. Harvesting was accomplished by using a sickle (Joel 3:13) to cut the grain, stalk included. Taken to a *threshing* floor, it was next either *trampled* by oxen

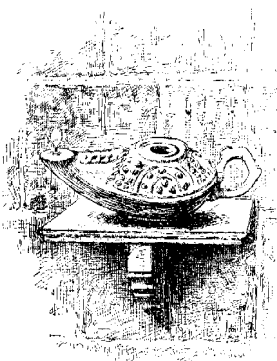
(Deut. 25:4) or beat with instruments (2 Sam. 24:22) to separate the grain from the stalks. Then *winnowing* forks were used to throw the stalks into the air, whereupon the wind blew the stalks or *chaff* aside as the grain fell back to the earth. Raked, sifted through screens to rid the grain of debris (called sieving) and put in containers, later women ground the grain into flour.

Better suited to terrace farming than grains, **vineyards** were especially productive in Canaan and contributed greatly to ancient diets. Grapes, raisins and juice were *prominent* food and drink. Grape juice was also *condensed* and later *reconstituted* with water for beverages. Vineyards, however, required much work; stone hedges or fences had to be



constructed to discourage stray animals, grazing herds and flocks from eating the vines and fruit. Towers were also constructed to guard the vineyards. *Vats* for juice and grape preparation and storage required much labor, being carved out of the rock hillsides.

Olive trees provided oil for **lamps, cooking and personal care**. Gathered in baskets from the ground after striking the trees to cause the fruit to fall, olives were crushed in an oil press. It consisted of a *revolving* stone on top of a larger stone that was carved with sides like a bowl. A hole inside the larger stone drained the resulting olive oil into a cistern for later use. Fig trees produce a fruit which can either be eaten when harvested or pressed into cakes for future use. First Samuel 25:18 provides a picture of a Bible-times' menu: bread, grape juice (translated wine), sheep, grain, raisins and fig cakes.





## MEANS OF TRAVEL

Walking, of course, is the first means of travel throughout the world. In Palestine of long ago, pack animals like the donkey and camel were used, sometimes to pull carts or wagons. Oxen were also used, especially to pull loaded wagons of grain or freight. Chariots were used by some government officials and wealthy individuals (Acts 8:26-40).

## QUESTIONS

1. Describe the differences between the design and function of clothes worn in Bible times versus clothes worn today.
2. What two things did a well-mannered host provide guests upon entrance to his home? Why?
3. What was the chief building material for homes in Palestine?
4. Where was the busiest place in most cities in Canaan? Why?
5. Why did farmers who managed cattle, sheep and goats stay in the fields with their animals?
6. What special problem did nomads such as the Patriarchs sometimes experience trying to water their herds and flocks?
7. The chief food in a Bible-times' diet was what?
8. Name two grain crops grown by farmers in Palestine.
9. What crop was better suited for agriculture in Canaan than grains?
10. Of what benefit was the fruit of olive trees to natives of Canaan in Bible times?

## CHAPTER 11

# BIBLE-TIMES' CULTURE (CONTINUED)



## LEGAL CUSTOMS

Obviously, legal codes varied from community to community and from nation to nation. Frequently only *residents* were protected by legal rights; *immigrants* or nomads often were legally *defenseless*, or at least largely unaware of local laws. However, hospitality was an area in which many ancient peoples exercised themselves nearly alike. Hospitality was neither offered nor accepted lightly. **Once hospitality was extended and accepted, certain legal, moral and cultural responsibilities were incurred by both parties.** Armed conflicts were forbidden during periods of hospitality and for specified periods following.

Though this often only involved individuals it sometimes affected larger groups, such as peoples as well. Further, the host became responsible for the well being and protection of his guests regardless of cost or danger (Gen. 19:1-8).

The oldest male held *absolute* power over his family unit. He was the law to those subordinate to him while he was himself responsible to the community law. However, should he commit a sin grievous enough or threatening the safety of the entire community, his household could suffer the *consequences* of his sin, too (Josh. 7:24-25). Community law was *administered* through the **elders** of the village; this group represented the *collective* group of heads of households in the community. It was their charge to manage the affairs and legal cases affecting the entire village. Such business was transacted at the city **gate** (Prov. 31:23).



Land was so precious to the Jews that they seldom sold it outside the family. Before land could be sold to a non-family member, it had to be offered for sale to the next eligible male in the family (Jer. 32:7-14). If he did not wish to purchase it, another male in the same family was permitted to buy it (Ruth 4:1-10).

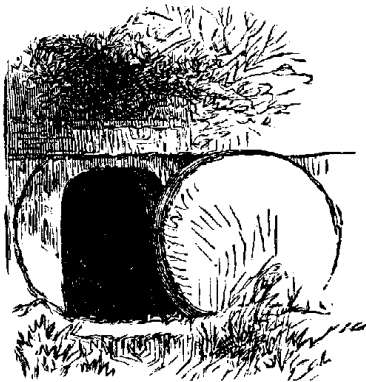
## MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Ancient marriages were usually arranged between the oldest male family members within the same group or family clan (Gen. 27:46-28:2). This guaranteed the future existence of the overall group and *preservation* of **culture and values**. Girls were given in marriage when they were old enough to bear children, whereas men married when they either received their *inheritance* or obtained their own resources. It was also common for the groom to give a *dowry*, or purchase his wife from his future father-in-law. In the case of Jacob, since he evidently had no such dowry, he *indentured* himself to his father-in-law in exchange for his wives (Gen. 29:15-21).

Judaism *prohibited* marriage between Israelites and non-Israelites (Deut. 7:3-4; Ezra 10:10-14). One purpose of this prohibition was to **segregate God's people from heathens who would lead them into idolatry**. Another reason for restricting these marriages was to **preserve the family tree of Abraham** until Old Testament *prophecies* concerning the *Messiah* could be fulfilled through Jesus Christ.



