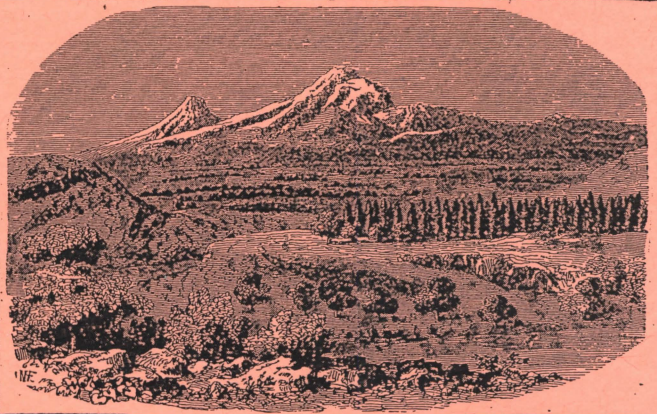
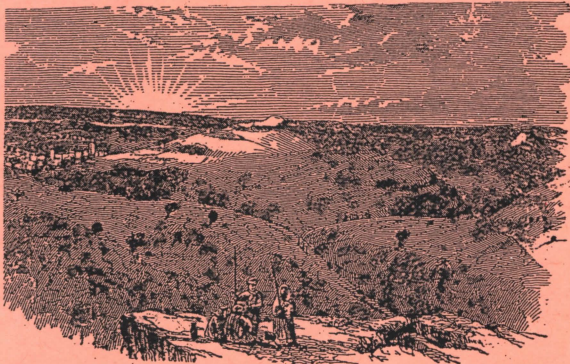
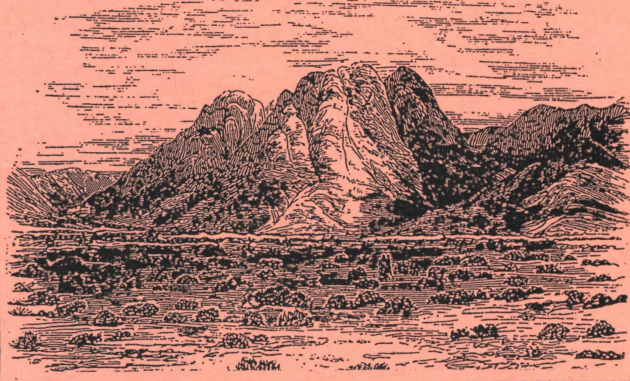


Majestic Mountains of Sacred Scripture



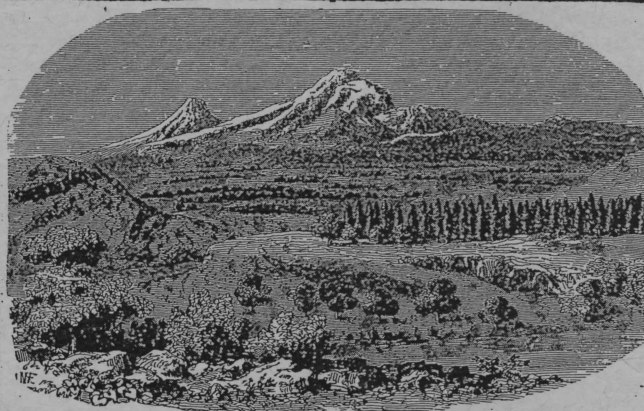
Derg Ararat.



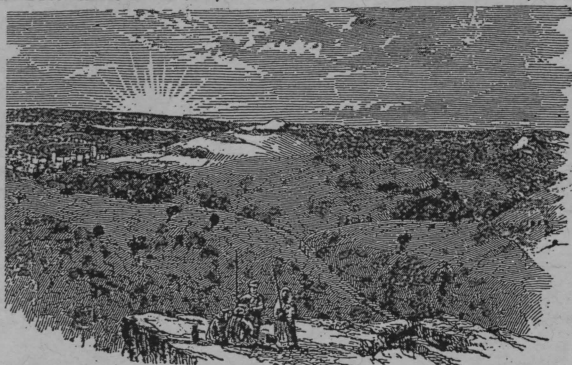
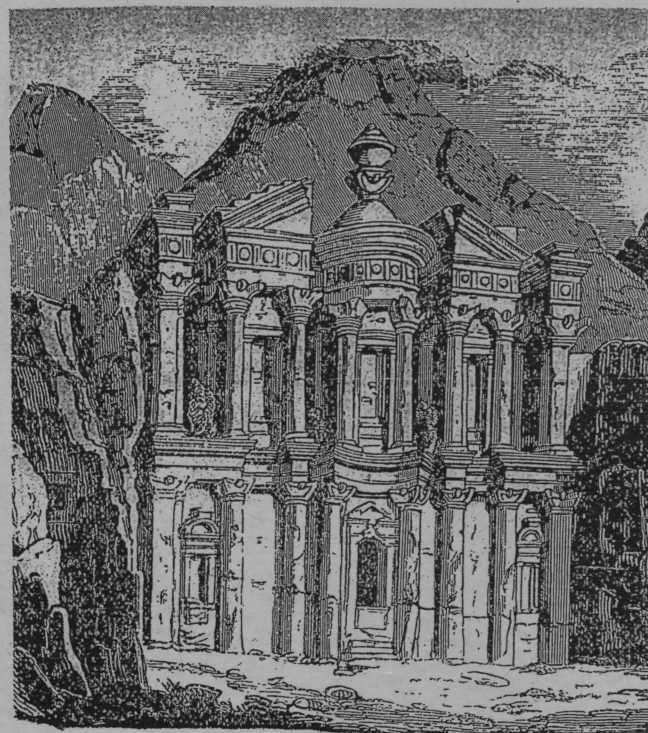
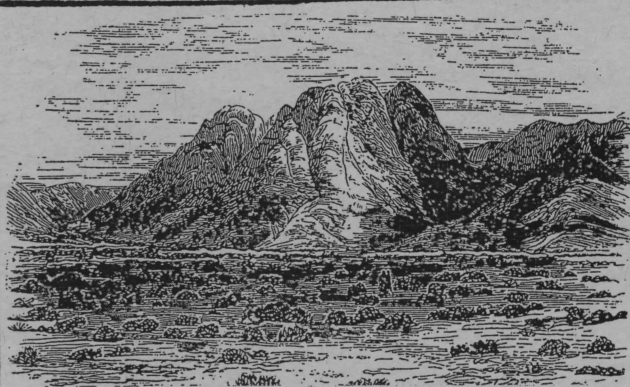
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Majestic Mountains of Sacred Scripture

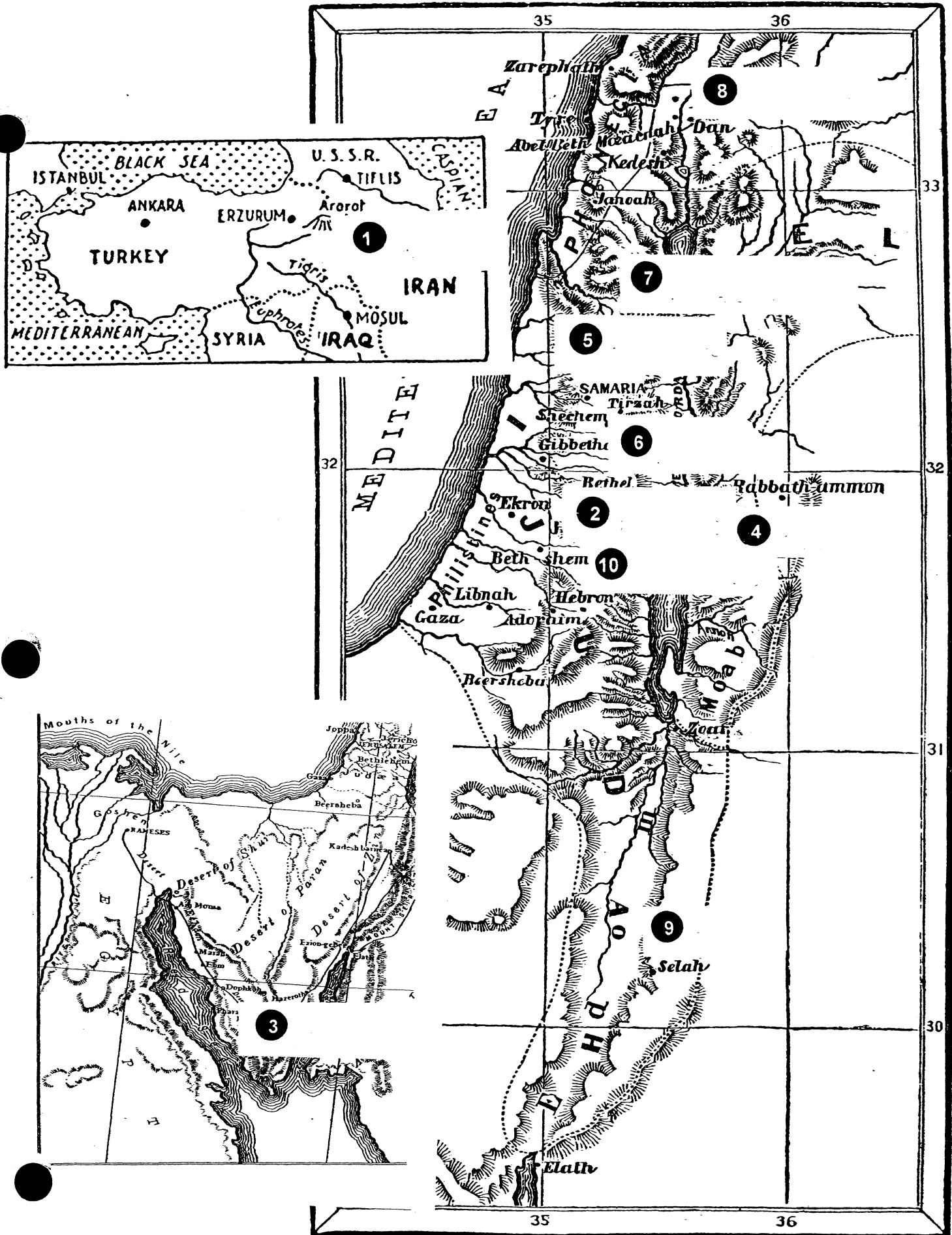


Berg Ararat.



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Map of Palestine after the Schism.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE MOUNTAINS OF THE BIBLE:

John McFarlane, in a volume from 1849, puts the importance of such a study in perspective. His superb observations can only be summarized:

I. The value of the Scriptures:

Every pious mind admits the truth, and feels the preciousness of these words of Paul to Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." This is, indeed, one of the christian's (sic) "cities of refuge," into which he escapes from skeptical suggestions and unbelieving fears. He values it "more than gold, yea, than much fine gold," and uses it as a reproof to the pride of reason, as well s an encouragement to the work of faith. It is impossible to overvalue the great truth asserted in it. At the same time, in this verse of scripture, another very notable, though, by reason of its juxtaposition, not so very observable a doctrine, is emphatically stated, viz., that "all scripture is profitable." This would seem to follow as a corollary from the former, and so it does.

II. The practicality of the Scriptures - McFarlane continues:

The Holy Ghost, however, is not dependent on particular portions of his word. As it all contains his mind, so he can make any portion of it serve the great end of its gift to man. The divine composer of the work saw the end from the beginning; and hence the gradual additions to the canon, while they diffused clearer knowledge, did not neutralize but confirm the original revelations. The earlier rays on the eastern horizon may be somewhat faint, but they come from the approaching orb of day. All scripture is therefore not only inspired, but must be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

III. The mountains of the Scriptures:

With these impressions, we purpose to investigate and improve some portions of the Bible which are not very often made the subjects of pulpit discourse, nor of private study, but which are most interesting, nay, profitable, to the humble and believing reader. We purpose to visit and ascend some of the mountains which scripture has immortalized, and which were once the scenes of wonderful events. As we draw near to these sublime monuments of nature, let us remember that they are also memorials of his majesty and mercy who is nature's Lord.

IV. The duty of believers:

The duty of devoting ourselves to God, is imposed not alone upon the church collectively, but upon the members of the church *individually*. It cannot fail to attract our notice in visiting the Bible Mountains, that the mighty things done upon or beside them, were done not by masses of men but by solitary men. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, David, Elijah, stand out conspicuously as illustrations of this great principle in christian (sic) ethics, that every man, in his own place and generation, is bound to be a witness for the Lord, "that he is God." This obligation cleaves to man while he lives, and when he dies he will be made to feel, in the judgment, that he was not overlooked in the multitudes of men that went down with his own era to the grave. (McFarlane, John, *The*



Mountains of the Bible: Their Scenes and Their Lessons, London: James Nisbet & Co., 1849, pp. 1-7 [emphasis in the original, points of the outline added]).



V. Mountains and God's revelation:

Bert Thompson shows the prominent position mountains have not just in biblical geography, but in the communication of God's truth:

Major Bible Mountains:

Mountains have always played an important part in God's dealings with His people. Consider, for example, Mt. Sinai (also called Mt. Horeb). When the Israelites left Egyptian slavery, they traveled for three months before arriving at Mt. Sinai. It was on the top of this mountain that God revealed Himself to Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19:16-20; 12).

Or, think about Mt. Carmel, which is composed of several peaks. It was here that Elijah challenged the false prophets of Baal by persuading them to pray to their "god" to light their sacrifice with fire. Of course, since Baal didn't exist, he couldn't light the fire. But when Elijah prayed to God, He sent fire that destroyed not only the bullock on top of the altar, but the altar itself (read 1 Kings 18).

There also is an important pair of twin mountains between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan in Samaria—Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. It was at these two mountains that Joshua assembled the tribes of Israel to instruct them in the Law of Moses (Joshua 8:30-35). And it was from these mountains that God's blessings (from Mt. Gerizim; Deuteronomy 11:29) and curses (from Mt. Ebal; Joshua 8:33-35) fell upon His people. Mt. Gerizim always has been considered sacred to the Samaritans, because they have "worshipped on this mountain" for countless generations (John 4:20).

You may remember Mt. Nebo, which is at the north end of the Dead Sea. During the Israelites' wilderness wanderings, on one occasion they ran out of water. So God told Moses to speak to a rock and it would yield water. But Moses disobeyed God and struck the rock instead (Numbers 20:8-12). As a result, Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land of Canaan. Instead, God took him to the top of Mt. Nebo and allowed him to look over into Canaan and after that Moses died.

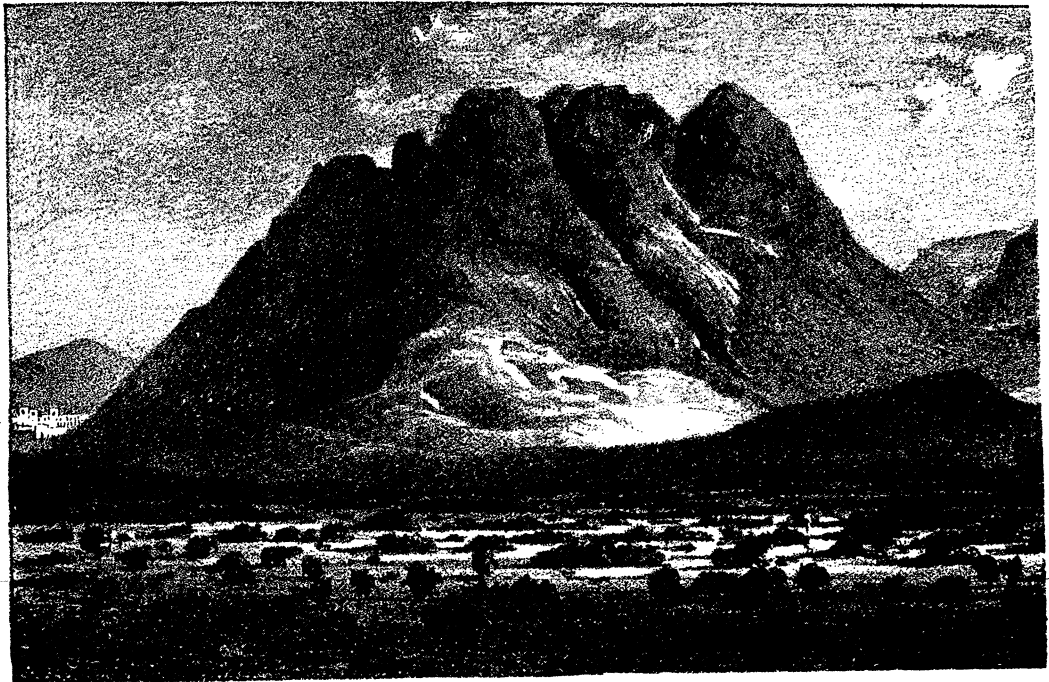
There are several other mountains associated with important events of the Old and New Testaments—like the Mount of Olives (outside of Jerusalem, where Jesus taught His disciples—Matthew 24:3), the mountains of Ararat (where Noah's ark came to rest after the Flood—Genesis 8:4), and Mt. Zion, which David took from the Jebusites (Joshua 15:63; 2 Samuel 5:7) and on which he built his palace in "the city of David." As you read about these famous mountains, remember that God is not limited to just a single mountain. And be sure to thank Him "for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the everlasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and the fullness thereof" that He has given us to enjoy while we are here on Earth (Deuteronomy 33:15-16).

(Bert Thompson, <http://www.discoverymagazine.com/articles/d2001/30106a.htm>)

VI. Benefits from the study of biblical mountains:

Upon reflection, it will become clear that there are several different aspects of biblical mountains which will prove of benefit to the diligent student.

1. Geographical—The mountain's location in relation to other geographical and biblical sites.
2. Archeological—Ancient artifacts which may be found nearby.
3. Topographical—The terrain with its unique features.
4. Spiritual—Divine truth revealed through the event related in the Bible.
5. Devotional and artistic—pious individuals have meditated on the biblical event and endeavored to capture the drama with their artistic skill.
6. Historical—Reports of visitors and eyewitnesses giving their impressions.
7. Christological—As the rest of the Scriptures, each mountain scene reflects something of the character and beauty of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.



RAS SUFSAFEH FROM THE PLAIN OF ER RAHAH
(SHOWING ON RIGHT HAND SIDE THE LOWER PART OF THE MOUNT WHERE THE ELDERS AND AARON SAW THE VISION OF GOD'S GLORY).

TEN VALLEYS OF THE BIBLE

PSALM 36:6

Thy righteousness is like the **great mountains**; thy judgments are a **great deep**:
O LORD , thou preservest man and beast.

It is interesting to note that in the Bible, valleys generally speak of something negative, possibly of a divine judgment or a human tragedy, whereas mountains accent magnificence, power and permanence. One can illustrate the negative aspect of biblical valleys by looking at the sample of ten valleys listed below:

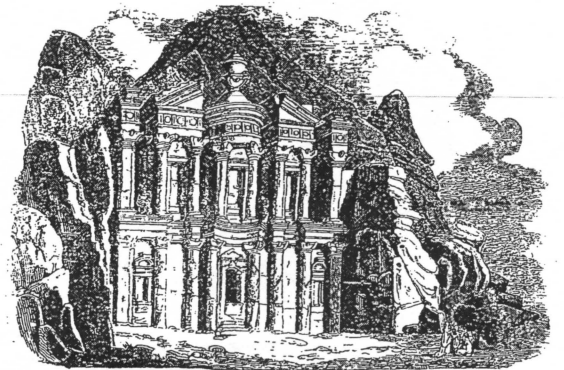
1. Euphrates-Tigris Valley:
2. Valley of Siddim:
3. Nile Valley:
4. Valley of Achor:
5. Valley of Aijelon:
6. Valley of Elah:
7. Valley of Hamon Gog:
8. Valley of Megiddo:
9. Valley of Jehoshaphat:
10. Arava Valley

Majestic Mountains of Sacred Scripture

	MOUNTAIN	MAIN MESSAGE	PROMINENT PERSON	PICTURE OF CHRIST
1	<i>Mt. Ararat</i>		NOAH	
2	<i>Mt. Moriah</i>		ABRAHAM	
3	<i>Mt. Sinai</i>		MOSES	
4	<i>Mt. Nebo</i>		MOSES	
5	<i>Mt. Carmel</i>		ELIJAH	
6	<i>Mt. Gerizim</i>		CHRIST	
7	<i>Horns of Hattin</i>		CHRIST	
8	<i>Mt. Hermon</i>		CHRIST	
9	<i>Mt. Seir</i>		THE WOMAN (ISRAEL)	
10	<i>Mt. of Olives</i>		CHRIST	

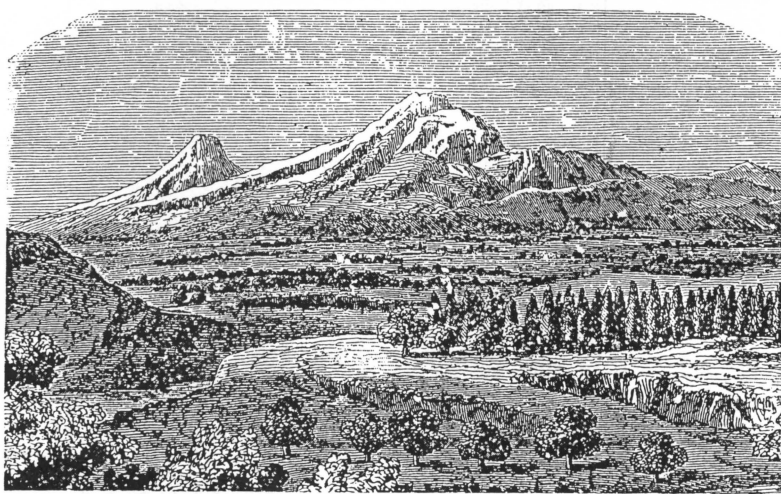
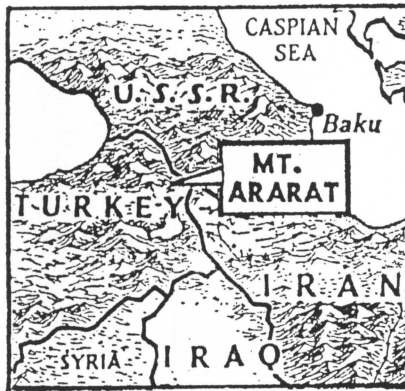
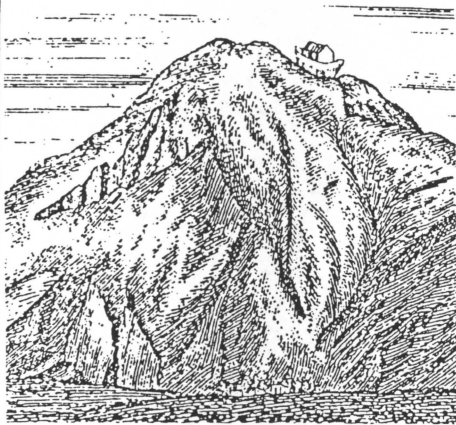
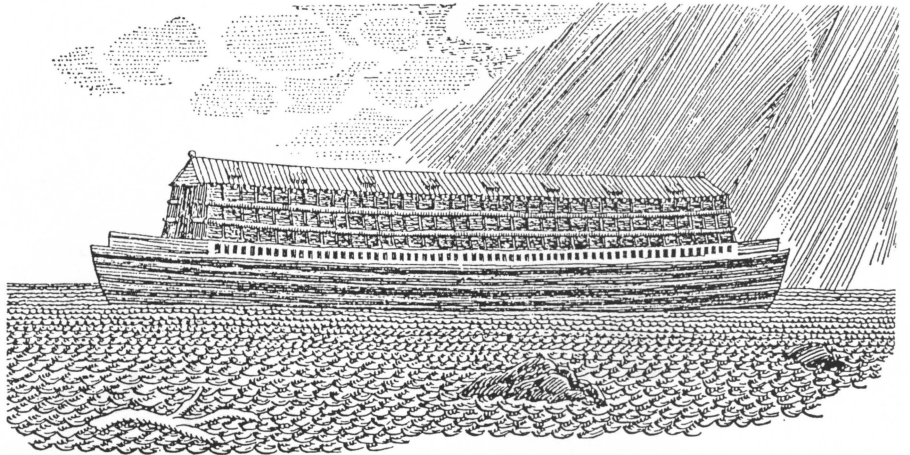


RAS SUFSAFEH (THE NORTHERN END OF SINAI)—FROM THE PLAIN.



Grotto of Petra.

Mt. Ararat: Its Majesty and Mystery



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Mt. Ararat – Its Majesty and Mystery

Genesis 8:1-4

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;

² The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;

³ And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

⁴ And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

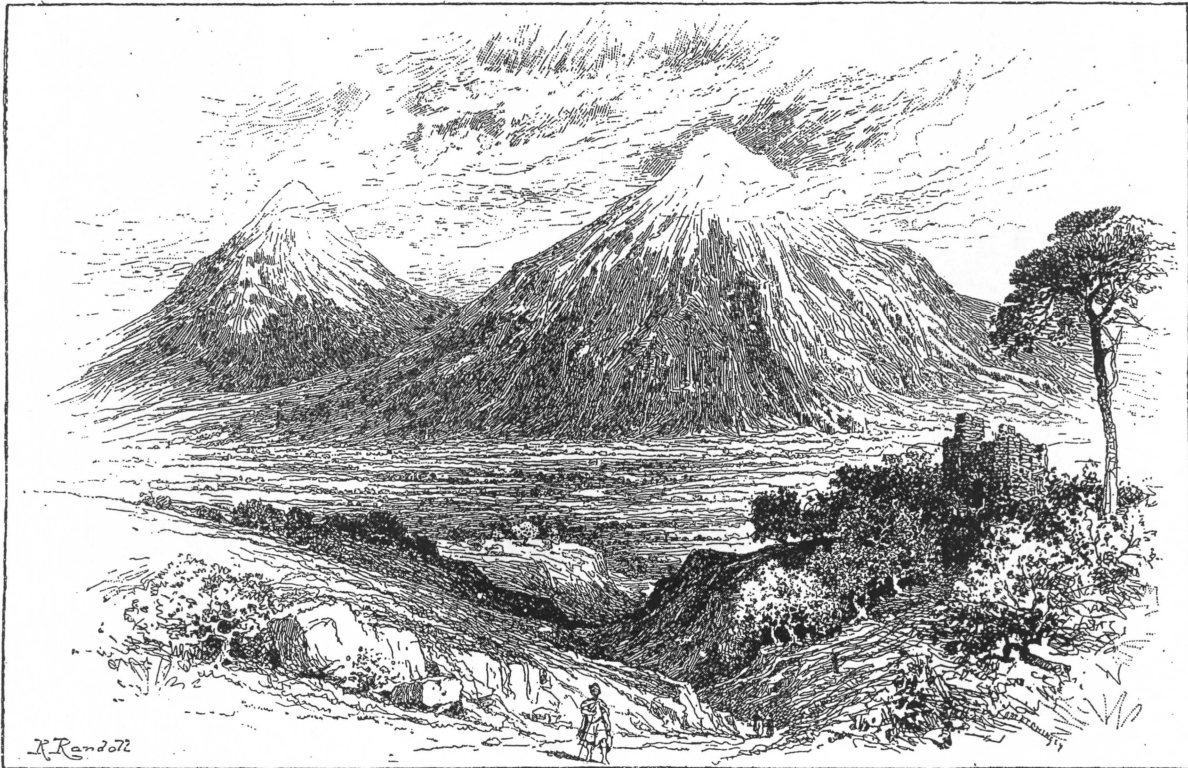
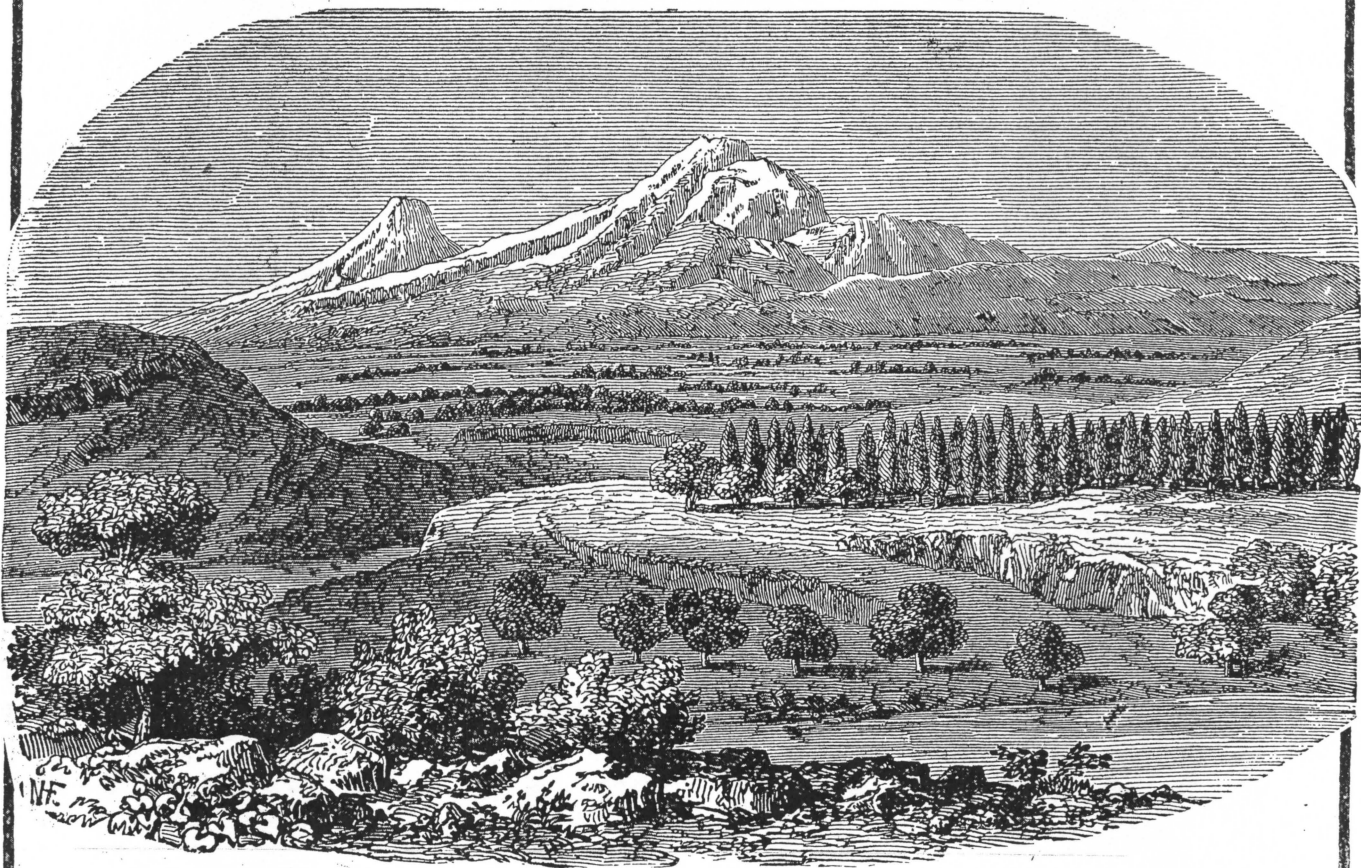


Fig. 23.—Mount Ararat.



FIG. 6.—Mt. Ararat—where three countries meet: Turkey, Iran and U.S.S.R.



Berg Ararat.

Mount Ararat— Its Majesty and Mystery



Map Locates Mt. Ararat

1A. The Location of Mt. Ararat:

Mt. Ararat is a snow-capped, dormant volcanic cone in Turkey. It has two peaks: **Greater Ararat** (the highest peak in Turkey with an elevation of 5,137m/16,854 ft) and **Lesser Ararat** (with an elevation of 3,896 m/12,782 ft).

The Ararat massif is about 40 km (25 mi) in diameter. The Iran-Turkey boundary skirts east of Lesser Ararat, the lower peak of the Ararat massif. It was in this area that, by the *Tehran Convention of 1932*, a border change was made in Turkey's favour, allowing it to occupy the eastern flank of Lesser Ararat.

Mount Ararat in Judeo-Christian tradition is associated with the "Mountains of Ararat" where, according to the book of Genesis, Noah's ark came to rest. It also plays a significant role in Armenian culture and irredentism.

2A. The Visitors' Accounts of Mt. Ararat:

M'Clintock and Strong record arresting observations of Mt. Ararat:

The mountain thus known to Europeans as Ararat consists of two immense conical elevations (one peak considerably lower than the other), towering in massive and majestic grandeur from the valley of the Aras, the ancient Araxes. Smith and Dwight give its position north 57° west of Nakhchevan, and south 25° west of Erivan (*Researches in Armenia*, p. 267); and remark, in describing it before the recent earthquake, that in no part of the world had they seen any mountain whose imposing appearance could plead half so powerfully as this a claim to the honor of having once been the stepping-stone between the old world and the new. "It appeared," says Ker Porter, "as if the hugest mountains of the world had been piled upon each other to form this one sublime immensity of earth, and rocks, and snow. The icy peaks of its double heads rose majestically into the clear and cloudless heavens; the sun blazed bright upon them, and the reflection sent forth a dazzling radiance equal to other suns. My eye, not able to rest for any length of time upon the blinding glory of its summits, wandered down the apparently interminable sides, till I could no longer trace their vast lines in the mists of the horizon; when an irrepressible impulse immediately carrying my eye upward again refixed my gaze upon the awful glare of Ararat" (*Trav. i*, 182 sq.; *ii*, 636 sq.). To the same effect Morier writes: "Nothing can be more beautiful than its shape, more awful than its height. All the surrounding mountains sink into insignificance when compared to it. It is perfect in all its parts; no hard ragged feature, no unnatural prominences; every thing is in harmony, and all combines to render it one of the sublimest objects in nature" (*Journey*, c., xvi; *Second Journey*, p. 312). Several attempts had been made to reach the top of Ararat, but few persons had got beyond the limit of perpetual snow. (*Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, New York: 1894, I, 358-359).



MOUNT ARARAT

3A. Critical Assertions Concerning the Flood:

1b. The liberal position:

- 1c. T. Eric Peet, *Introduction to Egypt and the Old Testament*:
 "The story has suspicious company"---i.e., it is close to two myths which explain the diversity of language and the origin of the rainbow.

The biblical flood account is "a baseless fairy tale."

2c. Magnus Magnusson, rector of Edinburgh University:

"The quest for Noah's Ark is self-evidently futile because the Flood story in the Bible is obviously a legend, and a borrowed and garbled one at that (in Genesis there are apparently two Flood stories which have been conflated into one)" (*Archaeology of the Bible* [1972], p. 23).

2b. The local-flood proponents:

1c. Spokesmen of the position:

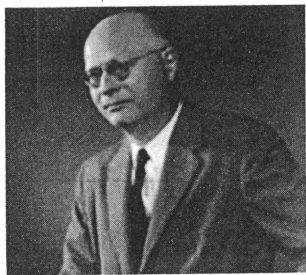
1d. William F. Albright:

It is remarkable that when wood was discovered on Mt. Ararat in 1969, the neoevangelical *Christianity Today* magazine (Sept. 12, 1969, p. 48) interviewed a liberal archeologist rather than a fundamentalist scholar to ask for his opinion whether the wood might be from the ark.

WOOD ON MOUNT ARARAT INTRIGUES EXPLORERS

Dr. William F. Albright of Johns Hopkins University, a world-renowned archaeologist and authority on ancient languages, scoffs at the idea the ark may be lying under the glacier. He told CHRISTIANITY TODAY there is no basis "either in biblical geography or in later tradition" for the claim that Mount Ararat (the mountain bearing this name in modern times) is the location of the settling of the ark. (Genesis 8:4 says the ark "rested. . . upon the *mountains* of Ararat.")

Further, Albright argues there isn't a trace of physical evidence that there was a flood of worldwide proportions around 2000 B.C. He completely dismissed the theory that the pieces of wood could be from the ark, noting that the remains of the ark, in his opinion, could not be at such a high elevation.



With all due respect to America's greatest archeologist in the 20th century, the Bible does locate the ark in the area of Ararat. While the book of Genesis does not specify that the ark came to rest on the highest mountain, it certainly does not exclude it. Furthermore, later tradition, indeed, attests to

many sightings of the ark. The interview shows, for one, the leaning of *Christianity Today* which appears to be more interested in opinions of liberals than observations by fundamentalists. It also evidences the possibility of prejudice on the part of the most respected scholars.

2d. Kenneth A. Kitchen:



Kenneth A. Kitchen, Egyptologist and possibly England's foremost O.T. scholar, refers to his "agnostic" position concerning the extent of the flood and the possibility of locating the ark.

An agnostic note. It is, of course, impossible to dogmatize on the extent of the flood of Mesopotamian or biblical tradition. . . Again, it is a sheer waste of time looking for remains of the ark on modern Mt. Ararat, because the biblical text does not locate it there—it clearly says, "the mountains (plural) of Ararat" in Gen. 8:4, which name covers a whole vast region. The ultimate reality behind the narrative does not rest on wild-goose-chases of that kind (*The Bible in Its World—The Bible & Archaeology Today*, p. 30).

Conclusion: The liberals assert that we are mistaken about the event of the flood; the local-flood proponents are sure we are in error about the extent of the flood. In Noah's day, men laughed at the possibility of a flood; today men laugh at the historicity of the flood.

4A. The Biblical Account:

1b. The statements of Scripture:

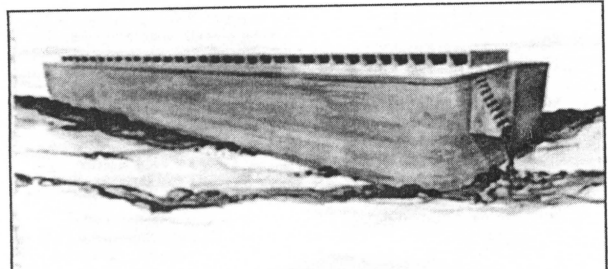
1c. The dimensions:

1d. The extent of the flood:

Gen. 6:17
And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

Gen. 7:4
For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

Gen. 7:19
And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.



Gen. 7:23

And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

Gen. 8:21

And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every living thing living, as I have done.

Luke 17:27

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

2 Peter 2:5 – “And spared not the old world.”

2 Peter 3:5,6 – “The world that then was. . .perished.”

Similarly, the earth will be destroyed in the future.
(Will this be a local or universal judgment?)

If language means anything, the flood must be understood as universal in extent. Disbelief in a world-wide flood is not a question of *interpretation* but of *inspiration*.

2d. The dimensions of the ark: Gen. 6:15

And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of; The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

- 1e. The length: 300 cubits or 450 ft.
- 2e. The width: 50 cubits or 75 ft.
- 3e. The height: 30 cubits or 45 ft.
(Gen. 6:16, three stories high)
- 4e. The tonnage: 43,300

2c. The duration of the flood:

- 1d. The rain endured 40 days, Gen. 7:4,12
- 2d. Noah was in the ark 371 days.



Noah Building the Ark.

2b. The support of archeology:

There are at least 269 flood traditions world-wide.

5A. The Historical Attestations of the Ark:

The extra-biblical reports of sighting the ark commence with the historian Berosus (3rd century B.C.). From Berosus to the 21st century there is a steady stream of such reports of the ark's survival, almost invariably associated with Greater Ararat (Mt. Agri) on the eastern border of present-day Turkey.

- 1b. The Babylonian high priest of the Temple Bel-Murduk, **Berosus**, states that, in his time, remains of the ark could still be seen on a mountain in Armenia. The historian **Abydenos** (4th century B.C.) agrees with him.
- 2b. **Nicolas Damscenus** (30 B.C.) also writes about a mountain in Armenia on which, he says, an ark was stranded after the waters of the flood receded. The Egyptian historian, **Hieronymus** relates basically the same story.

- 3b. In the book, *Antiquities of the Jews*, the well-known Jewish historian, **Flavius Josephus** (A.D. 100), wrote:

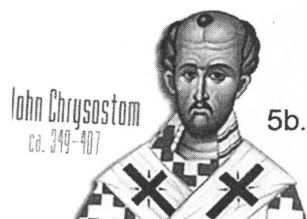
The ark rested on the top of a certain mountain in Armenia. . . However, the Armenians call this place, "The Place of Descent," for the ark being saved in that place, its remains are shown there by the inhabitants to this day. Now all the writers of barbarian histories make mention of this flood, and of this ark; among whom is Berossus the Chaldean. For when he is describing the circumstances of the flood, he goes on thus: "It is said there is still some part of this ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyaeans; and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly as amulets for the averting of mischiefs." Hieronymus the Egyptian also, who wrote the Phoenician Antiquities, and Mnaseas, and a great many more, make mention of the same. Nay, Nicolaus of Damascus, in his ninety-sixth book, hath a particular relation about them; where he speaks thus: "There is a great mountain in Armenia, over Minyas, called Baris, upon which it is reported that many who fled at the time of the Deluge were saved; and that one who was carried in an ark came on shore upon the top of it; and that the remains of the timber were a great while preserved. This might be the man about whom Moses the legislator of the Jews wrote."