## BURIAL CUSTOMS



Nomads, such as the Patriarchs, sometimes buried their dead along their route of travel (Gen. 35:19-20). Otherwise, **natural caves or rock-carved tombs** were often used as family burial sites (Gen. 23:1-20), especially by the wealthy. These rock tombs were used to bury several family members (Gen. 49:33—50:13). This custom of burying the dead was practiced in the time of Christ (Matt. 27:58-60). Personal possessions were *interred* with the dead to indicate who the person was in life. The poor were buried in shallow graves, the marking of which did not stand through time (Luke 11:44) or in a potter's field (Matt. 27:1-10). Most burial sites were

outside cities; only the very rich could afford the price of *scarce* city property for tombs.

Before burial, a *corpse* was washed and *anointed* with spices (Mark 16:1). Next, it was bound in a linen *shroud* or grave clothes (Matt. 27:59; John 11:44). This was the Jewish practice administered to the *crucified* Lord (John 19:39-40). Ordinarily, musicians and mourners participated with family members who also grieved for the dead (Matt. 9:23; John 11:31).

## DIVISIONS WITHIN JUDAISM

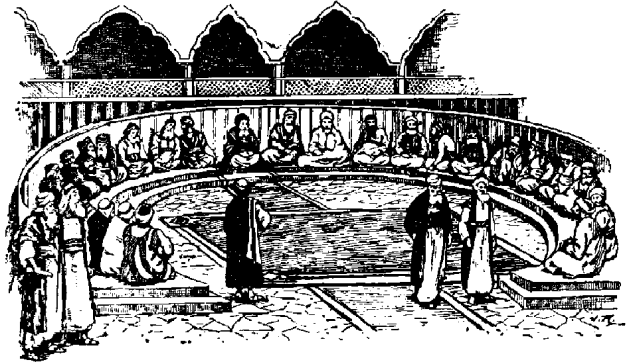
In the time of our Lord, Judaism was divided by religious and political *factions*. **Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes and Zealots** were the major groups. The Sadducees were *materialists* and did not believe in a *resurrection* from the dead; their religion was a liberal departure from the law of Moses and *overshadowed* by politics. The Pharisees were the strictest *sect* of Judaism, though they added many traditions not taught in God's



Word (Matt. 15:1, 9). The Essenes are not mentioned in the Bible, but they like the Pharisees believed in the resurrection and heavenly rewards for righteous living. Zealots were politically motivated to *fanatically* protest against and resist the Roman *occupation* of Palestine. Their strong views led to armed conflict against the Romans, which in turn contributed to Rome's decision to destroy the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

## THE SANHEDRIN

The Sanhedrin was a Jewish council of 71 religious leaders. Included in that number and serving as the chairman was the high priest. Other members included *prominent* priests, scribes, elders and other leaders (Mark 15:1; Luke 19:47). The various divisions within Judaism were represented in this group including the Sadducees and Pharisees (Acts 23:6).



The **Sanhedrin** was the highest religious authority in the time of Christ, as well as the highest Jewish civil and political authority under Roman occupation. However, they lacked the power to exact the death penalty under *prevailing* Roman control of Palestine (Mark 14:64; 15:1; Acts 13:27-28; 25:1-19).

## WARFARE

Weapons in ancient times ranged from *primitive* wooden *implements* such as farm tools, clubs and spears (Jud. 3:31) to iron or bronze military weapons. The three primary weapons became the **spear, bow and sling**. Later, the Jews adopted chariots and used horses as well in battle.

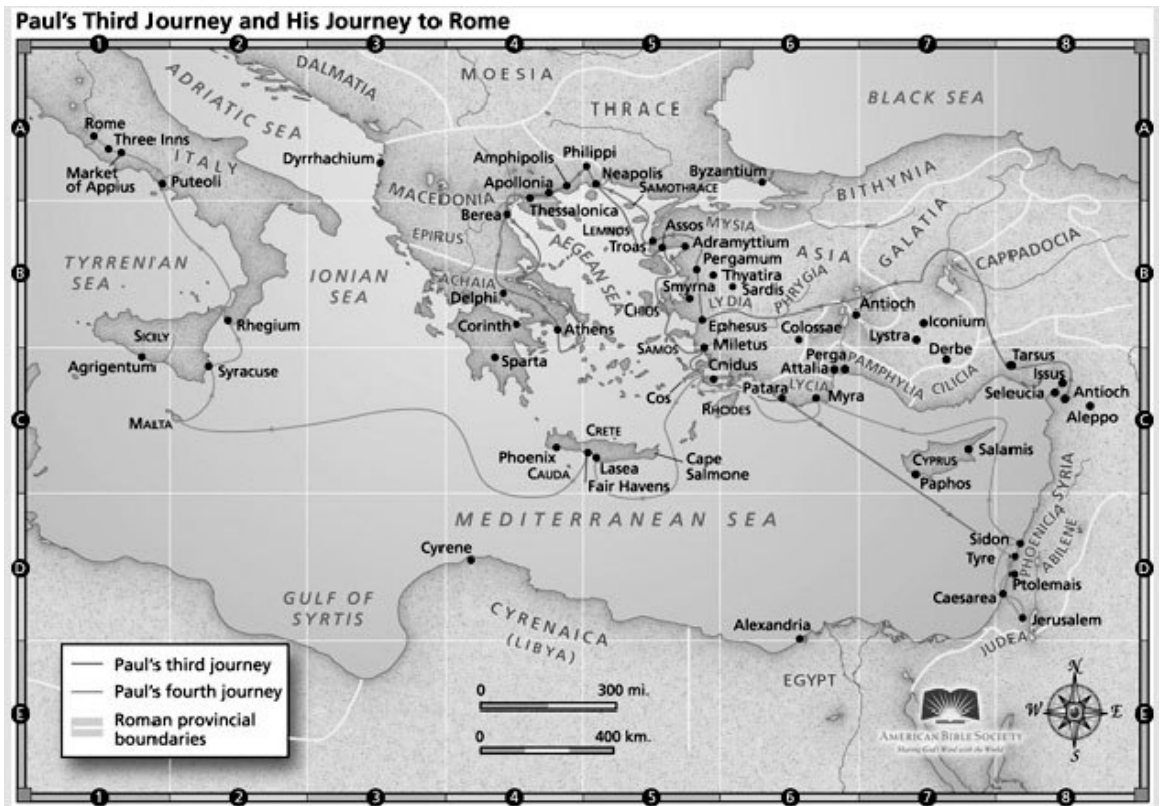
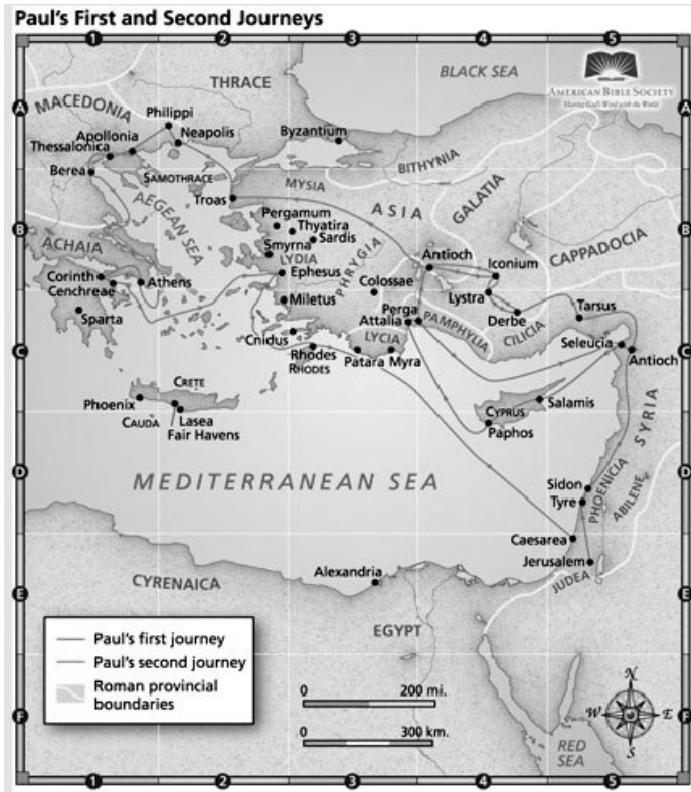


Sling and Stone

## QUESTIONS

1. Why was offering or accepting hospitality a serious matter to people living in Bible times?
2. Who was responsible for administering law in an Israelite community?
3. Where did legal transactions occur in an Israelite village?
4. Marriages to family members guaranteed the future existence of the family group and preserved what?
5. Give two reasons why Israelites were not allowed to marry heathen people.
6. Especially wealthier people buried their dead family members where?

7. Name four religious divisions within Judaism in the time of our Lord.
8. What was the name of the Jewish council responsible for religious, civil and political functions?
9. Name the three primary weapons of Israelite warfare.



## CHAPTER 12

# BEYOND THE FERTILE CRESCENT: ROME

The city of Rome is important to the student of the Bible because of its place in **Old Testament prophecy (Daniel Two) and New Testament fulfillment** relative to the *establishment* of the Lord's spiritual kingdom (Acts Two). As the New Testament opened, the Roman Empire ruled the known world, including Palestine and the Jews. The Gentile rulers in Palestine at the time of Jesus' birth, childhood, ministry and crucifixion were Roman *appointees*. The early church began and functioned while the world was ruled from Rome. The *missionary* travels of the apostle Paul also occurred during the reign of and sometimes *interacted* with the Roman Empire. The *epistles* that *comprise* our New Testament were written to churches and individuals in this period; one of those letters was penned to the congregation meeting in Rome.

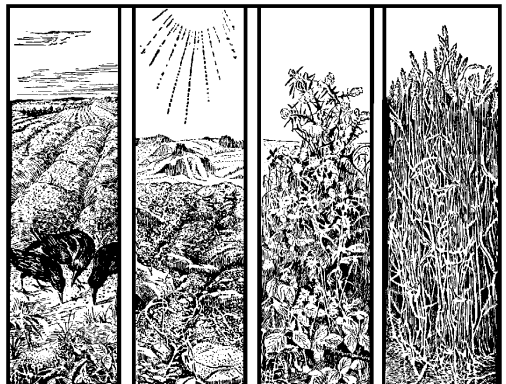
## OVERVIEW

Italy, where Rome is located, is large **boot**-like land mass extending from Europe into the Mediterranean Sea. The *peninsula* is 650 miles long and not wider than 125 miles. Despite its size, travel is somewhat hindered by the Apennines mountains which, traveling north to south, rise from 4,000 to a peak of 9,500 feet. Above the peninsula, Italy's borders extend about another seventy miles north and *approximately* 320 miles east to west. All of Italy measures 91,200 *square miles*.

Nearly all the few deep water harbors are found on Italy's southwestern shore; though, some of the rivers can be navigated by small boats. Lowlands consist of coastal areas between the sea and the mountains (the wider coast is on the west side), river valleys, the *watershed lowlands* for the **Alps and Apennines**, and valleys between the ridges. Whereas the coastal areas and watershed lowlands afforded *productive* farming due to the richness of the soil, valleys provided pastures for livestock. The mountains were covered with forests which were used for home construction and ship building.