- 4b. Six other historians of note, starting with **St. Theophilus of Antioch** in A.D. 120, follow the same line. While St. Theophilus writes practically the same account as Josephus, **Epiphanius**, Bishop of Salamis (A.D. 380), states that the wood of Noah's Ark is still being shown in the land of the Kurds.

- 5b. In his volume *On a Perfect Church*, Chrysostom (c. 345-407), wrote, "Have you heard of the Flood—of that universal destruction? That was not just a threat, was it? Did it not really come to pass—was not this mighty work carried out? Do not the mountains of Armenia testify to it, where the Ark rested? And are not the remains of the Ark preserved there to this very day for our admonition?"

- 6b. These and other historical accounts must have been taken literally by **Emperor Heraclius** (A.D. 600), for in *History of the Saracenes* by Hussein El Macin of Baghdad, it says that the emperor visited the remains of the ark after he had destroyed the Persians in the city of Thenia, located close to the foot of Mt. Ararat.

- 7b. Slightly over 600 years later, the Armenian historian **Haiton** writes that "in the snow of Mt. Ararat one can see a black spot which is Noah's ark," an object which he claims to have seen personally in 1254.





J. J. F. Parrot

- 8b. Even **Marco Polo** (1234-1324) writes, “. . .and you should know that in this land of Armenia, the Ark of Noah still rests on top of a certain mountain. . .”
- 9b. **Friedrich Parrot**, a Russian physician, climbed Mt. Ararat in the company of a group of Armenians in 1829 and claimed to have discovered wood.
- 10b. In 1840, after the great earthquake, **Turkish authorities** sent teams of workers into the mountains to prepare barricades against avalanches. One of these teams reportedly discovered the prow of an ancient ship, jutting from an ice pack, revealing three rooms.
- 11b. **Archbishop Nouri**, Patriarch of the Nestorian Church in Persia, also reported to have reached the ark on April 25, 1887, and stated that its wood was “dark red.” He furthermore claimed to have entered a part jutting out of the ice.

6A. The Contemporary Attempts on Ararat:

- 1b. Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, in his splendid book *The Quest for Noah's Ark*, gives much detailed information about the sightings of the ark mentioned above. Elsewhere he summarizes some of the recent testimonies:

Among the most recent testimonies are the following:

<u>Testimony to the Ark's Survival</u>	<u>Source of the Testimony</u>
i. Personally seen and climbed upon by a youthful Armenian (1902).	Interview with the Armenian (tape-recorded).
ii. Seen at close hand by a White Russian military patrol (1916-17).	Interviews with members of the families of now-deceased soldiers on the patrol and with officers who knew them (sworn statements).
iii. Explorer Hardwicke Knight comes upon a rectangular wooden framework in the ice of Ararat (1930's).	Knight's sworn statement.
iv. A boat-like form protruding from the ice on Ararat is photographed by engineer George Jefferson Greene from a helicopter (1952).	Drawing by a fellow engineer made on the basis of the deceased Greene's no longer extant photographs.
v. French amateur explorer Fernand Navarra sees under glacial ice on Ararat a boat-shaped form of the biblical dimensions of the Ark (1952), and later (1956) succeeded in obtaining some of its wood, which is definitely hand-tooled, apparently pitch- (bitumen-) impregnated, and at least 5,000 years old.	Navarra's accounts in his two books (<i>L'Expedition au Mont Ararat; J'ai trouve l'Arche de Noe</i>); personal interview with him and examination of the wood; wood analysis reports from the Forestry Institute of Research and Experimentation, Madrid, Spain, and from the Prehistory Institute of the University of Bordeaux's Faculty of Sciences.

He concludes:

Because of the powerful nature of this circumstantial evidence, I myself have been on Mount Ararat four times (August, 1970, 1971, and 1972; April, 1973), ascending to the peak of this exceedingly high (5,165 m./16,946 ft.) and treacherous peak on

The New Adventure on Ararat

by Dr. Randall Price

August 17, 1970. Ararat overlooks the Turkish-Russian border and is in a region controlled by the Turkish military; it has therefore been impossible, sad to say, to obtain government permissions to carry out the kind of extensive on-site research required to confirm past testimonies and bring about a firm discovery.

(Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium on Remote Sensing of Environment, April 15-19, 1974, Ann Arbor, p. 913).

2b. The efforts of Randall Price, of World of the Bible Ministries.

Randy and his team have been several times to Mt. Ararat in recent years, Randy has shared his impressive experiences and interesting slides at the Pre-Trib Conference in Dallas in December of 2010 and 2011. He has engaged personnel from NASA as well as obtained real time satellite data which allowed him and his team to localize a two-hundred-foot-long manmade object near the top of the mountain. He had hoped to continue his research in the summer of 2012. The pictures he shared in December 2011 showed a dark object beneath the ice as well as Randy and his team digging through the ice to reach whatever that mysterious object might be. Who knows what will come to the fore? Even if it is not wood from the ark, what handmade lumber would be deposited at an altitude of some 14,000 feet many miles away from the nearest town and trees? For Randy's search efforts, note the two articles appended to this outline and consult recent information under The World of the Bible Ministries.



7A. A Tentative Assessment:

1b. The opinion of the experts:

1c. **Robert C. Faylor**, Director of the Arctic Institute of North America commented: "We need objective appraisal to strengthen the findings. I can't explain how wood that size and age could get to that height... Whatever is there is going to be of great archeological interest."

2c. **Gilbert H. Grosvenor**, late editor of the *National Geographical Magazine*, once remarked: "If the Ark of Noah is ever discovered, it will be the greatest event since the resurrection of Christ: and it will alter all the currents of scientific thought."

2b. The antiquity of the wood:

Gen. 6:14 states that the ark was covered with pitch within and without. The wood discovered by Fernand Navarra is penetrated by some foreign pitch-like substance which makes accurate dating extremely difficult, if not impossible. The estimated age for this wood is 1300-5000 years. It is white oak wood. The closest tree is **150 miles** away, the closest white oak trees **600 miles** away from the location where Navarra discovered the wood.

3b. The location of the ark:

Most sightings have concentrated on the northeast side of Mt. Ararat. Remote sensing from satellites have located a large foreign object on the edge of the Ahora Gorge.

- 4b. The difficulties of exploring Mt. Ararat:
The weather on the mountain makes exploration possible only about eight weeks out of the year. The mountain itself is a volatile volcano. Navarra describes the danger:

Mt. Ararat being a volcanic mountain is strewn with millions of rocks which even the shout of a human voice can cause a landslide and alter the appearance of the mountain on a daily basis, making it extremely difficult for climbing. More than once Navarra and his son narrowly escaped from huge boulders rolling down the mountainside (*Noah's Ark: I Touched It*, p. 12f.).

- 5b. The reason for past failures:
Constant turmoil within the Turkish government, the animosity of the Kurdish farmers in the area against the Turks and all foreigners and the suspicion formerly of the Soviets at the foot of Mt. Ararat have prevented any large-scale exploration of the mountain.

Violet Cummings, a frequent traveler to the mountain, mournfully reports:

It must be recognized that the geographical position of Mount Ararat, and its highly sensitive military location on the very borders of its powerful and atheistic Soviet neighbor to the north has no doubt been one of the most potent and increasingly frustrating deterrents to every organized attempt to re-discover the Ark in recent years (*Noah's Ark: Fact or Fable?* pp. 311-312).

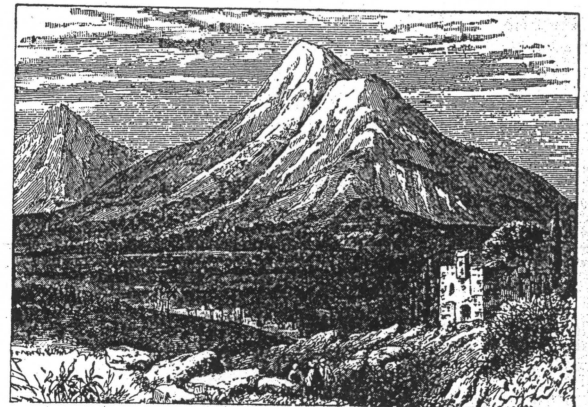
- 6b. The conclusion from the evidence:

After all is said and done, is the ark on Mt. Ararat? LaHaye and Morris, after sifting the wealth of evidence, give a positive verdict:

A Reasonable Conclusion

Logicians wisely tell us "the accuracy of a conclusion is dependent on the accuracy of the major premise and each additional premise." We believe Noah's Ark exists today encased in snow and ice somewhere up in the mountains of Ararat. We invite you to examine each of our premises and reach your own conclusions.

MAJOR PREMISE: The Ark of Noah is a fact of history! This fact is supported by the Bible, Jesus Christ, the apostles, universal flood stories, ancient flood inscriptions, and geological evidence that throughout the earth there was indeed a worldwide Flood.



Mount Ararat.

PREMISE: Preservation of the Ark by freezing is possible. The ice region on upper Ararat could easily have set in within a few years after the Flood. The unique "gopher wood" from which Noah made the Ark, and which seems to have no known counterpart in post-flood days, carefully covered with "pitch" (probably as a preservative against water and deterioration) may have provided a protective coating, increasing this potentiality. To our knowledge, no scientific arguments have been proposed showing that preservation of the Ark by freezing is impossible.

PREMISE: Several honorable men in relatively modern times claim to have seen the Ark. Since the giant explosion of 1840 and the avalanche of 1883, there have been increasing reports by individuals, from Haji the Armenian, Nouri the Nestorian from Malabar, India, Resli the Turk, Greene the American, Navarra the Frenchman, and almost 200 other individuals—all of whose stories have many common details in spite of the glacial changes that understandably alter the body of ice that usually hides the Ark from view. Such similarity, without the possibility of collusion, seems most unlikely unless the Ark is really there.

PREMISE: Three men have found hand-hewn timbers in that area—150 miles from the nearest tree. Sir James Bryce (1876), Hardwicke Knight (1936), and Fernand Navarra (1955). The latter two reported vast amounts of timbers in the area, and Navarra's wood tested out to be of ancient vintage.

CONCLUSION: That Noah's Ark has been preserved; on certain occasions it has been sighted and is still up there covered with an icy mantle.

PREDICTION: That someday, when climatic conditions are just right, a significantly long dry, hot spell will melt that icy mantle back, at a time when the political conditions below are stable enough to allow a research team to methodically investigate the area—the Ark of Noah will be found.

We hope—and we believe—it will be soon!
(*The Ark on Ararat*, 261-262)

CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Greater Ararat. He described that exploration in his book *L'Expedition au Mont Ararat* (1953). After attaining the summit of Ararat on August 14, 1952, Navarra and his companion began to search for traces of the ark. Here is his account of what they saw:

It was August seventeenth—we had reached an altitude of 13,800 feet and the enormous ice cap stretched before us. . . We were surrounded by whiteness, stretching into the distance, yet beneath our eyes was this astonishing patch of blackness within the ice, its outlines sharply defined. Fascinated and intrigued, we began straightway to trace out its shape, mapping out its limits foot by foot: two progressively incurving lines were revealed, which were clearly defined for a distance of three hundred cubits, before meeting in the heart of the glacier. The shape was unmistakably that of a ship's hull: on either side the edges of the patch curved like the gunwales of a great boat.

JULY 2, 1971



A crude sketch by Chardin in 1686 showing Ark located on northeastern side of Ararat as described to him by the natives at that time.

8A. The Eschatological Anticipation:

McFarlane shows the design and the devastation of the universal flood:

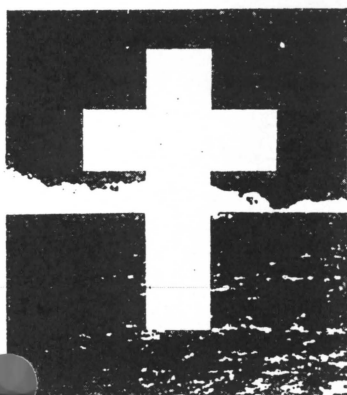
These causes may be described in one sense as natural, inasmuch as it was by the opening up of the fountains of the great deep, and of the "windows of heaven," that the deluge was brought upon the earth; but, in a moral or religious sense, it must be regarded as the doing of Jehovah, who, for good and sufficient reasons, after this manner determined well nigh to depopulate the world. Hence it is written, "Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth." Herein the divine glory is asserted. Again, "God looked upon the earth, and saw that it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Herein the connection between the flood and the existence of moral evil is emphatically stated, and not of extensive moral evil only, but of almost *universal* moral evil: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." These descriptions must be literally understood. Human nature, in itself, was not only universally depraved in all its powers and faculties, but all the human beings then living were partakers of such depravity, excepting one family. What must have been the extent of a degeneracy, to correspond with such an account, and the judgment inflicted upon it, we cannot conceive. Bad as the world has often been since, and bad, after all, as it is still, it appears that the wickedness of man has never produced like enormities. It is nowhere recorded, nor does the history of the world justify us in conceiving that it could be truthfully recorded, that, excepting at that period, "God repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart" (McFarlane, 20-21).

- 1b. Biblically, the ark is a **signal of destruction** (2 Peter 2:5; 3:6,7). Christ predicted that world judgment would come as it did in the days of Noah (Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27).
- 2b. The ark is also a **symbol of deliverance**. Jesus Christ is the ark of safety for the believer. As Noah and his family were delivered from the flood through the ark, so the believer will be delivered by Christ before the tribulation.

John Morris of the Institute of Creation Research has well stated that if the ark were discovered,

Christians would have unlimited opportunities to explain that the ark was God's gracious method of salvation for the believers of a previous world in a time of great rejection and consequent judgment. Those on board were placed in a new and better world after the flood.

Since the Bible identifies Noah's Ark as a "type" of Christ (1 Pet. 3:20,21; Matt. 24:36-39), the ark's discovery, properly explained, would focus the attention of the world on Jesus Christ, our present-day Ark, God's present, gracious method of salvation for believers, those who have turned to Him during this time of great rejection. Those on board this Ark (placed there by belief in Him as their personal Saviour) will escape the



coming judgment and be placed in a new and better world hereafter.
(http://www.worldofthebible.com/Arch_update.html)

- 3b. The ark may be a **sign for doubters**. Who knows whether God will not allow men to discover the ark as a sign and warning to doubters. Perhaps the excessive heat of the tribulation period would bring to light the remains of the ark for all to see. God who never judges without warning, may permit this one final sign to a Christ-rejecting mankind. One can imagine what the discovery of a ship the size of an aircraft carrier at the altitude of 14,000 ft. on Mt. Ararat would do to the skeptics, scoffers and scientists supporting evolution!

Die Sintflut.



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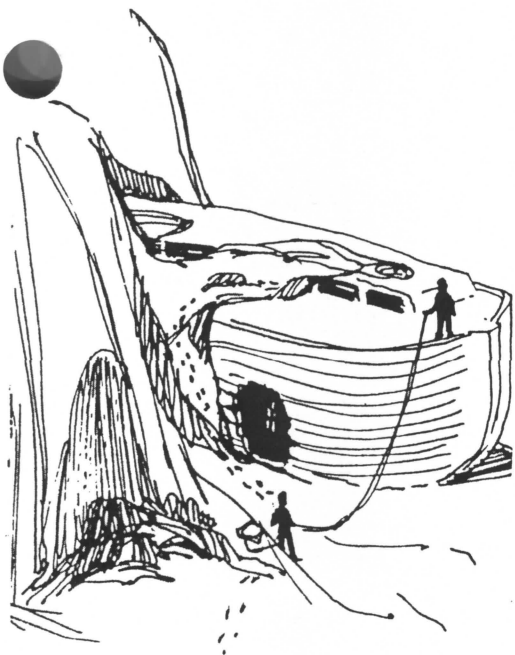
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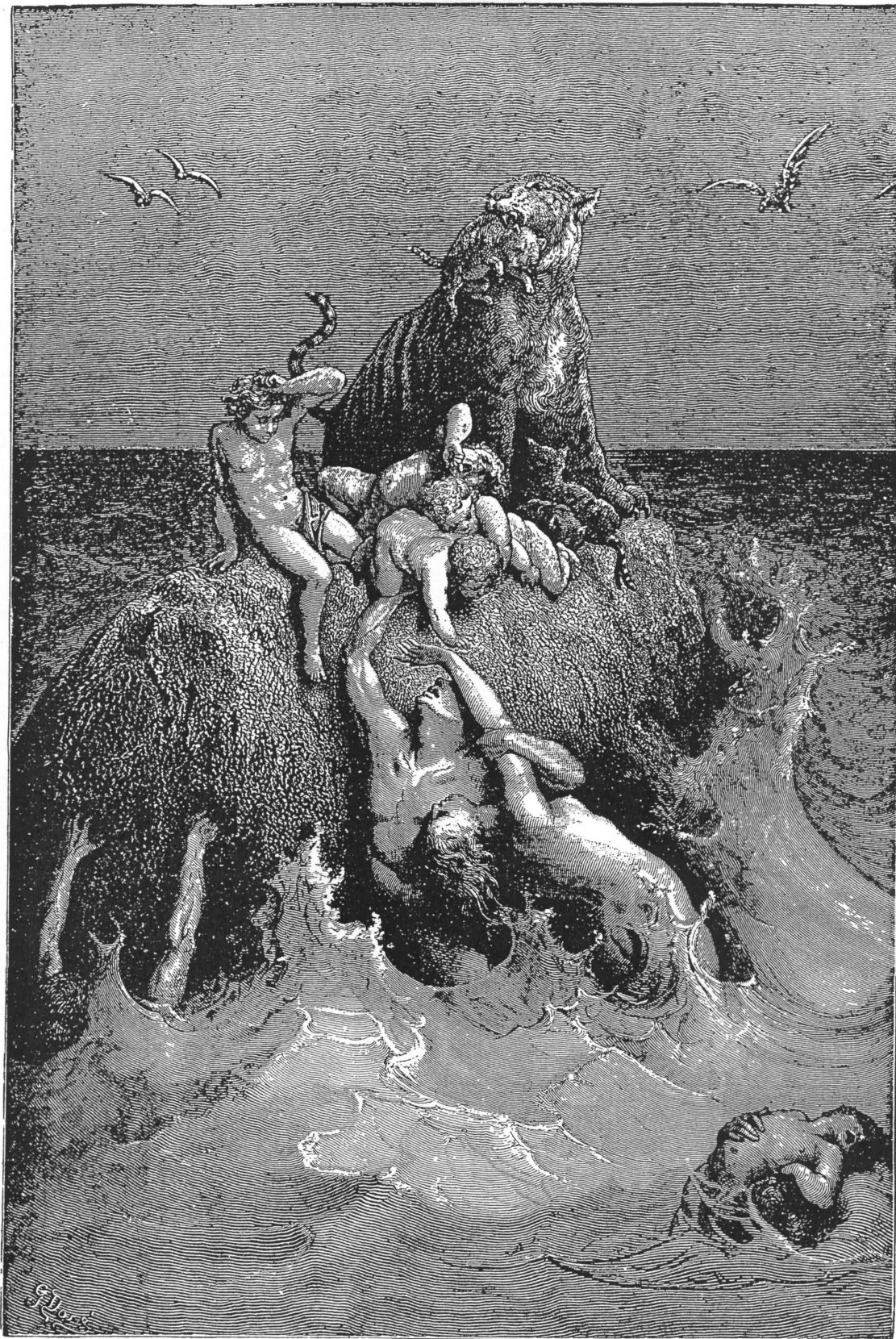
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Newspaper clippings from the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and several other papers around the world tell the story of a group of Turkish explorers who climbed the mountain in 1883 and stumbled onto the ark of Noah. After receiving the explorer's report, the Turkish government sent an expedition consisting of several Turks and one English commissioner.

Upon climbing the mountain, they found the ark and entered it through a hole in the side wall. After de-icing the first three compartments, they reported that inside were cages large enough to keep animals. Carved in an ancient language on the side wall of the third compartment was a ship's log—certainly a fascinating report from those who were eye witnesses in 1883.





“ My Spirit Shall not Always Strive with Man.”



Noahs Dankspter.