Climate differs from the continental part of Italy to the peninsula area. The northern part of the country has *definable* seasons, much like the rest of Europe. The southern portion of the country enjoys tropical temperatures. None of Italy's mountains are high enough to sustain snow year round.

The mountain passes to the north encouraged settlement from Europe. A wider western coastal plain and southwestern bays invited immigrants by sea from the west. A narrower eastern coastal plain with mountains rising closely in the background inhibited



*colonization* from the east. Two mountain chains separated by a common watershed discouraged political union of northern and southern communities. However, once united, the central location of this boot-like nation contributed to its expansion throughout the Old World.

The history of Rome and what became the Roman Empire predates its biblical treatment in the New Testament and its affect on Palestine. The city of Rome was founded in 753 B.C. by Romulus on one of seven hills (Palatine Hill) on the east bank of the **Tiber River**, fifteen miles from its mouth at the Tyrrhenian Sea. Eventually, Rome covered seven hills; the modern city, though, lies north of the ancient city. Originally, the hills were covered with timber and separated by deep valleys which were partially flooded. The topography of the site changed dramatically due to the destruction caused by wars, reconstruction upon ruin and efforts to build a magnificent world capital city.

The *magnificence* and *splendor* eventually *characteristic* of Rome resulted from (1) the *influx* of **treasures and skilled slaves** *acquired* through *conquest* of foreign peoples, and (2) the *determination* of its emperors to build a city equal to or greater than any the world had ever seen. From Augustus forward, emperors added to the once forested hills: temples, huge assembly halls (basilicas), open market places (forums), *aqueducts*, public baths, theaters, palaces, *triumphal* arches, statues and parks. Most early buildings in Rome were of brick and cement; later marble was used *extensively*, too. Thirty-one highways also led to Rome and distances to all points in the empire were calculated from a monument at the center of the Forum in the city.

When Augustus became emperor, he had 500,000 soldiers at his command; 300,000 of these he dismissed and settled in colonies. He further reorganized his forces and relied mostly on a professional, volunteer army. Augustus' army was formed from two main categories, legionaries and auxiliaries. **Legionaires** were Roman citizens, 6,000 to a legion, 25 legions in all. *Auxiliaries* were recruited from conquered peoples and amounted to about the same total number as the legionaries, only they were grouped in much smaller units. An *inducement* to *enlistment* for this latter group was Roman *citizenship* upon the conclusion of 25 years of service.



Still another military unit was the **praetorian guard**. Nine cohorts of 1,000 men each recruited from the peninsula of Italy served as personal bodyguards to the emperor. Unlike other troops, they were stationed at Rome. Their length of service was 16 years, whereas legionaries served for 20 years. Upon discharge, both praetorians and legionaries received bonuses, but the former were much better paid. The Roman Empire also had a fleet, however, which paled in importance compared to the land armies. The Roman government, though, also controlled the private shipping industry enough to *guarantee sufficient quantity* of food and resources for Rome and *distribution* to its armies. Another reason why the Roman navy was *comparatively* little used militarily is that Italy, though it has about

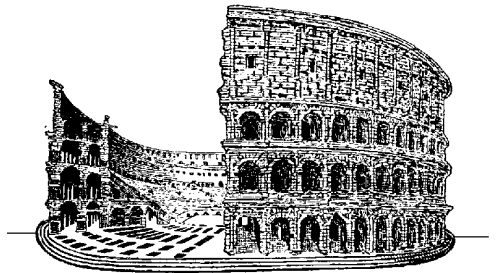


2,000 miles of coast, has few good harbors.

*Census* and *subsequent* taxation were the means by which Rome paid for the military and the expansion of the Empire by conquest. Such a census was decreed by Augustus about the time of the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1). This is the *circumstance* that caused Joseph and Mary to travel to their hometown of Bethlehem from their home in Nazareth. In A.D. 14, the year of the death of Augustus, a census numbered *citizens* in the Roman Empire at nearly five million.

One of the principle ways in which *successive emperors* were chosen rested with the praetorian guard. This elite group of troops would select a successor which the senate felt compelled to ratify. Later, armies throughout the empire claimed the same right to select a successor to a deceased emperor and *rivals* often competed in military conflicts, supported by their respective armies.

Life in Rome was accompanied by numerous carnivals and entertainment. The holidays during which these amusements were pursued increased to 135 annually. The events included **chariot races, gladiatorial combats and the theater.** Those were prosperous times for Rome which resulted from international traders flocking there, the establishment of military highways, *suppression* of piracy and a single currency for the entire empire.



The Colosseum

Many Jews migrated to Rome after the Roman Empire conquered Palestine. They, however, lived in their own section, just outside the city on the west bank of the Tiber. (The Greeks and the Syrians also had their sections in which they lived.) The Jews were allowed to practice their Jewish faith and culture without restriction. Many Jews were also made freedmen.



When the Lord's church was established in Jerusalem, the Gospel began to spread slowly throughout the Roman Empire, including Rome. This occurred as a result of the presence of about 15 nationalities of Jews in Jerusalem when the Gospel was first preached (Acts 2:9-11). Initially, 3,000 Jews were converted to Christianity. After a while, those who lived in foreign lands and were converted returned to their homes; there they told others of the Gospel. Some of the Jews present in Jerusalem in Acts Two were inhabitants of Rome (verse 10), possibly some of which were also converted and who later returned to Rome. Biblical evidence attests to the *vigor* with which Jewish *converts* spread their new faith (Acts 8:4).

It is quite possible that a *dissension* arose between Jews and Jewish Christians; this may be the reason all Jews were commanded by Claudius to leave Rome (Acts 18:2). The Gentiles were likely unable or not interested in discerning the difference between *practitioners* of the Jewish faith and Jewish Christians; the early church was solely Jewish. Judaism was at that time divided into different sects (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots), and for all *Imperial* Rome knew or cared, Christians were merely another sect of Judaism. Claudius made no distinction between Jews and Christians in his decree; Christians had to leave also.