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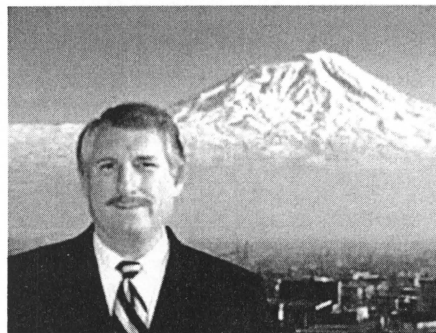
NEWSLETTER OF WORLD OF THE BIBLE MINISTRIES, INC.

The New Adventure on Ararat

by Dr. Randall Price

Back in the summer of 1972 I had the invitation to join an expedition in search of Noah's Ark on Mt. Ararat. The expedition was to be directed by Dr. John Morris, son of Dr. Henry Morris whose book *The Genesis Flood* was the first Christian book I had read as a new believer. The invitation had come to my friend Roger Losier and me as last minute replacements for one of the team leaders, Mike Turnage, who had developed a heart murmur and had to drop out. As a college student I had already been hired to work at a Christian youth camp that paid \$300 for the entire summer. Before me was the daunting task of raising, in a matter of only two weeks, \$1,500 for the trip to Turkey and the climb up Mt. Ararat. Roger made it and I didn't, but one reading of John Morris' book *Adventure on Ararat* that recounted the expedition, told me I was glad I hadn't! The team had been shot at, robbed, and struck by lightning that temporarily paralyzed them, and possibly contributed to John's later development of Multiple Sclerosis. Knowing my own penchant for disaster, I'm sure that had the Lord allowed me to go on that trip it would have been my pathway to heaven! Still, in the years that passed, I never stopped regretting that I had not been able to go to Mt. Ararat!

Move ahead with me to October 2008, some 36 years after the "adventure on Ararat" as I find myself looking up at the summit of Mt. Ararat in climbing gear. I cannot understand the ways of the Lord, for my 56 year-old body is not the same as the 20 year-old body that *could* have climbed the mountain back in 1972. I know this because my 23 year-old son Jon climbed in front of me (*far* in front of me!) to our 14,000 foot site on one of the mountain's glaciers. Despite coming in last place, I made it! Yet, this is just the beginning of the



October 2008 Expedition Team



"new adventure on Ararat" that lies ahead. But before we go there, let me bring you up to date on this amazing story.

For more than 25 years former Continental Airlines Captain Richard Bright has been on a search for the Ark. After so many years, this godly gentleman who has financed his own expeditions, was only a few months ago led by a local mountaineer (with whom he had long worked) to meet a Kurdish shepherd who claimed to have seen the Ark. More than that, this shepherd, when he was a boy had climbed on top of the Ark and looked into an opening. Inside he saw rows of wooden "columns" (probably support beams/posts). He was now prepared to take Richard to the very site! In itself, this is a

phenomenal event, for never in the history of Ark research has a living witness actually taken an Ark researcher to the very spot of his sighting!

Richard climbed to the site with this shepherd in September, and after descending the mountain, personal responsibilities in the states called him home, preventing a second climb. As Providence would have it, our team (myself, my son Jon, geologist Don Patton, and Don Campbell) was already in Turkey following up another Ark lead and was invited to do the follow-up expedition. On September 30 we started our ascent with the shepherd and the mountaineer, making base camp at 10,000 feet to spend the night in pup tents on packed snow at about 15 degrees below zero. The next morning (October 1) we started our six-hour climb to the glacier, balancing on the snow-covered and unstable volcanic boulders strewn on the path before us (what Richard Bright calls "that miserable rock pile"). The snow was knee to waist deep (sometimes deeper!), and trudging through it was painful. Finally, we made it to the sunlit summit before us (not the summit of the mountain, but of a ridge near a glacier), and the shepherd pointed out the area where as a boy he had walked on the Ark.

The site today is covered by a landslide of boulders, the remains of two peaks that we believe were blasted by the Turkish military in the 1990s either to eradicate PKK (Kurdish rebel) hideouts or, possibly to cover the known location of the remains of at least a part of the Ark (possibly even then covered by ice); the search for which had been increasingly attracting "religious people" to the mountain since the 1980s. An explosives expert on our team (Don Campbell) confirmed that the evidence

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New Adventure on Ararat
Continued...

was consistent with an explosion and other members of Richard Bright's team had earlier discovered remains of shell casings at the site and even an unexploded shell. Climbing on to the rubble, the shepherd stood above the very spot where he says he walked on top of the Ark in his youth. He estimated there was about 60 feet of rock now covering the ice under which the structure lies. Even though we could not see anything, the zealous conviction of this Kurdish shepherd was quite contagious and we all felt the rush of excitement that we could be ourselves standing on the Ark!

Of course, at this point in time, the only "proof" we have is the shepherd's story; however, I find it hard to doubt his sincerity for a number of reasons. First, he is a devoutly religious Muslim and will not take a single cent for his participation in this work. He believes by showing us the Ark he will fulfill the good deed he must do before he dies. Second, I interviewed him for two hours, asking through our interpreter every question I could to trip him up and expose a contradiction in his story. He has never been to school, cannot read or write, has other people buy his groceries, and has never been to more than three nearby villages in his life.

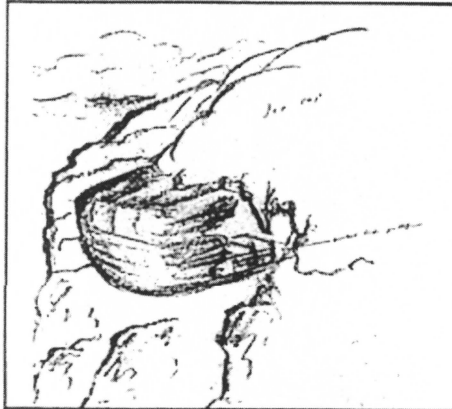
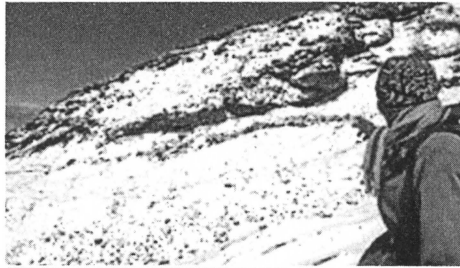
He said that he did not know it was the Ark when he first saw it, but thought it was a big house. Only later in life did he hear about the story of Noah and the Flood from the Qur'an and realized it was the Ark he had seen. He did not go inside when he was a boy because a friend with him scared him by telling him a bear might be inside (bears frequent the mountain). Ever since he had wanted to get back to the Ark, but military restrictions to certain areas of the mountain prevented him from returning to the site. This summer the mountaineer was able to negotiate with some of the authorities to make their climb (and ours) possible. Third, his description of the Ark was accurate and consistent with two of the most reputable Ark eyewitness accounts as described below.

After my interview I showed him a number of sketches made by alleged eyewitnesses and drawings made from their descriptions of the Ark. He rejected most all of them (evidence he was not simply trying to please or agree with us), but was excited about two in particular - a drawing of the Ark as described by the Armenian George Hagopian (during his visit to it in 1904), and later rendered by artist Alfred Lee, and a sketch made by Army/Air Force navigation expert and pilot Vince Will after he had seen the



For more than 25 years former Continental Airlines Captain Richard Bright has been on a search for the Ark.

structure during a WWII flight where the aircraft commander decided to descend around the mountain while preparing a landing at the now Armenian airport of Yerevan. The year was 1943, and Vince was a member of the crew who witnessed the sighting. They had actually purposely searched for the Ark in the flight around the mountain, having heard that other pilots had seen the structure on a previous flight. This experience of witnessing the Ark protruding from a glacier so affected him that he later became a minister (and, providentially, a close friend of Richard Bright). After I left the interview, the



Above: The shepherd pointing to the place where he saw it in his teens. Below: The eyewitness sketch from another source that the shepherd picked from other artist's drawings as what he remembered.

interpreter told me he had a hard time convincing the shepherd that I had not been there and seen the Ark because I had real pictures of it! The interpreter explained that they were simply artist's drawings, but had been based on real sightings, like his. There is much more to this interview and the story behind it, which I hope to be able to reveal in the future. But what does the present hold?

As I write these words, permits are being negotiated to bring heavy equipment into the

site and start removing the rocks covering the structure the shepherd says is buried below. In addition, our team wants to ascend to the glacier on the summit above where we believe subsurface radar data shows another section of the Ark deep beneath the ice. We believe that the Ark was broken into two or more pieces by the earthquake of 1840 that deepened and enlarged the Ahora Gorge on the northern face. The pieces that may be in the radar image could be associated with the structure seen by the shepherd at the lower elevation and probably slid down the glacier and rested in the valley (now filled with collapsed debris). The intent is to use special ice-melting gear to cut a passage to the anomaly in order to take samples and confirm it is a wooden structure. These works will be part of an expedition planned for this summer. More urgent, however, is the need to raise funds to secure the permit by the middle of December. There is an official who has favored this work. Again, by God's direction, he is one of the rare, undisclosed Christians who is in the midst of a country that is 99.9% Muslim! However, he is to retire in the not too distant future and upon his retirement he will lose access to his authority to grant, or influence the peer authorities who will grant the permits. Moreover, he is the one who negotiates with the authorities who allow our team to work in these areas under strict military control. Without immediate funds for this man the permits cannot be obtained and our expedition cannot take place.

We believe God raised this man to his office for such a time as this and believe that God brought our unique team together for this moment and that we were all led to the shepherd—the only living eyewitness to the Ark that is known—at just this time. We must also believe that his retirement and the short time we have to raise the necessary funds are also in God's timetable! Therefore, we believe the Lord will provide the necessary funds to see this vital work accomplished. The amount needed is \$19,000 for the shepherd's site and \$37,000 for the higher more difficult glacier site. These funds are only to get the permission to carry out the expedition in these sensitive sites.

Gilbert Grosvenor, the first editor of *National Geographic* allegedly declared, "The discovery of Noah's Ark would be the greatest archaeological find in human history, the greatest event since the resurrection of Christ, and it would alter all the currents of scientific thought." Could we be on the threshold of uncovering this incredible discovery and being a part

Continued on page 5

shall live, I, Gabriel, command you." For Professor Knohl, this account of a suffering, dying, and resurrected messiah from before the birth of Jesus suggests that the story of Jesus' death and resurrection was not unique but part of a recognized Jewish tradition at the time. Such concepts are indeed found in less explicit form in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical documents from the pre-Christian era, although this is the first text to use the expression "after three days" in relation to a messianic resurrection.

Professor Knohl said in our conference that "This should shake our basic view of Christianity since it runs contrary to nearly all [Christian] scholarship." His reason for making this declaration came from his exclusive acquaintance with higher critical scholarship (such as the Jesus School), which has claimed that Jesus did not rise from the dead and that the resurrection was a much later theological interpolation made by the church, since such a concept did not exist in Jesus' day. However, what he thinks will shake up [liberal] Christianity in fact confirms evangelical Christianity, which has always understood the core of the gospel message to be that Jesus died and rose after three days "according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Although the professor believes that church theologians borrowed this Jewish concept and put it in Jesus' mouth when He

predicted His suffering and resurrection in the Gospels, a more plausible (and biblical) understanding is that such an extra-biblical text simply collaborates the affirmation of Jesus and the Apostles that "the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled" (Acts 3:18; cf. Acts 17:3). Indeed, Jesus found this concept in many of the prophets, including the Prophet Jonah whose "three days" inside the great fish He saw as the pattern ("the sign of Jonah") for His own three days in the tomb (Luke 11:29-32). Even though the concept exists in extra-biblical texts, this can be best explained by their earlier presence in biblical prophetic texts such as Isaiah (53) and Daniel (9), upon which many such apocryphal texts depend, as does the Gabriel text with its allusions to Daniel (8). Jewish-rooted interpretations, such as that in evangelical Christianity, finds no problem with the Jewish messianic hope contained in the Gabriel Revelation.

Therefore, despite Professor Knohl's misunderstanding of Christianity's understanding of Jesus' own messianic consciousness, he is right when he argues (he thinks against Christian scholarship) that Jesus shed His blood for the redemption of national Israel. True, He shed His blood for the Gentiles also, but the Gabriel text reminds us that Jesus, as the Jewish Messiah, came to "save His people from their

sins" (Matthew 1:21) and will come again as a Risen Savior to fulfill this mission when "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26-27). With the Gabriel Revelation we have another archaeological attestation of the accuracy and authenticity of the text of the New Testament. 🌟

New Adventure on Ararat Continued...

of ushering in a new era of evidence with which the unbelieving world will have to contend? We can only know the answer if we can complete the expedition this summer. If you can help in any way you can make your checks to World of the Bible Ministries so you will be able get a tax-deductible receipt for your donation. We will immediately send every cent of your donation to Richard Bright of Ark Search LLC for distribution to the official in Turkey. Please remember that this contribution is only for the Noah's Ark project and that World of the Bible Ministries has its own need for support at this time. Above all, please pray that the Lord will honor our efforts to reveal His glory on the mountains of Ararat and that if it is His time to have the Ark discovered that He would grant wisdom to our team! 🌟

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REPORT ON THE ARK SEARCH LLC EXPEDITION TO MT. ARARAT JULY-AUGUST 2009

More of the Summer Story with Pictures

By Randall Price

In July the team of the Noah's Ark Search LLC Expedition began their arduous climb and excavation of two sites on Mt. Ararat in eastern Turkey. Headed by Richard Bright, a retired airline captain and a 30 plus year veteran of expeditions in search of the Ark, this first season was based on some of the most exciting research ever made for such expeditions. The lower site at 14,000 feet was based on a living eyewitness who took our team to the place where 40 years earlier he had seen and walked on a wooden structure protruding from the glacier. Our upper site at 16,800 feet was based on satellite data of two very large organic man-made anomalies lying under the glacier in the eastern plateau.

Work at the lower site began in June extending roads previously cut by the military. Workers were brought



Randall at the Summit

to move the rock pile covering the glacier in which the wooden structure was seen by the shepherd. Work at the upper site began in mid-July with our team scaling the summit and establishing a high camp near the site of the anomaly. Severe weather, even for MT. Ararat at this time of the year, consisting of winds of 100 mph and blizzard conditions, destroyed our tents and twice forced our team off

the mountain. We returned with a pre-fabricated house that we constructed on the eastern plateau. This enabled a small team to live at the site and to begin digging a test hole into the glacier. Despite continued difficult weather, the team dug a test hole to 18 feet and water began to ooze up from below. This may be an indication that we are in the vicinity of the anomaly as a darker mass under the ice would absorb heat and melt



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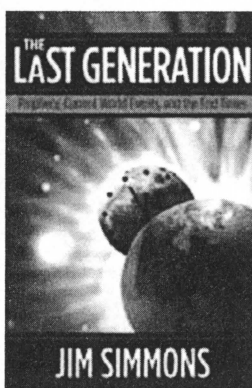
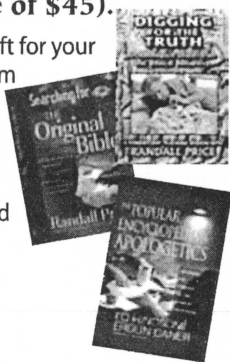
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argument for this generation alive today being the last generation". A thorough and current prophetic primer for anyone wanting a good overview of end times prophecy.

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Randall cutting the hole

the ice around it. This could also be evidence of a thermal vent, as the mountain is volcanic and partially active.

Political problems at the lower site in July forced our workers from this area and eventually forced our team off of the upper site at the end of August. Several members of our team, including Richard Bright, returned in October to try and wait out the political situation and get back to the lower site. However, by late November the political situation had worsened

as had weather conditions, requiring the team to return to the U.S.

Upon return to the U.S. our satellite operator determined that our test hole was only 30 feet from the anomaly and new information was gained from another satellite photo of a possible structure above the shepherd site. The team will return for a second season this coming August. The team will bring with them a radar expert who will make a 3-D image of the eastern plateau in order to produce a visual record of the anomalies at the upper site and excavation work will commence. With the political situation resolved and permits in place we will return with workers to remove the rocks and excavate beneath the glacier. We are quite certain that if the authorities cooperate and funding is secure that we will make a discovery in these areas. Please pray for the team as they make plans for the summer expedition. If

you wish to make a tax-deductible donation toward the work, please make your gift to World of the Bible Ministries and earmark it for Noah's Ark Search LLC. We have a pledge for a matching gift of up to \$75,000, so we encourage your end of the year donation as it will be doubled at this time! 🌍



The hole at twelve feet

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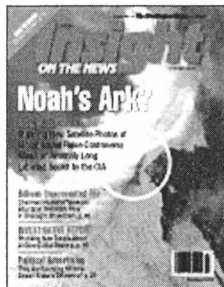
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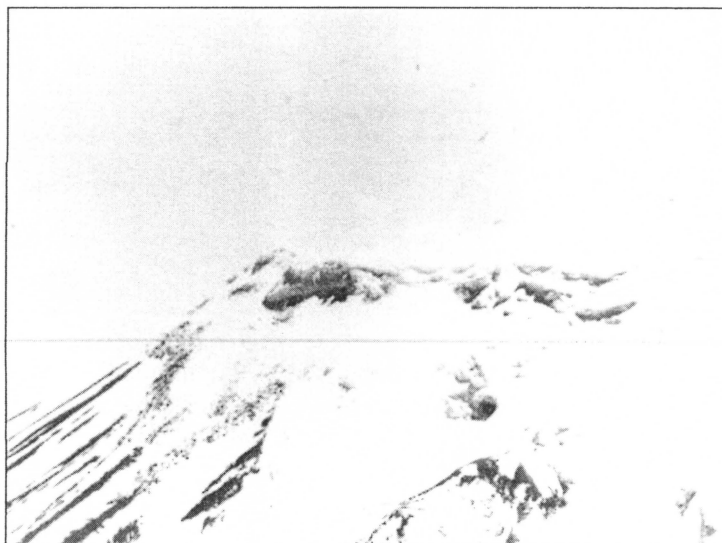
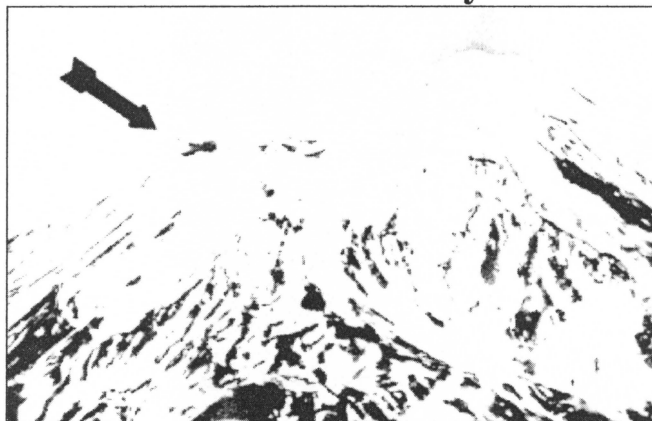
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Anomaly or Noah's Ark?

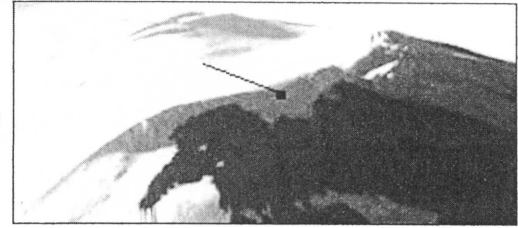
November 20, 2000 COVER STORY The Mystery on Mt. Ararat The CIA classified as secret the U-2 and satellite photos of the "Mt. Ararat Anomaly." Is it Noah's Ark? Insight has commissioned its own satellite photos. By Timothy W. Maier

Ararat Anomaly



Much of the credit for obtaining the Ararat Anomaly photos goes to Porcher Taylor. The 1949 photo above was released to Mr. Taylor on March, 14, 1995, who requested the DIA photos using the Freedom of Information Act.

While camping on the Western Plateau in 1989, Bob Garbe and I stood just above the Ararat Anomaly. Compare our 1989 photo of the Ararat Anomaly area with the one above. The 1989 photo seems to show the Anomaly covered by a wave of ice, but notice the ice meltback below the object is much greater in our photo than in the 1949 photo?



Close-up view of the 1987 Anomaly photo provided by John McIntosh.



Close-up view of the 1949 Ararat Anomaly

Porcher Taylor has written a 15-page summary about the Ararat Anomaly, and has given me permission to publish here on the Web. You can read the Washington Times article below or jump to [Porcher Taylor's Ararat Anomaly Summary](#).