Additionally, the church and Gospel in ancient Rome were confronted with government encouraged and widely practiced *idolatry*. *Ultimately, because Christians refused to worship the state gods, they were viewed as atheists* and punished or executed. In time, living emperors considered themselves gods and demanded worship; the Christian refusal was viewed as treason and sufficient cause for punishment and death. After Nero burned Rome (A.D. 64.), Christians who were already despised by their pagan neighbors were accused of the crime. Subsequently, Christians were punished and killed.



In spite of *unpopularity* of the Gospel and finally severe persecution of Christians, many Jews and Gentiles as well were converted by the Gospel. Eventually, the church at Rome appears to have been dominated primarily by Gentile Christians (Rom. 1:13; 11:13) with a large Jewish minority also.

The apostle Paul was likely the first apostle to arrive in Rome. For, it was to Nero Paul appealed and to whom he was sent (Acts 25:11). In Paul's day, Rome was probably a large, *irregular* mass of buildings, unprotected by an outer wall; the city outgrew its previous wall of defense. Streets were winding and narrow, *flanked* by tall apartment houses; Augustus placed a limit of 70 feet on such buildings because they were poorly constructed and subject to collapse. Many of modern day ruins of Rome noticed by travelers had not been built yet in Paul's day.

The city was populated by as much as one half with slaves; each palace and *plantation* had from hundreds to thousands of slaves. Many masters freed their slaves, especially at the owner's death. Others were freed upon the purchase of their citizenship. The larger number of the remaining population was *impoverished* and supported by welfare. A middle class was wholly absent; the balance of citizens were the few wealthy nobles of Rome.

As the apostle approached Rome, he was taken along the highway called the Appian Way (Acts 28:15). Upon his first imprisonment, Paul lived in his own rented house for two years, though he was chained to a Roman guard (Acts 28:16, 20, 30). His house was either near the emperor's palace or Paul otherwise had *association* with people attached to the palace (Phil. 1:13; 4:22). Though not documented by Bible evidence, secular testimony uniformly acknowledges a second imprisonment of the apostle, possibly under the reign of Nero, at which time he was executed. About this time,



other Christians were also killed for their faith. They were wrapped in animal skins and killed by dogs, robed with clothes wetted with flammable liquids and set on fire for light or crucified.

Many *martyred* Christians were **buried** by fellow Christians in the Catacombs. The Catacombs beneath Rome were tunnels of from eight to 10 feet high and from four to six feet wide; they continued for miles and were also used by early Christians for **worship**.

## BACKGROUND OF ROMAN OCCUPATION OF JUDAEA

Though the Roman Empire had its beginning hundreds of years earlier, it first conquered Palestine when the general **Pompey** captured Jerusalem in 63 B.C. From 40-37 B.C., Jerusalem was *wrested* from Rome by a rival nation (the Parthians). Again captured in 37 B.C., Jerusalem remained militarily subject to Rome throughout and beyond the biblical record. Herod the Great was installed as the King of the Jews by Rome and ruled from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. when Jesus was born. Other Roman appointees served in Palestine during New Testament times.



The first Roman Emperor, Octavian, Augustus Caesar, ruled at the time of our Lord's birth (Luke 2:1). The Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' crucifixion was Tiberius (A.D. 14-37). Caligula (A.D. 37-41) reigned during the time of the Book of Acts; Claudius (A.D. 41-54) and Nero (A.D. 54-68) ruled contemporary with the life of the apostle Paul. Trajan (A.D. 98-117) was emperor when the apostle John was banished to Patmos.

In A.D. 66, Judaea *revolted* against Roman rule. This was brought about by several factors: (1) heavy taxation, (2) the murder of Jews in Caesarea (Roman capital of Judaea) by Greeks, (3) murder of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem by Jews, and chiefly (4) Jewish *nationalism* which the Jews viewed as identical to the free practice of their religion. After subsequent Jewish victories over Roman armies that were sent to stop the uprising, **Vespasian**, a Roman general, was dispatched in A.D. 67 with 50,000 troops to re-conquer Judaea. After he defeated the rest of Palestine, Vespasian laid siege to Jerusalem in A.D. 70., but withdrew to become emperor after his troops selected him to that position. However, his predecessor was still reigning and surrendered in effect when he was slain in battle. Vespasian entrusted his army on Judaeian soil to his son **Titus**, who destroyed Jerusalem and put down the Jewish rebellion.



## QUESTIONS

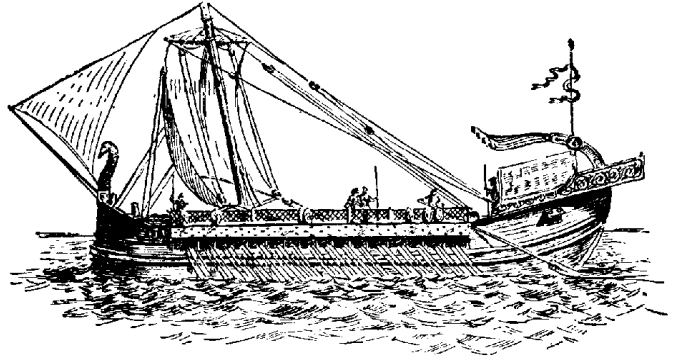
1. Briefly, why is the city of Rome important to the student of the Bible?
2. What article of clothing does the shape of Italy appear to be?
3. What two mountain ranges are found in Italy?