Unfortunately, since the Washington Times article, many other newspapers around the world have picked up the story, only to over-sensationalize it. Here are a few examples: SPY-IN-THE SKY PHOTOS SHOW REMAINS OF THE ARK; CIA no longer keeping Ark dark; Ark Of Noah Visible; etc.

[Analysis of 1949 Ararat Anomaly Photographs](#) by Jim Hays

I understand that the Anomaly images have been transferred from the DIA to the [National Archives and Records Administration](#) If you want your own copies of anomaly photos, you need to request aerial photographs of Mount Ararat located at 39 degrees 42' 10" North and 44 degrees 16' 30" East, and located at approximately 15,000 to 15,500 feet, 1-2 km west of the summit. Previous images (5), were taken June 17, 1949, and were previously at the the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), then released to the NARA.

[Matthew Kneisler's web page](#), has a section on Noah's Ark: Satellite Imagery that has alot of information about the quest for Anomaly photos.

[11-18-97 Washington Times Article](#)

CIA spy photos sharpen focus on Ararat Anomaly

By Bill Gertz
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

In the secret world of intelligence, it goes by the bland name of the "Ararat Anomaly." But former intelligence officials say soon-to-be-released U.S. spy photographs of the odd formation high on Turkey's Mount Ararat could reveal something far more explosive: the remnants of Noah's Ark, the ancient vessel from the Bible that safely preserved a pair of every creature on Earth in the midst of a global flood.

"The pictures are real clear. You see the whole summit and lots of rock formations," said Dino A. Brugioni, a retired CIA photographic specialist who was directed to study the high-resolution photographs of the unusual Mount Ararat

site two decades ago.

A series of images snapped by a U-2 spy plane at the end of a 3,000-mile reconnaissance flight from what was then the Soviet Union to Turkey caught the attention of a photo interpreter in his section.

"We measured things, but none of them fell within the dimensions given in the Bible," he said. "If you didn't have the biblical dimensions in cubits, you could pick up those pictures and say they look like a ship. But when you measure it, it doesn't come out right. ... At no time did we say we saw an ark."

For more than two decades, highflying U.S. reconnaissance aircraft and satellites routinely photographed the "Ararat Anomaly" site. But over the next few months, the CIA will begin releasing more detailed high-resolution spy pictures of the distinctive formation near the summit.

High-level U.S. government interest in the search for Noah's Ark led to a study by the CIA's National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) of the Ararat Anomaly back in the 1970s, and the Defense Intelligence Agency conducted a second, more recent analysis.

The Bible in Genesis tells of God's command to Noah to build an ark 300 cubits in length, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. (A cubit is an ancient measurement of about 20 inches, making the ark approximately 500 feet long, 83.3 feet wide, and 50 feet high.)

God then made it rain for 40 days "and the waters increased and bore up the ark and it rose high above the earth ... so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the heavens were covered," the Bible says.

According to the CIA, the U-2 photographs of the Ararat Anomaly will be released in the next few months as part of a batch of hundreds of thousands of spy photographs taken on U-2 and SR-71 spy plane missions between the 1950s and mid-1970s.

CIA spokesman Tom Crispell said the release of the U-2 photographs will contain pictures of the Ararat Anomaly. But other photos taken by KH-9 and KH-11 high-resolution spy satellites are not likely to be made public any time soon, intelligence sources said.

Getting the public to see the photographs of Mount Ararat has been a four-year quest for Porcher L. Taylor III, a University of Richmond professor who first heard rumors about the spy pictures of Noah's Ark as a cadet at West Point in 1973.

"Although it is remote that the Ark could survive for 4,500 years in a moving glacier, some CIA photo interpreters have not ruled this out," Mr. Taylor said.

"It doesn't really matter what the anomaly may be," he added. "The CIA has photographic evidence that can shed light on the enduring mystery of Mount Ararat, and it has a duty to the public, archaeology and the scientific community to release all of its Ararat Anomaly file, be it photos of a bunch of rocks or a nautical structure of unknown origin."

Jews and Christians shouldn't be the only ones interested, the professor said. The Quran also mentions the Ark, and several ancient historians, dating back to 275 B.C., have written of a vessel and timbers from a ship being spotted near the summit.

Mr. Taylor said his interest in the formation increased when the late George Carver, a respected top CIA official, told a gathering in Florida several years ago "that there were clear indications that there was something up on Mount Ararat which was rather strange," according to a transcript of his remarks.

Since then, Mr. Taylor has mounted a concerted campaign to win the release of the aircraft and spy satellite photos under the Freedom of Information Act.

The effort bore fruit when the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1995 released aerial photographs of the curved formation located about 1 and a half miles below the western summit of the almost 17,000-foot peak. The photos were taken by an Air Force plane on June 17, 1949.

The DIA also produced an analysis of the anomaly for Mr. Porcher using the images and a composite "stereo enlargement." The report described the unusual site as a combination of shadows, ice and snow.

"The accumulated ice and snow along this precipice obviously fall down the side of mountain at frequent intervals, often leaving long linear facades," the report says. "It appears that the 'anomaly' is one of these linear facades in the glacial ice underlying more recently accumulated ice and snow.

"Further, the tone and texture of the 'anomaly' and avalanche debris immediately below are consistent with that of the shadowed snow, ice and debris prevalent along the face of the precipice."

But other former intelligence officials said later photographs, including those produced by the KH-11 series of spy satellites, provide better views.

A former high-ranking U.S. intelligence official who has seen a satellite photograph of the site produced around 1973 said analysts at the time were surprised when close-ups revealed what looked like three large curved wooden beams -- resembling part of the hull of a boat -- protruding from the snow.

"They sort of curved over and formed up what would have been the bow of something or other poking out of the ice," the former official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

Enlargements of the spy photographs also produced what appeared to be "striations" on the formation that gave the appearance of what was once wood, he said.

One analyst wanted to believe "very badly" that the structure in the photographs was Noah's Ark, but other interpreters prevailed in concluding "it was just rock," he said.

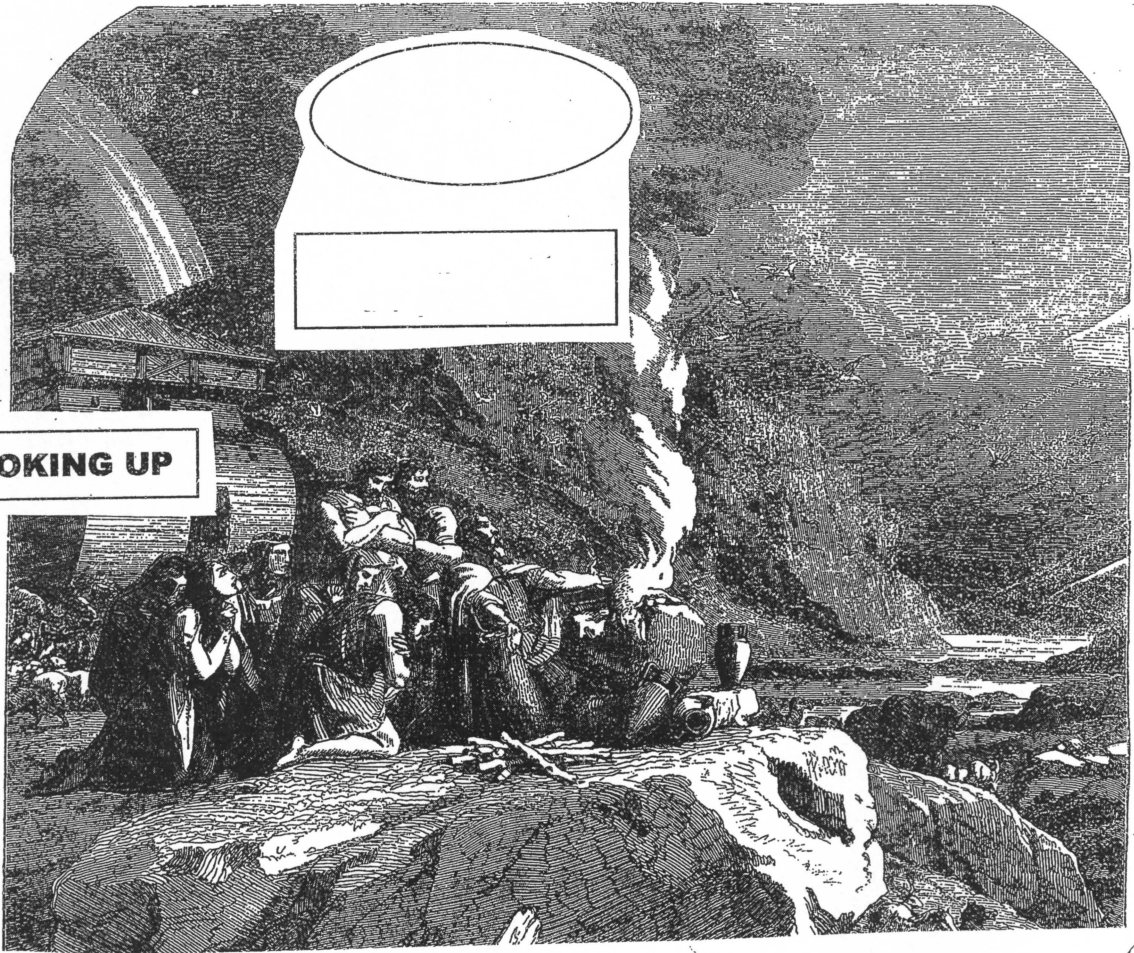
"I was skeptical on the advice of my experts," he added. "But I have felt from the beginning the thing ought to be looked at more carefully. It's worth looking into."

The search for the ark on Mount Ararat has been greatly complicated after the Turkish government closed off the area to visitors, Mr. Taylor said. The government cited problems with Kurdish rebels and the site's proximity to borders with Iran and Armenia.

In 1991, five archaeologists near the mountain were kidnapped by Kurdish rebels -- the same year the Turks closed Mount Ararat to outside visitors.

The mountain is permanently snow-capped and is often covered in clouds. The peak rises 16,945 feet and is located not far from the Armenian and Iranian borders.

THE SPIRITUAL LESSON FROM THE NARRATIVE

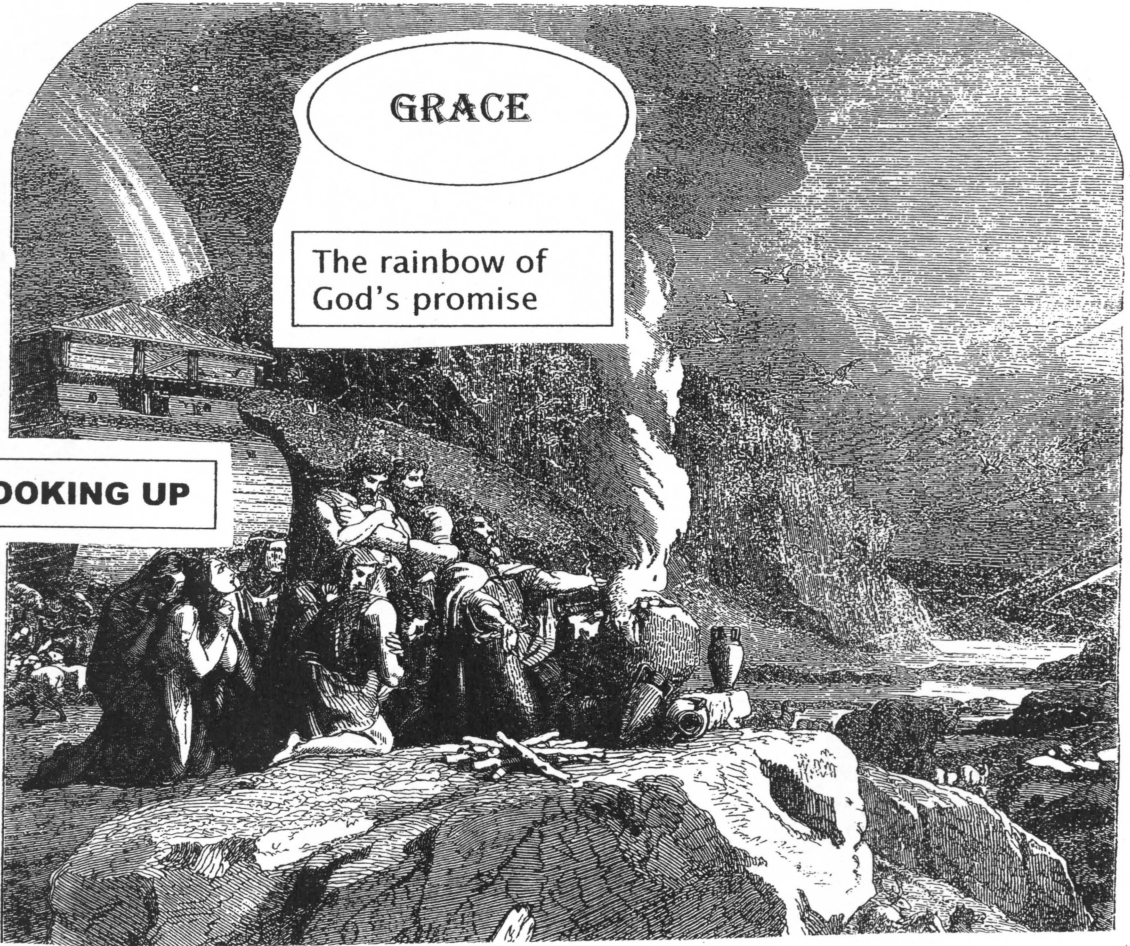


LOOKING UP



LOOKING DOWN

THE SPIRITUAL LESSON FROM THE NARRATIVE



GRACE

The rainbow of
God's promise

LOOKING UP



LOOKING DOWN

GUILT

The rebels and
God's punishment

***Mt. Moriah* – God's Ultimate Test of Obedience for Abraham**

Genesis 22:2-4

² And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

³ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

2 Chronicles 3:1

³ Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.



ABRAHAM OFFERS UP ISAAC.

Mt. Moriah – God's Ultimate Test of Obedience for Abraham

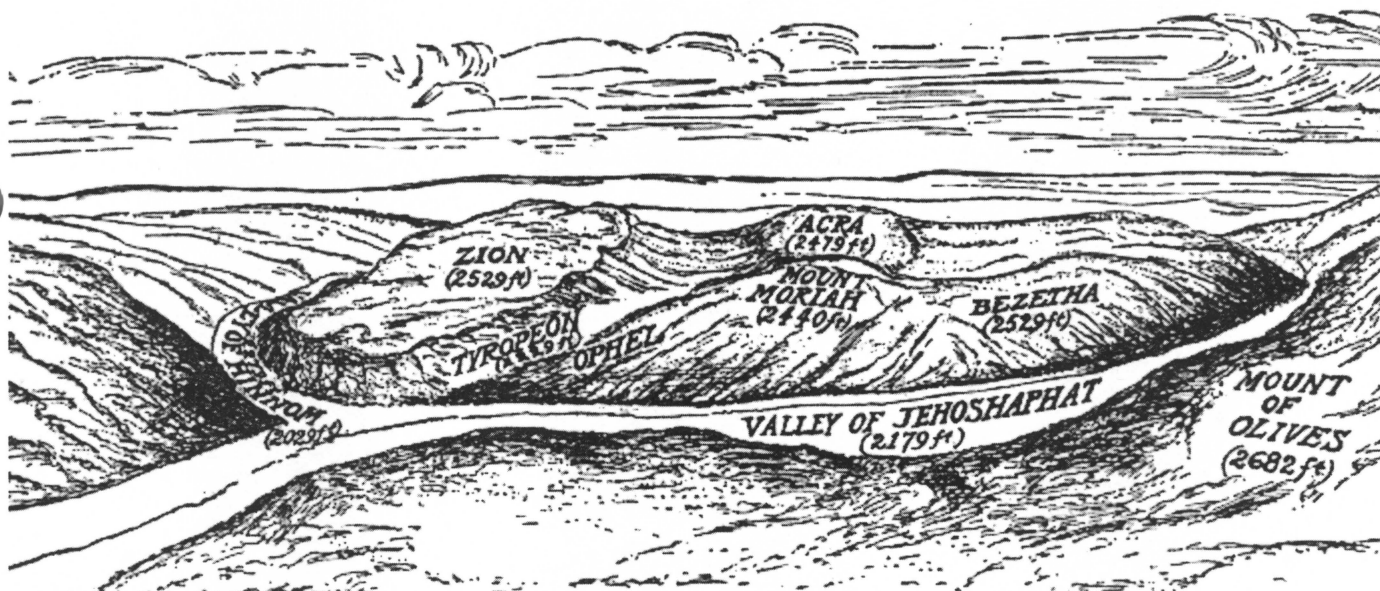
1A. THE TERRAIN AROUND JERUSALEM:

1b. Geography:

The city of Jerusalem rests on a limestone plateau 2500 feet above sea level. It is located in the central hill country, and is near the border of the Judean desert. It is far removed from any major trade routes. On the west side of Jerusalem are the Judean mountains, on the east side is the Judean desert which descends 4000 feet in 10 miles at the Dead Sea. The rugged terrain of Jerusalem was a definite military advantage, it was easy to defend because the city can only be reached on its northern side. The east, west, and southern sides had steep valleys.

2b. Jerusalem's Four Hills

Ps. 87:1 "His foundation is in the holy mountains."



Jerusalem rests upon four hills or mountains, but only two of them have biblical names, Mount Zion and Mount Moriah. Between these mountains there is a large valley that the Romans called the Tyropoean. Mount Zion was referred to geographically as the southwestern hill of Jerusalem. But Zion has much greater significance in the Bible and it is frequently mentioned as the place of the Temple and of the King. When David said that he would not rest until he "has found out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob," the Lord replied with this Scripture:

Ps. 132:13-14 "For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 'This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.'"

2A. THE TOPOGRAPHY OF JERUSALEM:

1b. Jerusalem's Valleys:

Jerusalem was surrounded on the west, south, and east by deep ravines the which are 200-400 feet deep and therefore made it impossible for an enemy to attack from either these directions. Therefore Herod's Jerusalem was considered unapproachable, except from the north side which was actually protected by the outermost wall which was over 100 feet high and had 90 towers according to Josephus.

The deep valley on the west and the southwest side of the city was called the valley of Hinnom (the abhorred place).

The deep valley on the east side of the city was called the valley of the Kidron, or Jehoshaphat, where the prophet Joel saw a futuristic vision where the nations of the world would be summoned for judgment. The place where these ravines met was called "Enrogel" or "The Well of Joab" (2 Sam. 17:17).

These deep valleys made the inhabitants of Jerusalem to feel safe and secure, as though God Himself were protecting it. It was so secure from an enemy attack that Titus, the Roman General who conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D. said that "if it had not been for the internal dissensions, the city could never have been taken."

- 1c. **The Kidron Valley** also called the Valley of Jehoshaphat formed the eastern boundary of the city of Jerusalem and separation of Mount Zion from the Mount of Olives. The Bible also refers to the Kidron Valley as the King's Dale (2 Sam. 18:18).
- 2c. **The Tyropoean Valley** also called the Valley of the Cheese Makers, joins the Kidron Valley on the south side of Mount Moriah and runs to the north between Mount Zion and Mount Moriah. The Tyropoean Valley separates at the north part causing a fork and Mount Acra is located between the forks.
- 3c. **The Hinnom Valley** created a western and southern boundary for the city of Jerusalem. The southern part of the Valley of Hinnom was called Gehenna or Tophet, "the place of fire" (Jeremiah 7:31). It was here in the Valley of Hinnom that Moloch was worshipped and therefore later became a garbage heap during the first century A.D.

2b. Jerusalem's Mountains:

- 1c. **Mount Moriah** is the mount on which Abraham was to offer Isaac in Genesis 22. In 1 Chronicles 21 it is identified as the location of Arunah (or, Oman) the Jebusite threshing floor that David bought for 600 shekels of gold. This purchase is an important fact since it demonstrates that the Jews received this area through a legal transaction. They have never sold the rights to Mount Moriah.

King David said to Oman, "No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David paid Oman 600 shekels of gold by weight for the site. And David built there an altar to the Lord and presented burnt offerings – 1 Chronicles 21:24,25.