4. On what river is the city of Rome found?
5. What two factors resulted in Rome being built into one of the most magnificent cities the world has ever known?
6. What was the name of the Roman armies formed from Roman citizens?
7. What was the name of the Roman armies that acted as bodyguards for the emperor?
8. Name the three primary ways in which people living in Rome amused themselves during their holidays.
9. Why were the early Christians wrongfully accused of atheism?
10. Name two things for which the Catacombs were used by early Christians in Italy.
11. What Roman general first conquered Jerusalem?
12. Two Roman generals, father and son, conquered Palestine after the Jews revolted in A.D. 66; name them.

## CHAPTER 13

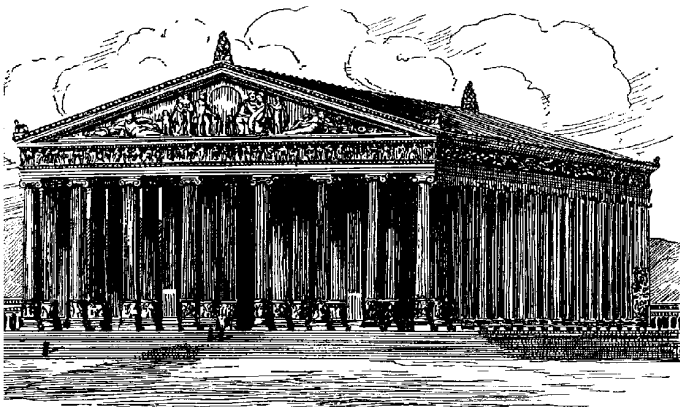
# BEYOND THE FERTILE CRESCENT: CORINTH

In Bible times, the city of Corinth was a *fortified* city and a center of commerce and trade. Situated on an isthmus (a **narrow neck of land between two larger masses of land**), it was a **crossroads for land trading** between southern and northern Greece and **sea trading** between East and West. Ships anchored in Corinth's west harbor off-loaded



their cargo to be hauled about five miles and loaded on ships in the east harbor. Likewise, ships in the east harbor sent their freight overland the short distance to be loaded on ships in the west harbor. This *procedure* saved about 150 miles of sailing around Greece. Because of its *commercial significance*, Corinth was called the “eye of Greece.”

The Old World city of Corinth was built against a rock *formation* rising 2,000 feet. This offered complete protection from attack in that direction. The balance of the city was guarded by a double wall. However, due to its strategic location, Corinth came under attack repeatedly and was more than once destroyed, only to be rebuilt.



In the apostle Paul's day, the city of Corinth may have had a population of about 400,000 — including several Jewish traders. It was also a prosperous city of many magnificent public buildings. Further, Corinth was the site of the **Isthmian games**, perhaps the forerunner of our modern **Olympics**. The Isthmian games were held every five years, and were so highly

respected that warring city-states suspended warfare while they were in progress. *Participants* in the games leaped, ran races, threw darts, boxed and wrestled.

The *inhabitants* of Corinth were *polytheists*; they worshipped all the **gods of Greek mythology**. Their chief gods and goddesses were: Zeus, chief of the gods; Poseidon, god of the sea; Apollo, god of song and music; Artemis, goddess of flocks; Hephaestus, god of fire; Hermes, messenger god; Ares, god of war; Hera, wife of Zeus; Athena, goddess

of wisdom and war; Hestia, goddess of the hearth; Demeter, goddess of agriculture; and Aphrodite, goddess of love. Part of this heathen worship included fornication; the temple of Venus supported 1,000 priestesses dedicated to prostitution.

Citizens of Corinth were *notoriously* famous for their **sinfulness**. Whereas Athens, about 46 miles north of Corinth, was noted for its **culture**, Corinth was widely known for every manner of *corruption* and evil. Citizens of Corinth were viewed as dishonest and immoral. To call one a Corinthian was to charge him with base immoralities.



In Paul's day Corinth was a Roman Colony, built by **Julius Caesar** in 46 B.C. In 1858 an earthquake forced the *evacuation* of the city. By the twentieth century nearly all evidence of ancient Corinth vanished from the surface. However, *excavation* has yielded some *relics* of this Old World city. Some fountains have been uncovered, 40 feet below the present ground surface.

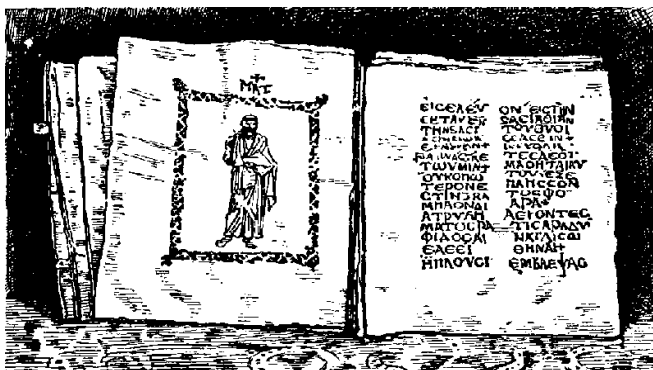
Also discovered were a theater, a portion of an ancient temple, parts of statues of gods and goddesses, some low walls, colorful murals, vases, ancient bath towels, lamps, theater seats and over 400 coins. Only about one percent of the site was excavated in the first one hundred years since it was deserted. In our time, a city of about 18,000 is found three miles from the ancient site.



The value of a *canal* through the isthmus was realized hundreds of years ago; Nero attempted to have a canal cut through the rock beginning in about A.D. 66. He however abandoned the project due to the great difficulty involved and the costly nature of this *undertaking*. In more recent history, a canal was successfully carved through the isthmus and completed in 1893. The canal is four miles long, 75 feet wide and 26 feet deep. At one point, the rock had to be cut 260 deep from its surface to the depth required.

Since the *terrain* around Corinth is rocky and land is limited, farming is not a suitable pursuit. The *geographical* location, though, more than made up for what the soil lacked. Corinth was a commercial *hub* of activity for both highways and sea lanes. Corinth also took advantage of large deposits of white and cream colored clay and became an early leader in the ceramic industry.