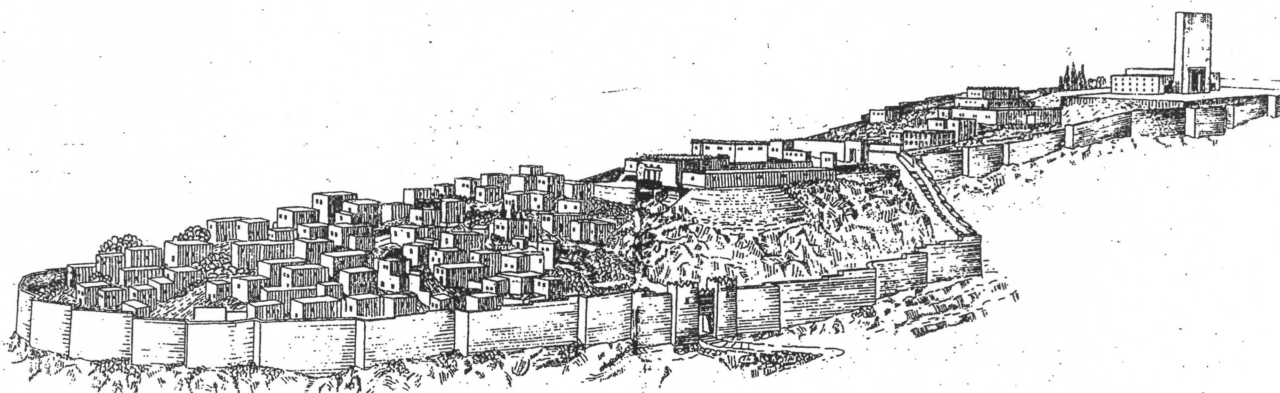
Mount Moriah is where Solomon built the Temple:

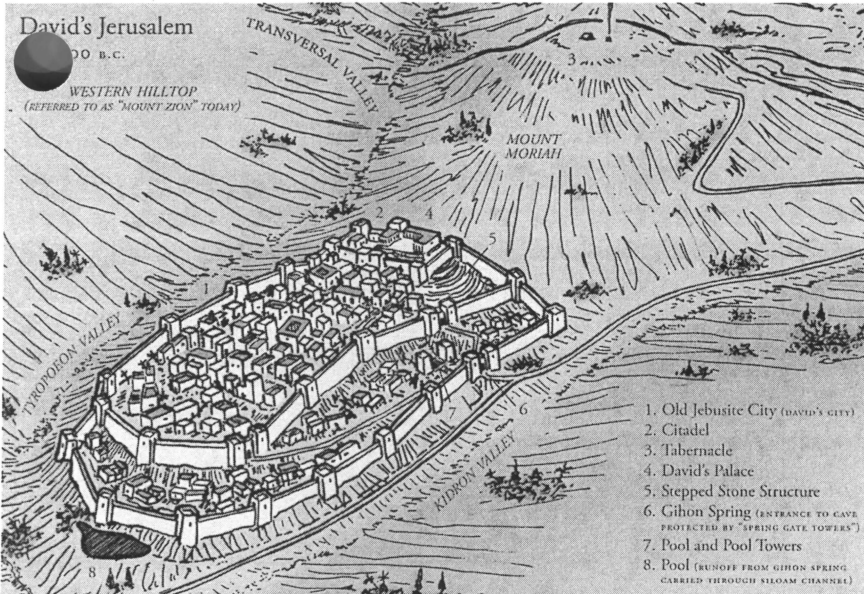
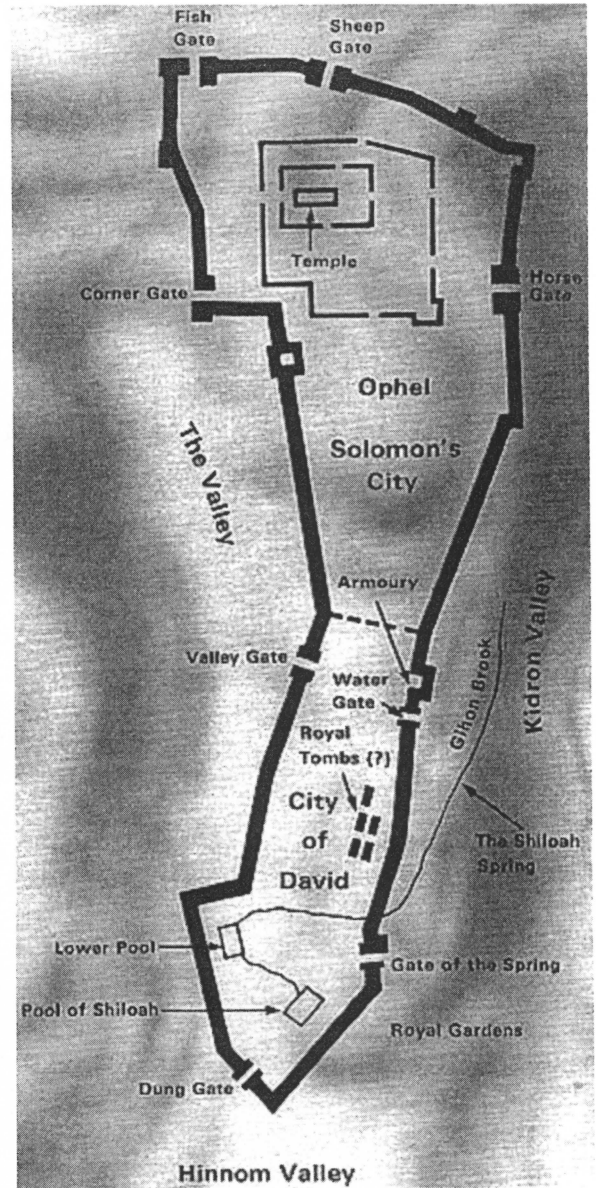
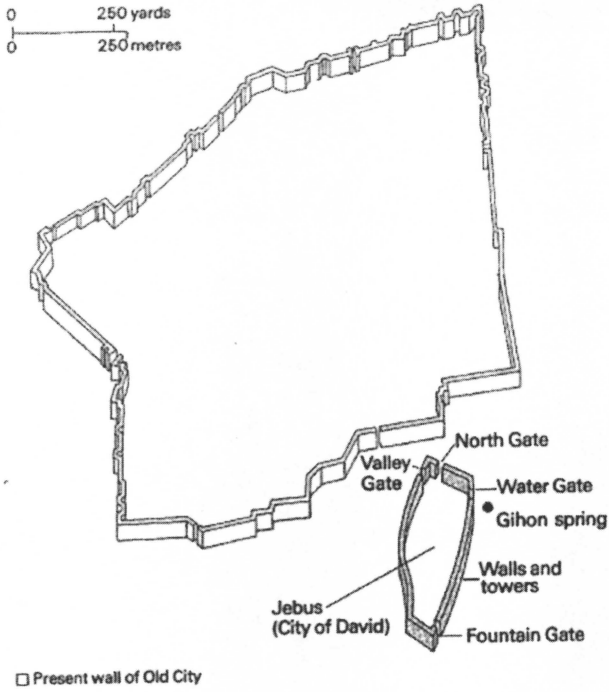
Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed on the threshing floor of Oman the Jebusite – 2 Chronicles 3:1.

- 2c. **Mount Zion** is the largest of the hills in Jerusalem. It stands 2,550 feet high. Mount Zion is mentioned throughout the Old Testament but only once in the New Testament (Rev. 14:1). Mount Zion is located on the southwest side of Jerusalem between the Tyropoeon Valley and the Hinnom Valley and this is the location of the Upper City where the wealthy lived during the time of Jesus. This is also the hill where the Jebusites built a stronghold but were eventually conquered by David. David built his palace here on Mount Zion; it became the palace and home for the kings of Israel. David and most of his successors (14) were buried on Mount Zion (1 Ki. 2:10; 9:43; 14:31).
- 3c. **Mount Acra** is located in Jerusalem on the north side of Mount Zion between the Tyropoeon Valley and the Hinnom Valley. It is interesting that Simon Maccabeus nearly filled up the Tyropoeon Valley which is located between Mount Bezetha and Mount Acra. He slo reduced the height of Mount Acra in order to make it lower than Mount Moriah where the Temple stood. Antiochus Epiphanes, ruler of the Seleucid Empire, built a fortress in Jerusalem on Mount Acra after he conquered the city in 168 B.C. It was here that the Syrians governed the Jews. Later this fortified compound was destroyed by Simon Maccabeus. Mount Acra was important in the Maccabean Revolt and the formation of the Hasmonean Kingdom.
- 4c. **Mount Bezetha** is located in Jerusalem west of Acra and in the first century it was north of the Antonia fortress. Mount Bezetha was not included in the city of Jerusalem until the first century after the third wall was built, and therefore received the name "New City."

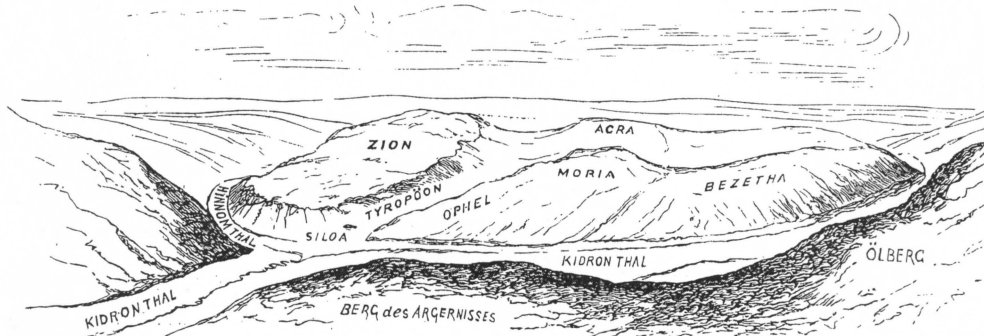
Adapted from http://www.bible-history.com/jerusalem/firstcenturyjerusalem_the_land_of_jerusalem.html (accessed August 22, 2012)

- 3b. The changes in the Temple Mount:

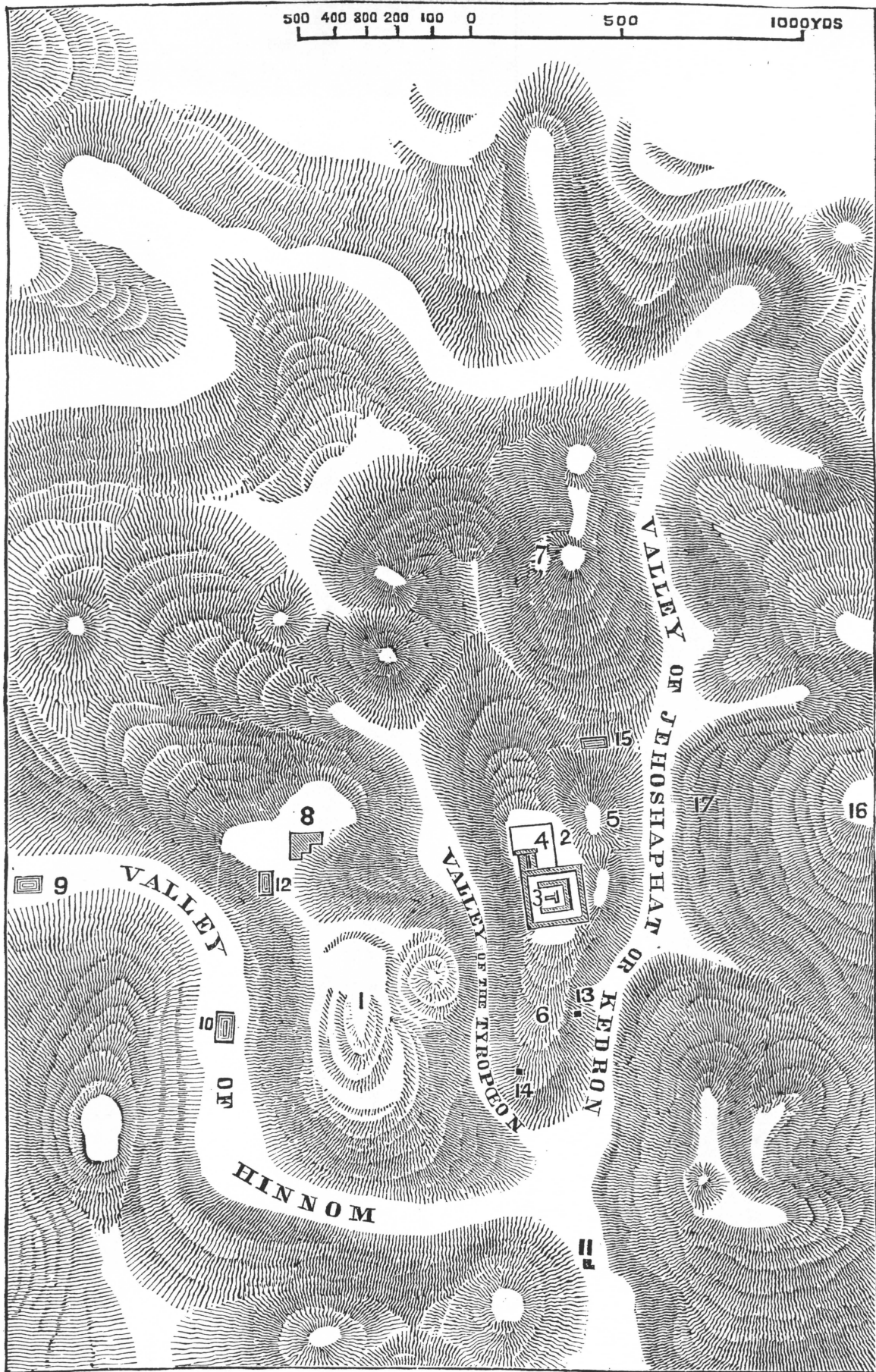




1. Old Jebusite City (David's city)
2. Citadel
3. Tabernacle
4. David's Palace
5. Stepped Stone Structure
6. Gihon Spring (entrance to cave protected by "Spring Gate Towers")
7. Pool and Pool Towers
8. Pool (runoff from Gihon spring carried through Shiloah channel)



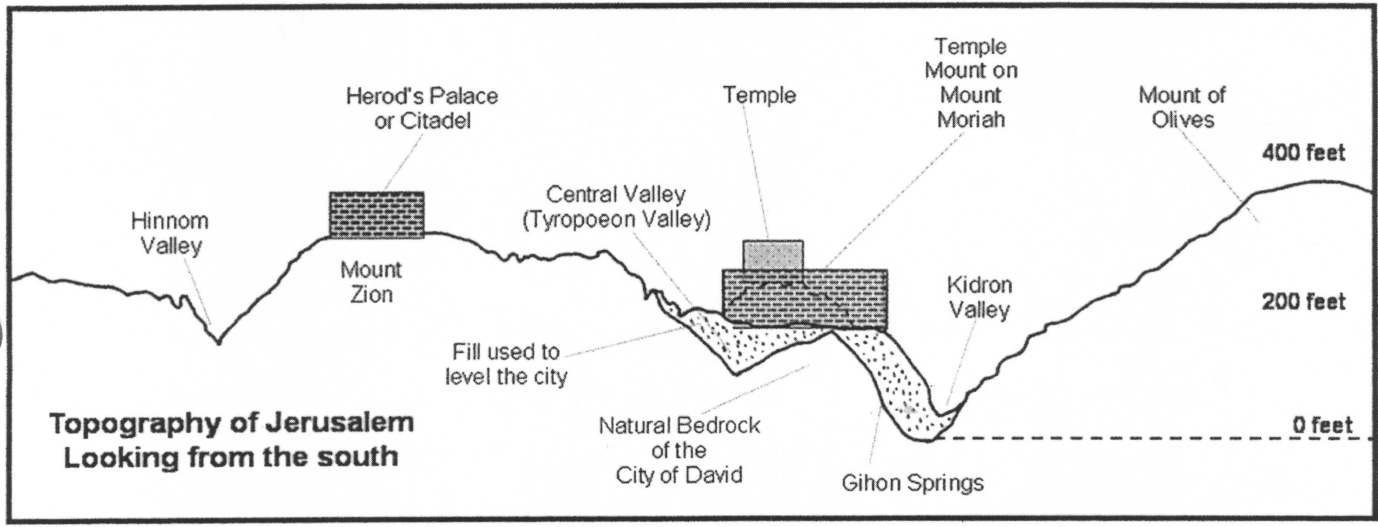
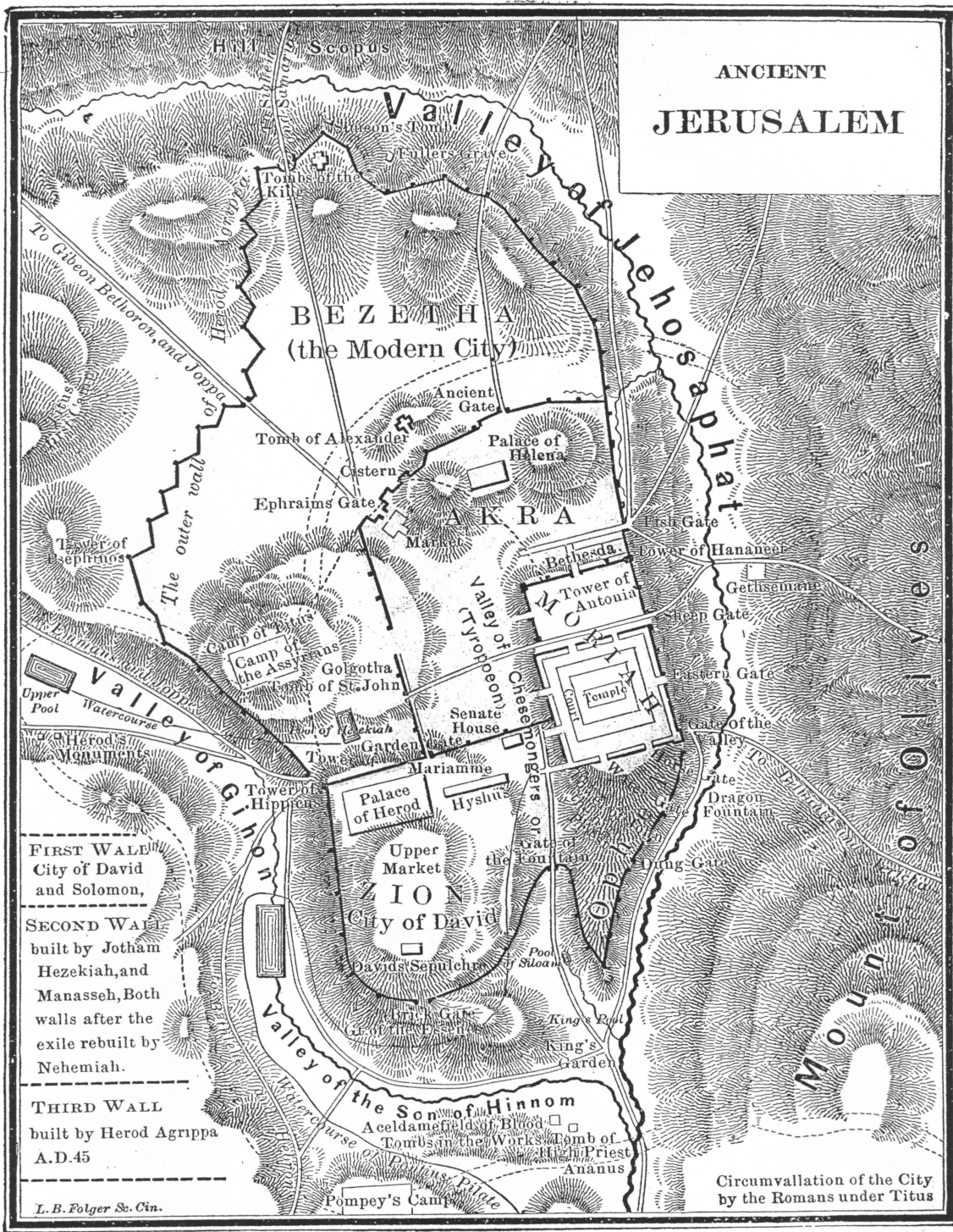
Plan von Jerusalem.