**Two New Testament epistles** that were written by the apostle Paul to the church meeting in that city have been preserved. Because of the *excessive* wickedness of Corinth, a *vivid* contrast existed between the Lord's people and other citizens. The Gospel was as a *brilliant* light in an otherwise *ebony* black darkness. Unfortunately, though, the church of God at Corinth was guilty of several sins for which the apostle corrected them.



Some of those sins, like the incest cited in 1 Corinthians Chapter Five, may have been instances of the sinful world at Corinth influencing Christians to do evil. Evidently, the

church at Corinth possessed the right attitude since it corrected the errors of which it was guilty.

## QUESTIONS

1. What is an isthmus?
2. Why was the city of Corinth an important trading city?
3. Every five years Corinth was the site of what games, which may have been the forerunner of what modern games?
4. Who did most people in Corinth worship?
5. For what was Corinth famous? For what was Athens famous?
6. Corinth became a Roman Colony after it was rebuilt by whom?
7. Why is the ancient city of Corinth important to Christians today?

## Special Chapter:

# NEW BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Not unlike hermeneutics which is being supplanted by the infamous “new hermeneutics,” biblical archaeology is being revamped with a “new” biblical archaeology. In both cases, the old, tried, proven and biblically defensible standards are being wholly undercut and discarded — by “scholars” who demonstrate their agnosticism or worse at every juncture.

Strangely, many “biblical archaeologists” today are openly enemies of the Bible. That being so, the term “biblical” should be dropped. Further, the propositions of both “new hermeneutics” and “new biblical archaeology” contradict the respective topics of hermeneutics and biblical archaeology.

James K. Hoffmier, a professor at Wheaton College, summarizes the perspective of new biblical archaeologists.

The result of their scholarly investigations has been that virtually all that the Bible has to say about the early history of Israel has been rejected . . . Gone are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua and now even David. The Egyptian sojourn and exodus stories, along with Sinai wanderings and Joshua’s military entry into Canaan, have been reduced to retrojections or inventions by later Biblical writers. (James K. Hoffmier, “Of Minimalists and Maximalists,” *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March/April 1995, p. 22.)

These and other biblical events, places and people are touted as “fictional.” (*Ibid.*) New biblical archaeologists picture “. . . the emergence of Israel from varied groups of pastoral nomads, sedentary farmers and possibly even urban families, mainly of local Canaanite origin.” (Shlomo Bunimovitz, “How Mute Stones Speak: Interpreting What We Dig Up,” *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March/April 1995, p. 67.) The Old Testament is equated with “superstition” and “folk religion.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 67, 96.)

New biblical archaeologists **do not** believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God (at least not by the *ordinary definitions* to which we subscribe). Therefore, they are predisposed **not** to find correlation between archaeological discoveries and the Bible. Of course, new biblical archaeologists accuse “old” biblical archaeologists of being predisposed to find correlations between archaeological discoveries and the Bible — even if they must forge those comparisons. God’s Word does not require fraudulently devised external evidences to defend it. However, legitimate external evidences of the Bible’s veracity — which may be uncovered through biblical archaeology — deserve fair consideration.

John H. Morison, Professor of New Testament Studies and Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Harvard Divinity School, author and Lutheran minister, has a



loathsome view of God's Word. In an article in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, he: (1) shudders at the thought

. . . that the Hebrew Bible . . . can be understood properly by both Jews and Christians only if it is acknowledged that its ultimate meaning is seen as a prophecy for the fulfillment in Jesus Christ. . . . that all Jews should be converted to Christianity. . . . there is neither a historical nor a theological justification for such claims. (John H. Morison, "Historic Mistakes Haunt the Relationship of Christianity and Judaism," *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March/April 1995, p. 26.)

(2) Morison quotes a fellow Harvard colleague and proceeds to defend the statement: "Both the canon of the New Testament and the Mishnah are a tragic historical mistake." (*Ibid.*) He adds:

It is a simple historical fact that Jesus was an Israelite from Galilee, and that he understood himself to be nothing else but a prophet in Israel and for Israel — a venerable tradition, and he was not the first of these prophets of Israel who was rejected and persecuted — though he was tried and executed by the Romans, not by the Jewish authorities. (*Ibid.*)

(3) According to Morison, Christianity and modern Judaism resulted from an unauthorized disruption in Judaism. A new religion (Christianity) was never intended by God or the apostles. "The Pharisee Paul," though he did not envision a new religious group, through his teaching inadvertently drove a wedge between Jews and Jewish-Gentile groups — by which "the heirs of the Pharisaic tradition" caused two distinct groups to form: Jews and Christians. (*Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.)

Even the editor of the magazine *Biblical Archaeology Review* is critical of "belief in the inerrancy of the Bible." (Hershel Shanks, "A Short History of BAR," *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March/April 1995, p. 38.) Four sentences within two paragraphs by another renown archaeologist show the link between new archaeology and new hermeneutics — which produces liberal theology.

I think that it is time for us to stop fooling the people, making them think that there is just one Bible and that *our* Bible committee got closer to it than *their* committee did. . . . Must we continue to pretend that only our group is right denominationally and others are not right, and it is just too bad about others? . . . The Hebrew text is still in the process of standardization, but I wonder if it would not be proper for there to be an effort afoot to provide our people with the differences where they exist and let them see that there have been differences all along. I have been told by some that that would just destroy the Bible because lay folk still want to think of the Bible as somehow "inerrant." (James A. Sanders, "Understanding the Development of the Biblical Text," *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Forty Years*, pp. 70-71.)

Funny, if it were not so tragic, biblical archaeology has become the very thing that when it initially came forth it was intended to counteract. Biblical archaeology sprang

from Palestinian archaeology as a calculated effort to offset German “higher criticism” of the Bible.

Archaeologists working in Palestine between the end of the 19th century and the First World War are generally regarded as the “Founding Fathers” of Biblical archaeology. . . . The “Golden Age” of Palestinian archaeology — the period between the two World Wars — was dominated by American-style “Biblical archaeology” as championed by William Foxwell Albright and his disciples. (Bunimovitz, pp. 60-61.)

J.W. McGarvey, was one valiant opponent of higher criticism. His book, *Lands of the Bible*, is an enduring testimony of his appeal to external evidence with which to confirm the Bible against liberal German theology.

However, a new generation of *scholars* in “the 1960s and early 1970s” arose which dubbed themselves *new biblical archaeologists*. They dismissed the archaeological work of their predecessors as “simplistic” or otherwise faulty. Former biblical archaeologists were ridiculed for engaging in *circular reasoning* for their acceptance of “. . . both archaeology and the Bible as essentially trustworthy sources of historical information.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 59, 62.)

Archaeologists are accompanied in the digs by “geologists, paleobotanists, zoologists, anthropologists, soil scientists, climatologists, etc.” (*Ibid.*, p. 65.) and apparently evolutionists (“. . . we found evidence of early man’s settlement in the Arabian Peninsula nearly a million years ago.” (Hamid Abu Duruk, “Archaeology Thriving in Saudi Arabia,” *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, March/April 1995, p. 73.) Together, these specialists collaborate to render *interpretations* regarding biblical archaeology. These interpretations are naturally subject to whatever presuppositions that the archaeologists may have. Consequently, new biblical archaeologists are promoters of humanistic depiction of man’s past, present and future. They tend to destroy the Bible as God’s Word and encourage an ecumenical, liberal theology. Personally, were I to adopt what new biblical archaeologists have to offer, I would not be anything religiously. I would be a confirmed atheist.

Fortunately, though in the minority, there are still *old* biblical archaeologists. They still do revere God’s Word and are willing to make correlation between archaeology and the Bible where those comparisons legitimately exist. Happily, there are numerous archaeological proofs that serve as external evidence to the truthfulness of the Bible. Finally and remarkably, no archaeological discoveries have been unearthed which contradict the Bible.

**“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24).**

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In late 1998, *Gospel Gazette Online (GGO)* at [www.gospelgazette.com](http://www.gospelgazette.com) was born of an idea and a desire to extend one's usefulness beyond the local setting, coupled with the (financial) go-ahead by my wife. From time to time in the past and in various locations around the country, *Gospel Gazette* appeared in printed form. First, *Gospel Gazette* was a quarterly, tabloid-size, newsprint magazine, which was distributed through paid insertion in a city newspaper. Years later, *Gospel Gazette* appeared again as a paperback-size booklet which was mailed to community households.

*Gospel Gazette Online* made its debut in January 1999 as a monthly, religious Internet journal. Today, it is a 20-page, monthly Gospel magazine read by people all over the world (from all seven continents, including Antarctica). Obviously, *GGO* via the Internet is available even in some places in the world to which one cannot easily go physically with the Gospel of Christ (e.g. Saudi Arabia and Antarctica). Each issue sports articles by Christian men and women on a variety of biblical subjects as well as several features (an onscreen, interactive crossword puzzle; youth articles; one or more articles by women especially for women; questions and answers; and an audio message). In addition, thousands of articles from past issues appear in the archives and may be selected with the help of the site search engine.

Dozens of brothers and sisters in Christ have lent their studious pens through the pages of *GGO* to an international readership of both Christians and non-Christians. By design, short, teaching articles populate Gospel Gazette Online. Thereby, *GGO* purposes to edify both Christians and non-Christians with Bible-based lessons. Response from readers reveals a wide array of religious backgrounds, including members of the church of Christ, denominational bodies and world religions. Most fan mail is positive and encouraging, though some of it ranges from critical to hostile, bordering on hate mail. A couple of the more heartening posts include correspondence about baptisms in Saudi Arabia and the request from a Muslim in Pakistan that I pray for his sick wife. Subsequently, after initial contact through the pages of *GGO*, and later studying with Christians in his country, he put Jesus Christ on in baptism.

Any good that *Gospel Gazette Online* has done or continues to do is owing largely to the many Christian writers whose articles comprise each issue. Most of my immediate family has had or continues to have a significant role in any successes that may be attributed to *GGO*. Beyond that, if *GGO* is a useful tool today, it is also because of a number of persons in the Christian family of God. Periodically, the recipient of lauds from around the globe, if there is anything praiseworthy, let the glory be to God.

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# PLAN OF REDEMPTION

## **GOD'S PART**

Love (John 3:16)  
Grace (Eph. 2:8)  
Mercy (Titus 3:5)  
Gospel (Rom. 1:16)

## **CHRIST'S PART**

The Blood of Christ (Rev. 1:5)  
Our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)

## **Holy Spirit's Part**

Revelation (2 Pet. 1:20-21)

## **MAN'S PART**

Bible Faith (John 8:24)  
Repentance (Acts 17:30)  
Baptism (1 Pet. 3:21)  
Obedience (Heb. 5:8, 9)  
Purity (Rev. 22:14)  
Faithfulness (Rev. 2:10)  
Love (1 John 2:10)  
Hope (Rom. 8:24)  
Works (Jam. 2:24)  
Endurance (Matt. 10:22)  
Confessing Christ (Rom. 10:9-10)  
Being Born Again (John 3:3-5)  
Laying Aside Evil (Jam. 1:21)  
Preaching (1 Cor. 1:18, 21)  
Calling on the Name of the Lord (Rom. 10:14)  
Knowledge of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15)