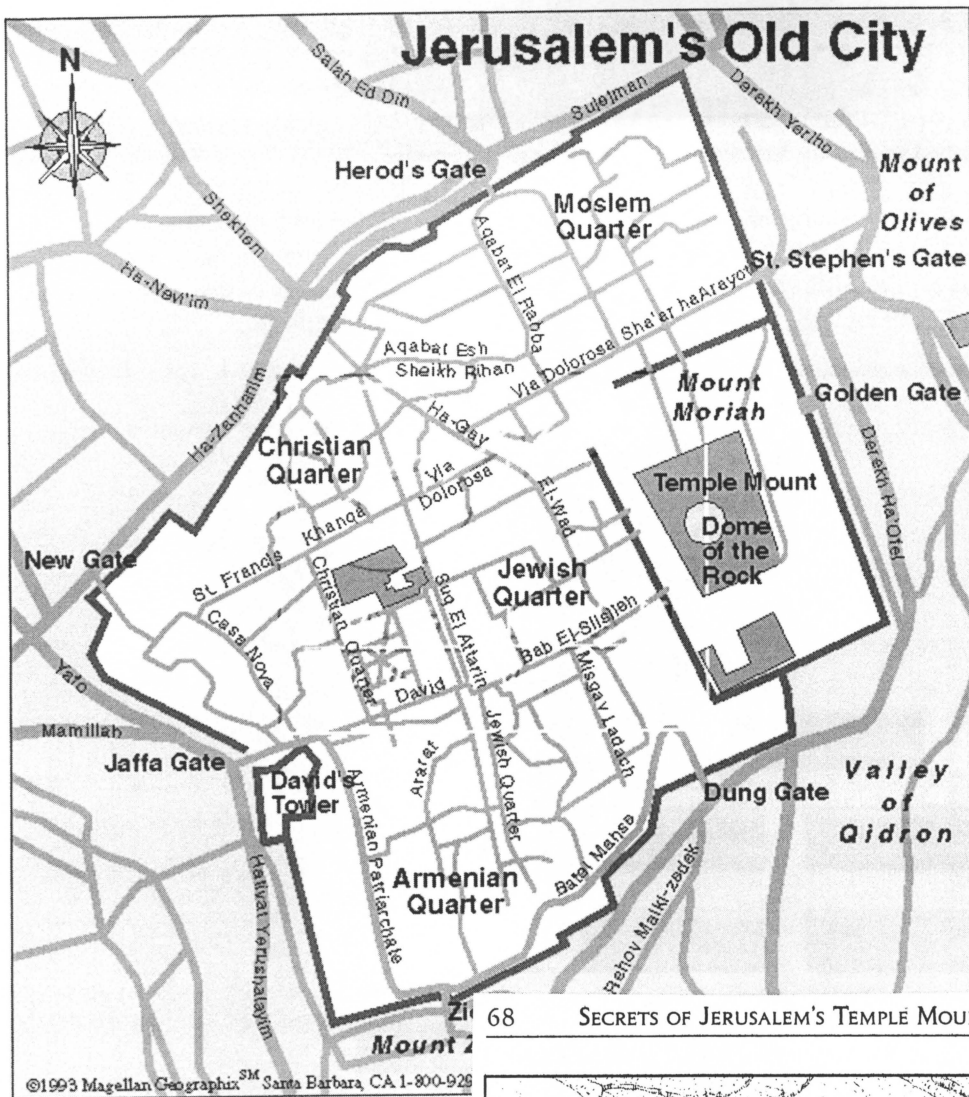


PLAN OF JERUSALEM.

1. Mount Zion. 2. Moriah. 3. The Temple. 4. Antonia. 5. Probable site of Golgotha.
6. Ophel. 7. Bezetha. 8. Church of the Holy Sepulchre. 9, 10. The Upper and Lower Pools of Gihon. 11. Enrogel. 12. Pool of Hezekiah. 13. Fountain of the Virgin. 14. Siloam. 15. Bethesda. 16. Mount of Olives. 17. Gethsemane.

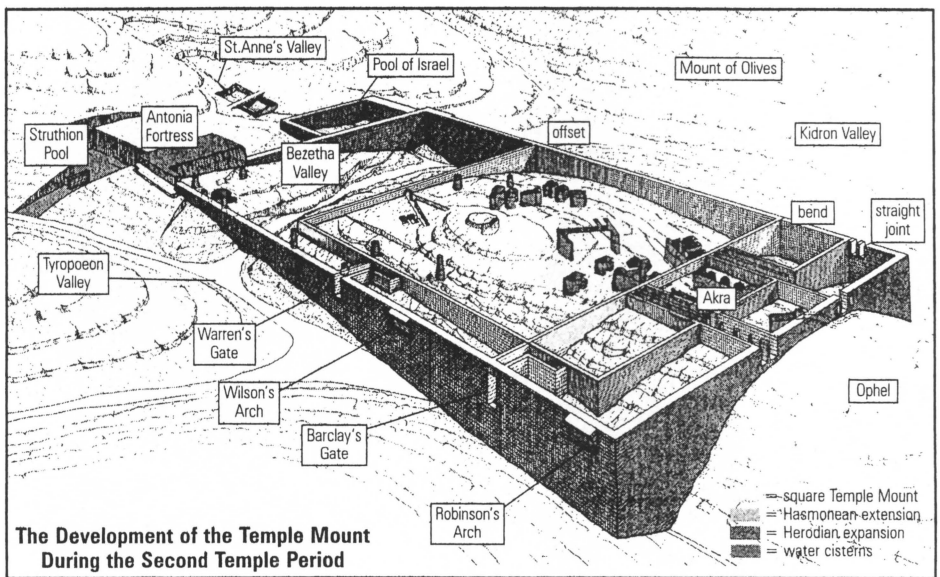
ANCIENT
JERUSALEM





68 SECRETS OF JERUSALEM'S TEMPLE MOUNT

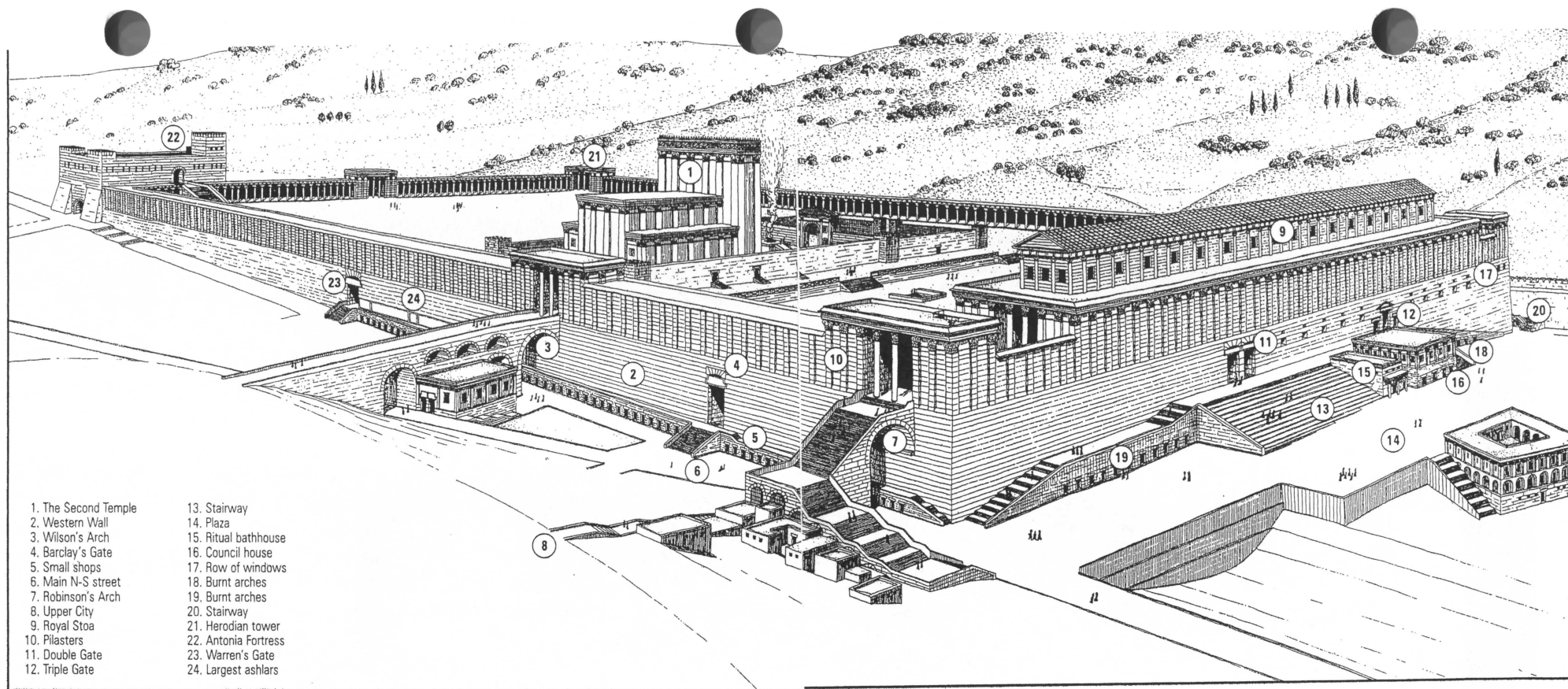
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The Development of the Temple Mount During the Second Temple Period

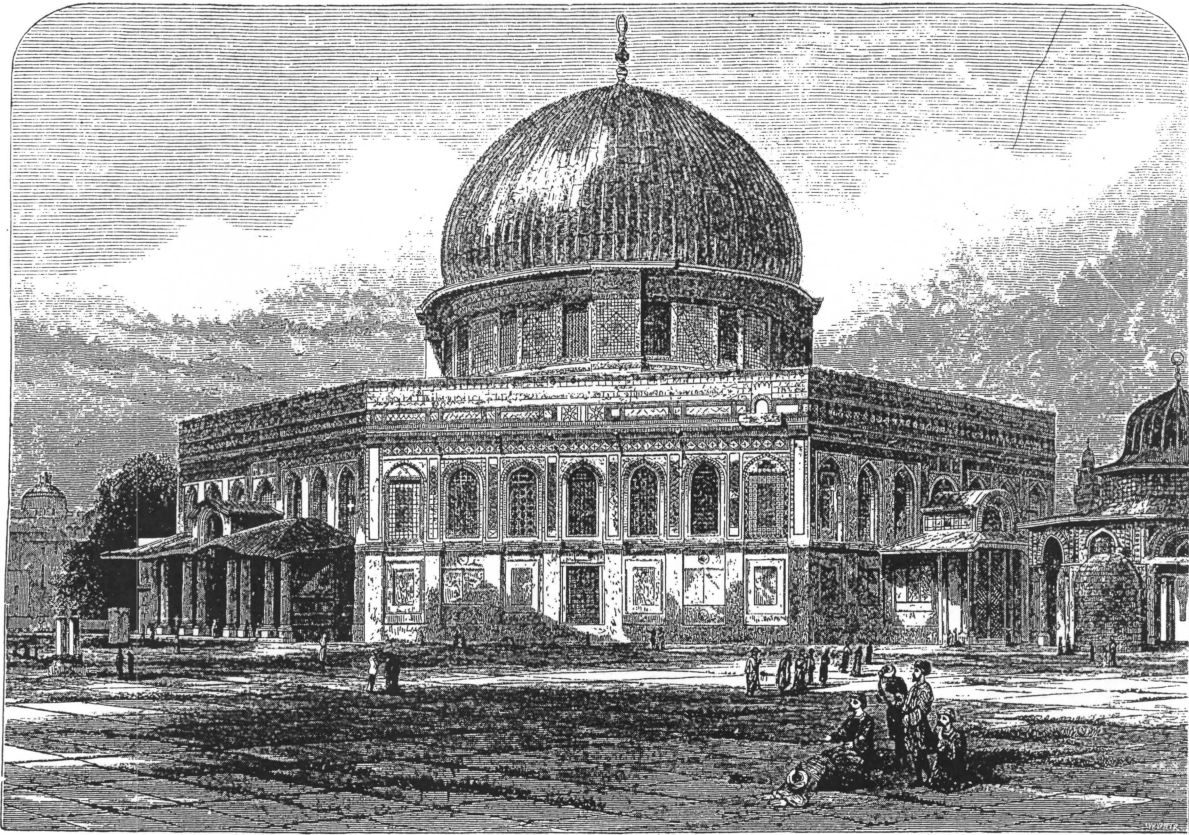
A CUTAWAY LOOK AT THE TEMPLE MOUNT. Combining architectural features from various periods, the underlying topography of the bedrock and cisterns and passageways cut into the bedrock, this drawing shows the Temple Mount's expanding boundaries over time (in practice, older walls would have been covered over or their stones reused elsewhere when new construction took place). Not shown is the surface of the Temple Mount itself or the structures built atop it, most notably the Temple.

At center are the walls of the square Temple Mount of the First Temple period, measuring 500 cubits on each side. Extending to the south is the location of the Seleucid fortress known as the Akra, built in about 186 B.C. The Akra was dismantled in 141 B.C. and a Hasmonean addition was then built across the entire southern side of the previous square Temple Mount. The outermost walls represent the Herodian addition on the south, west and north.

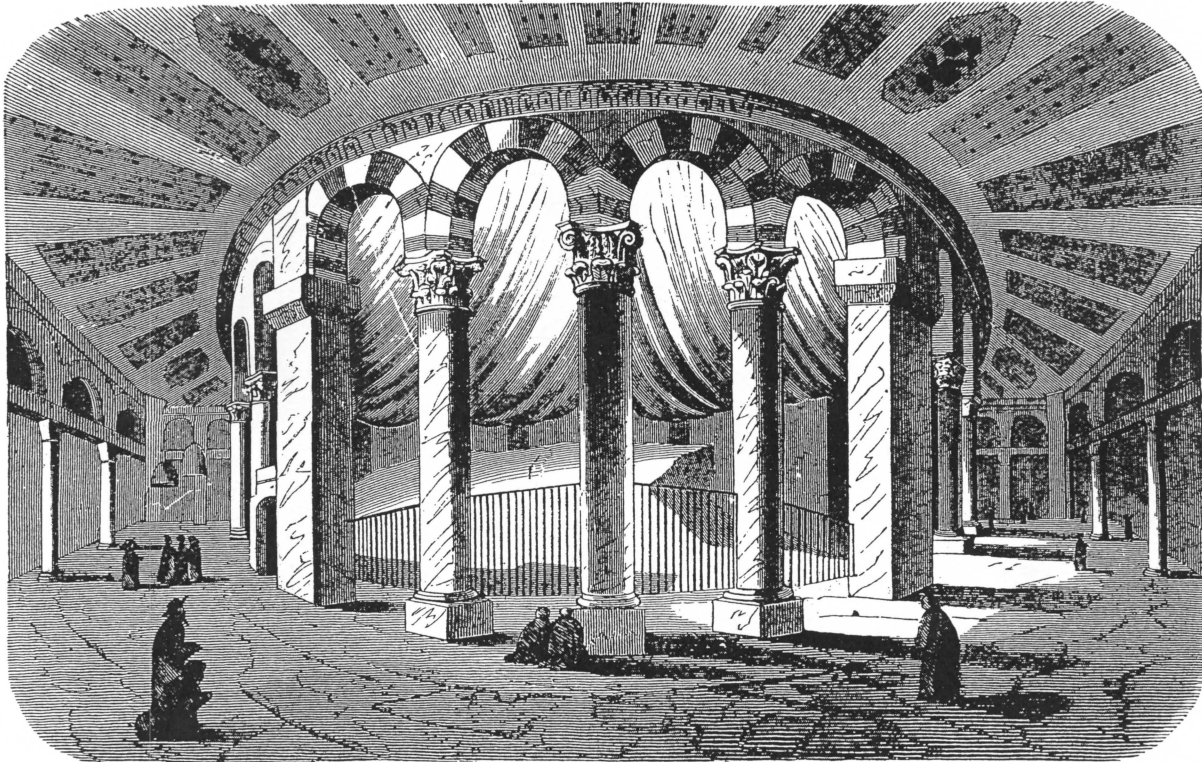


THE TEMPLE MOUNT. When King Herod (37-4 B.C.) rebuilt the Temple (1), he carried out the project on a grandiose scale. Not satisfied with the size of the Temple Mount that Solomon had built, Herod doubled its extent by lengthening the eastern wall, in the background, at each end and by building a new wall on the other three sides. To this he added the monumental stoa (9) along the southern wall, right foreground, a series of gates—some with simple stairways, others adorned with magnificent stairways—and a bridge (3), at left, linking the mount with the Upper City (8). The Antonia Fortress (22), at the far left, was built to guard the Temple Mount's vulnerable northern side, the only side lacking a natural valley that could give protection to the mount.

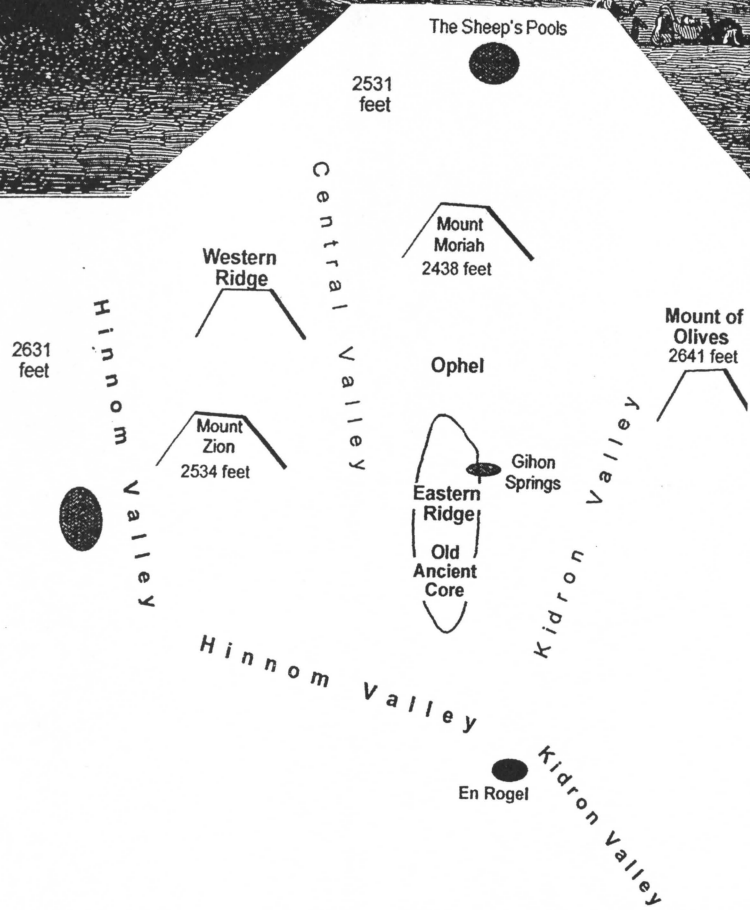
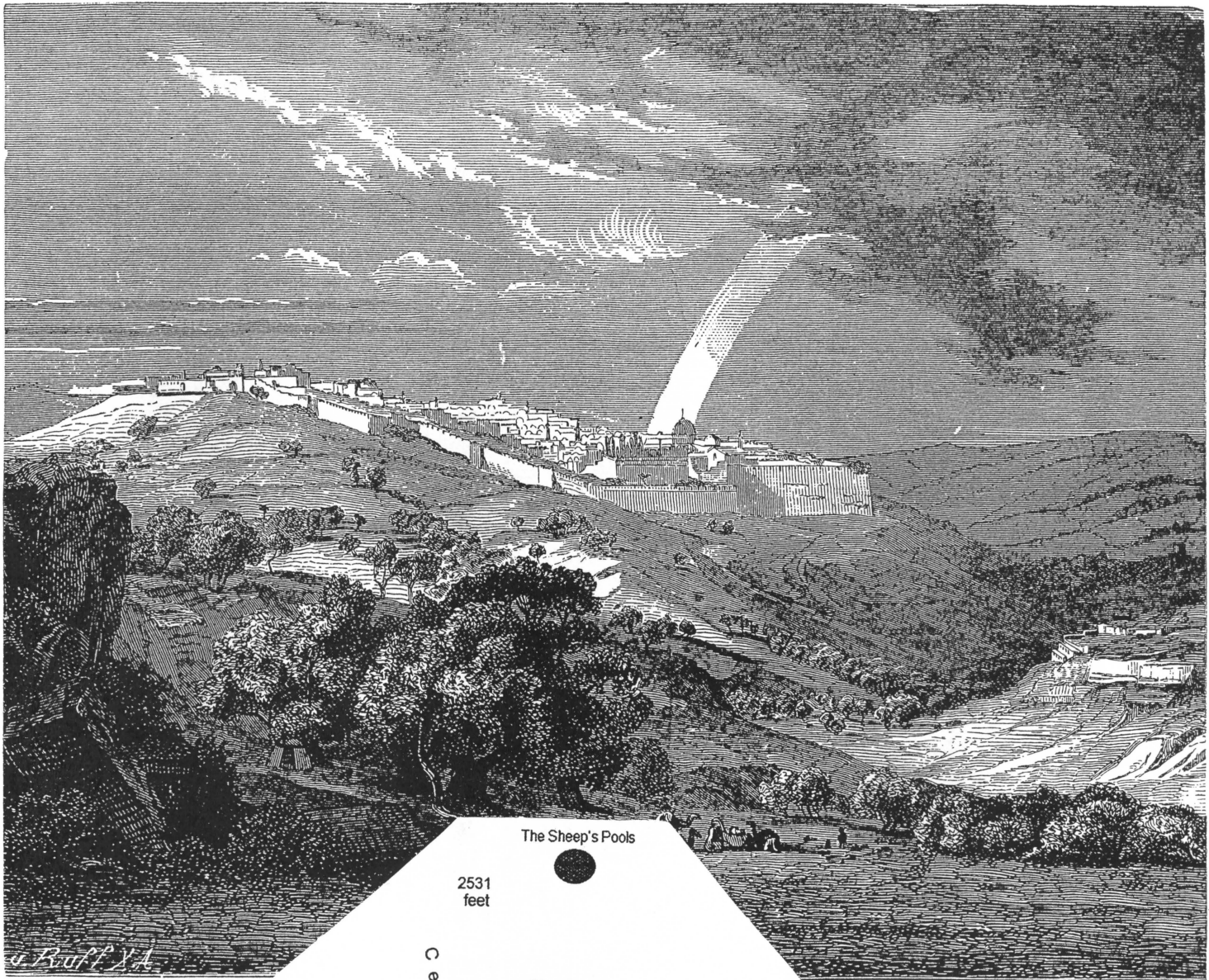
This glimpse at grandeur is the product of painstaking excavations, insightful interpretations and the skilled hand of architect-artist Leen Ritmeyer, who translates the evidence into a vision of the past. Using photos, drawings and words, Ritmeyer and his wife Kathleen conduct the reader on a tour around the wall surrounding the Temple Mount. They employ archaeological and literary evidence to reconstruct the ancient appearance and function of all the major features of the wall and its gateways during the Herodian period. The reconstruction seen here, with the western wall extending to the left and the southern wall extending to the right, can serve as a visual guide to this chapter. Features discussed in the text, and the photos and plans that illustrate them, are keyed by numbers to their locations in this drawing.

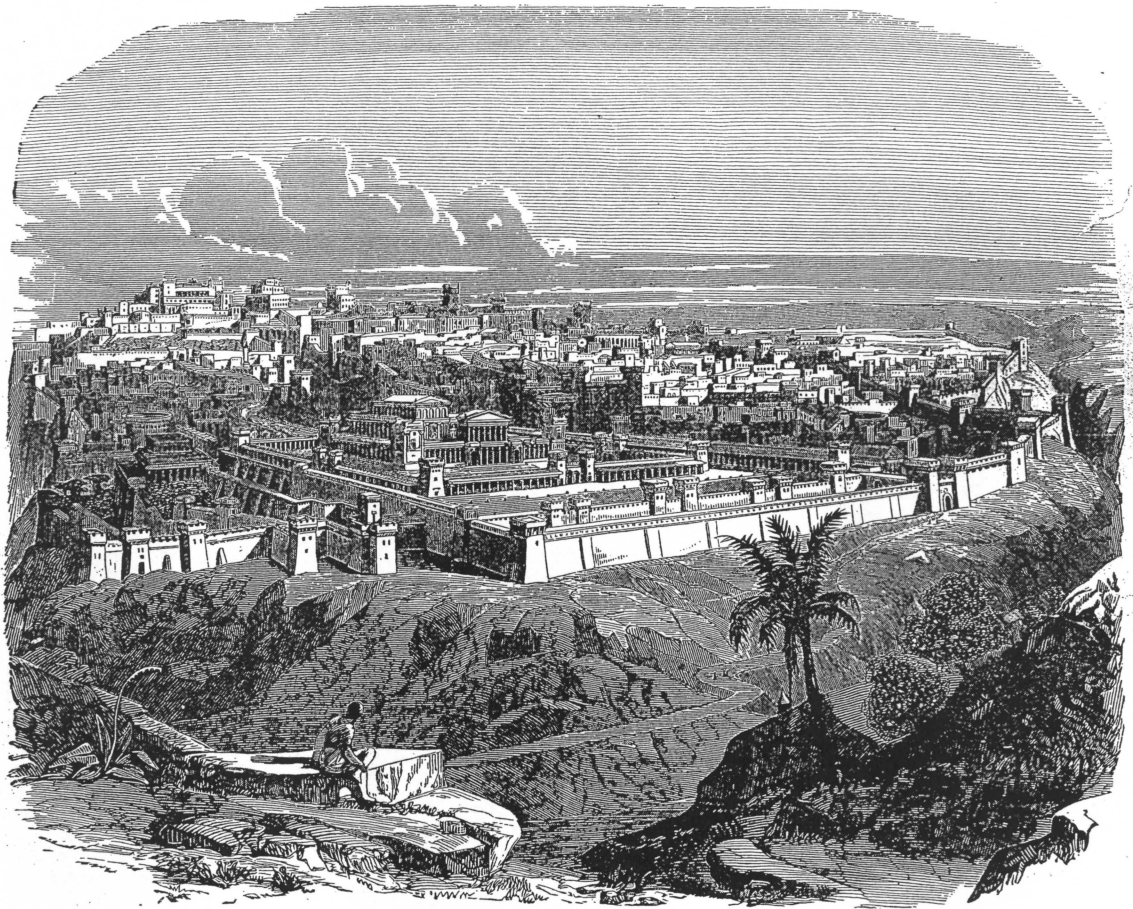


Der Felsendom oder die Omarmoschee.

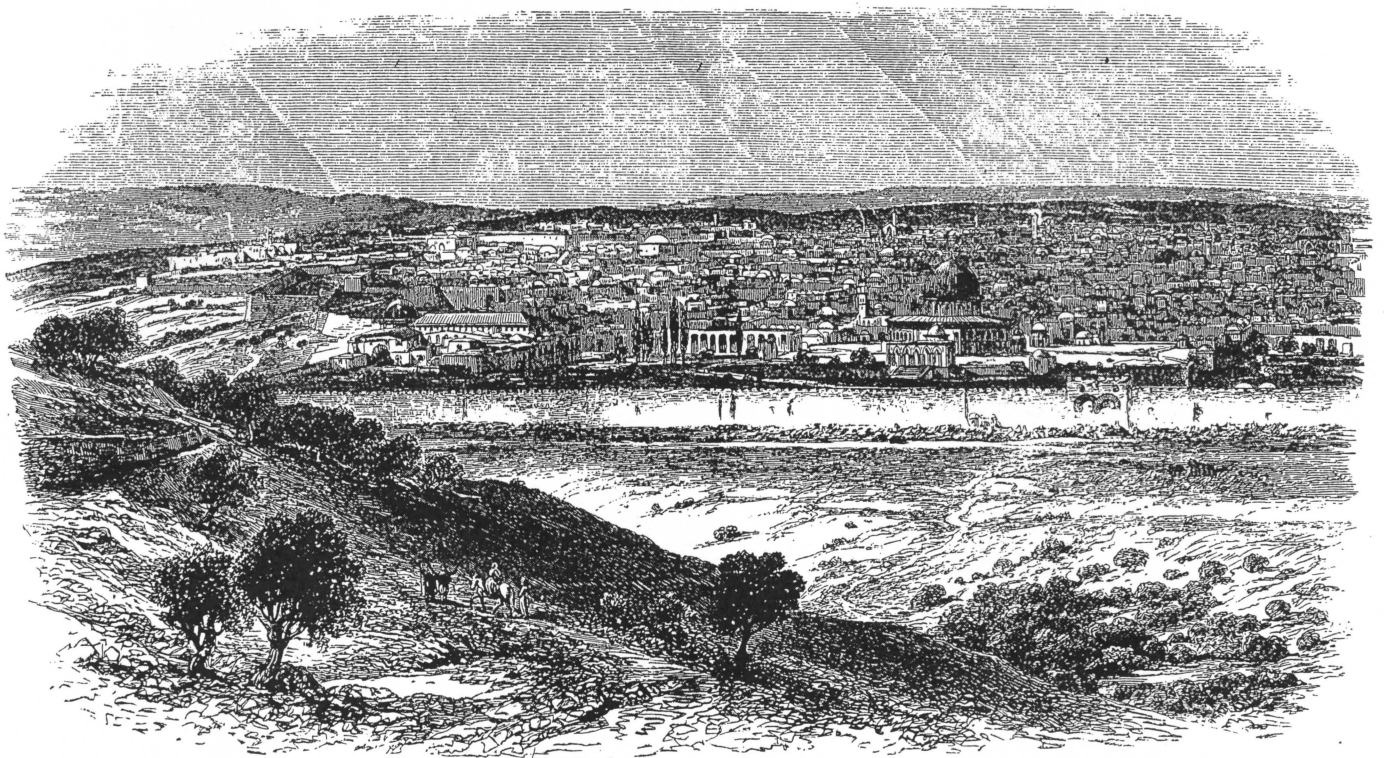


Der heilige Fels (es Sachrà) in der Omarmoschee.





Jerusalem zur Zeit unseres Zeitaldes.



WYMPER SC.

Ein Teil von Jerusalem von Oben aus.

Abraham's Test of Faith: Exegetical Outline of Genesis 22:1-19

- 1A. The Demand for Abraham: 1-2
- 2A. The Dedication of Abraham: 3-4
- 3A. The Directive to the Servants: 5
- 4A. The Continuation of the Journey: 6
- 5A. The Inquiry by Isaac: 7
- 6A. The Response of Abraham: 8
- 7A. The Preparation for the Sacrifice: 9-10
 - 1b. The building of an altar: 9a
 - 2b. The binding of Isaac: 9b
 - 3b. The brandishing of the knife: 10
- 8A. The Intervention of the Angel of the Lord: 11-18
 - 1b. The first message: 11-14
 - 1c. The revelation: 11-12
 - 2c. The response: 13-14
 - 1d. The sacrificing of the ram: 13
 - 2d. The sanctifying of the place: 14
 - 2c. The second message: 15-18
 - 1d. Recognition of Abraham's faithfulness: 15-16
 - 2d. Repetition of divine blessings: 17-18
 - 1e. Personal blessings:
 - 2e. A vast nation:
 - 3e. A land for the nation
 - 4e. Universal blessings
- 9A. The Return to Beersheba: 19



Manfred E. Kober, Ph.D.

3A. THE TEST OF ABRAHAM:

In an old classic volume, unfortunately little-known today, John Kitto describes Bible history and geography. His narrative of the test of Abraham bears reciting here:

The Jewish doctors count up ten trials of Abraham's faith and obedience (1. In quitting his native country, Chaldea; 2. his flight to Egypt from famine in Canaan; 3. the first seizure of Sarah, in Egypt; 4. the war for the rescue of Lot; 5. his taking Hagar to gratify Sarah; 6. his circumcision; 7. the second seizure of Sarah in Gerar; 8. the expulsion of Ishmael; 9. the expulsion of Hagar; 10. the sacrifice of Isaac.) Nine of these we have told. The tenth and last was of all these the most terrible, and from which, proportionably, the character of the patriarch came forth with the greater splendour—with the resplendence of gold refined in many fires. He had dwelt many years in Beersheba, and his son Isaac had reached the age of twenty-five years, when the astounding command came, that he was to immolate this son—the heir of the promise—as a sacrifice to Jehovah. It being the design of God to render the patriarch an eminent example to all his future posterity of unquestioning obedience, whereby he might worthily claim the title of "The Father of the Faithful," every circumstance was accumulated which seemed calculated to render obedience more difficult to him. Even in the requirement itself, the proposed victim is indicated by a variety of tender appellations, rising in their value by an admirable climax from the first to the last, every one of which must have entered like iron into the soul of the patriarch: "Take now *thy son*, thine *only son*, whom *thou lovest*, ISAAC—and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee."

We do not imagine that the idea of a father sacrificing his son to God as a burnt-offering was new to Abraham. In after times we know it was but too common; and it appears probable that in those times which lie beyond the reach of our knowledge, the notion had crept in, that the life of a son, and especially of the eldest, the only, or of a very dear son, was the most valuable and precious offering in their power to present, it must needs be the most acceptable and meritorious in the eyes of the gods they worshipped. Hence, as the most sensible of the Jewish writers conjecture, Abraham understood that this highest sacrifice by which, as he knew, the heathen manifested their zeal for their false gods, was required of him as a test of his zeal for the true God. But how he could reconcile such a command with the promise of a numerous posterity through this very Isaac might not appear very evident, did we not learn from the New Testament, that so confident did he feel that this promise would and must be accomplished, that he believed that God would restore Isaac again to life after he was sacrificed. Curbing, therefore, the force of his paternal emotions, he, with the usual alacrity of his obedience, "rose early in the morning," and made the necessary preparations for the journey and for



the sacrifice, directing the ass on which he usually rode to be saddled, and the wood required for a burnt-offering to be cleaved. He then departed with Isaac, attended by two of his young men. On the third day they arrived within a distant view of the place, which God had appointed for this awful act; and it proved to be that Mount Moriah on which, in after ages, the temple of Solomon was built; and this site was probably selected with a prospective reference to that circumstance, as well as to the mysteries of which the neighbourhood was to be the scene in ages to come.

Here, while the place was still some way off, Abraham alighted from his ass, and fearing lest the young men might be disposed to interfere, or perhaps, apprehending that the act which he was about to execute might, through such witnesses, be drawn into a precedent, he directed them to remain there with the ass, while he and Isaac went yonder to worship. The father and son passed on in silence, Isaac bearing the wood which, unknown to him, was destined to consume his own body, and Abraham taking the knife and a vessel containing the fire with which the wood was to be kindled. As they thus proceeded, it occurred to Isaac to ask the natural but, under the circumstances, very trying question,—“My father, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?” To this Abraham only answered, “God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.” But as they proceeded, or when they arrived at the top of the hill, the patriarch must have explained to his son the he was himself the victim which God had provided; and that the pious and dutiful youth then bowed in submission to the will of God and the desire of his father, is evinced by the circumstances: for any act of compulsion was morally impossible by an old man of 125 years upon a vigorous youth of 25 years, whose strength is evinced by his ability to carry all the wood required for such a sacrifice; and his submission must have been founded on the conviction that his father was right in that which he was doing. The altar was built; the wood was disposed properly upon it; Isaac laid himself down upon the wood; and lest the weakness of the flesh should shrink in this fiery trial, he submitted to be bound: and then the patriarch—with feelings which a fond father can understand without any description, and which none else would understand if described—lifted up his hand to smite the life which was doubtless far more precious to him than his own. The trial was complete. The uplifted arm was arrested, and the intense feelings of that solemn moment were calmed in an instant by a most welcome voice from heaven, which cried: “Abraham! Abraham! lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: *for NOW I KNOW that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son—thy only son—from Me.*” And as the patriarch heard these words, his eyes fell upon a ram which had been caught in a thicket by its horns, and joyfully recognizing in this the victim which God *had provided* for a burnt-offering, he hastened to offer it on the altar in the place of his own son Isaac; and never, surely, from the beginning of the world till now, was a religious act performed with such released feelings as those which attended this sacrifice. In memory of this event, and with a happy allusion to his own ambiguous answer to the question of Isaac, as well as to its most unexpected accomplishment, he called the name of that place JAHOH JIRE—*the Lord will provide.*

This act of perfect obedience being consummated, it pleased God to reward the faith he had thus proved, and not found wanting, by the renewal of all his former promises, in terms so express and so strong, and confirmed by the highest of all possible sanctions—“BY MYSELF I have sworn,”—that the patriarch could not but receive it as a firm and settled matter; and hence it does not appear that any further promise was made to him during the remainder of his life. Cheered by this promise, Abraham returned happily to Beersheba with his son, whom he had, as it were, received again from the dead, and who must now have become all the dearer to him, for the signal proof he had given of his pious resignation and filial piety.

John Kitto, *Palestine: The Bible History of the Holy Land*. London: Charles Knight and Co., 1841, 62-64.

4A. THE TRUTH FOR THE BELIEVER TODAY:

1b. The glorification of Almighty God:

C. H. Mackintosh, a gifted Brethren writer in the mid-1850s, shows the spiritual ramifications of Abraham's test:

There was not a scene in Abraham's entire history in which God was so much glorified as the scene on Mount Moriah. There it was that he was enabled to bear testimony to the fact that he had found all his fresh springs in God—found them not merely previous to, but after, Isaac's birth. This is a most touching point. It is one thing to rest in God's blessings, and another thing to rest in Himself: it is one thing to trust God when I have before my eyes the channel through which the blessing is to flow, and quite another thing to trust Him when that channel is entirely stopped up. This was what proved the excellency of Abraham's faith.

2b. The dedication of Abraham:

Mackintosh continues:

Have I such a simple view of God's sufficiency as to be able as it were, to "stretch forth my hand and take the knife to slay my son?" Abraham was enabled to do this, because his eye rested on the God of resurrection—"he accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead". . . . Faith is always proved by action, and the fear of God by the fruits which flow from it. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son on the altar?" (James ii.21) Who could think of calling his faith into question? Take away faith, and Abraham appears on Moriah as a murderer and a madman: take faith into account, and he appears as a devoted worshiper—a God-fearing, justified man. But faith must be proved.

C. H. Mackintosh, *Notes on the Book of Genesis*. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1959, 230-233.

3b. An illustration of the atonement:

The spiritually discerning believer realizes immediately that in the narrative which finds culmination on Mount Moriah, Abraham is a type of the heavenly Father and Isaac is a type of Christ.

Pastor Will Pounds, in a fine sermon on Genesis 22:1-19: "Isaac's Substitute Lamb" noted the spiritual parallelism between Abraham about to sacrifice his son and God the Father indeed giving His Son as our sacrifice for sins.

The key to Genesis 22 is the fact that "Abraham accounted that God was able to raise Isaac back from the dead." Abraham trusted God believing he would see God perform a miracle and raise Isaac from the dead. The son must live or God would be found a liar. There is no contradiction in God. The one, clear, logical conclusion is that God is going to raise Isaac from the dead.

The Puritan theologian John Owen wrote: "The ultimate object of Abraham's faith was the power of God. Abraham firmly believed. . . the resurrection from the dead." This "was we see clearly from what is said of him in this text. Abraham still firmly believed the accomplishment of the great promise, although he could not discern the way whereby it

would be fulfilled. Abraham reasoned within himself as to how the power of God would fulfill the promise, and he accounted that if there were no other way, yet after he had slain Isaac, and burnt him to ashes, God could raise him again from the dead."

From that experience, Abraham had a clearer understanding of God's eternal plan of redemption. In the substitutionary ram was prefigured the work of the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Abraham's experience foreshadowed Christ's atoning death and anticipated His victorious resurrection.

Hebrews 11:19 tells us Abraham "considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type." The author of Hebrews regarded the incident as a "type" (*en parabole*) of the violent death and resurrection of Christ. The sacrifice of Isaac was a type of our Lord's crucifixion. This ancient patriarch's faith was able to reach the wonderful heights of the resurrection and for this reason Isaac was restored to him as one from the dead. Isaac was as a type of the death and resurrection of the Son of God who was not spared His life (cf. Rom. 8:32; Jn. 8:56).

(<http://www.abideinchrist.com/messages/gen22v8.html> (accessed August 30, 2012))



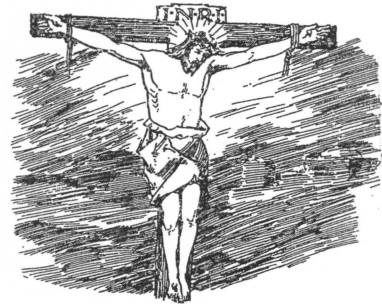
An Important Lesson for Us Today

THE SON (_____) WAS SILENT BEFORE THE
FATHER (_____) AND THE FATHER SILENT BEFORE
GOD.

THE SON (_____) WAS SUBMISSIVE TO THE
FATHER (_____) AND THE FATHER
SUBMISSIVE TO GOD.

In this, Abraham and Isaac are _____ of Christ.

Christ was silent before and submissive to
His heavenly Father as the sacrifice for our sins.



Isaiah 53:7

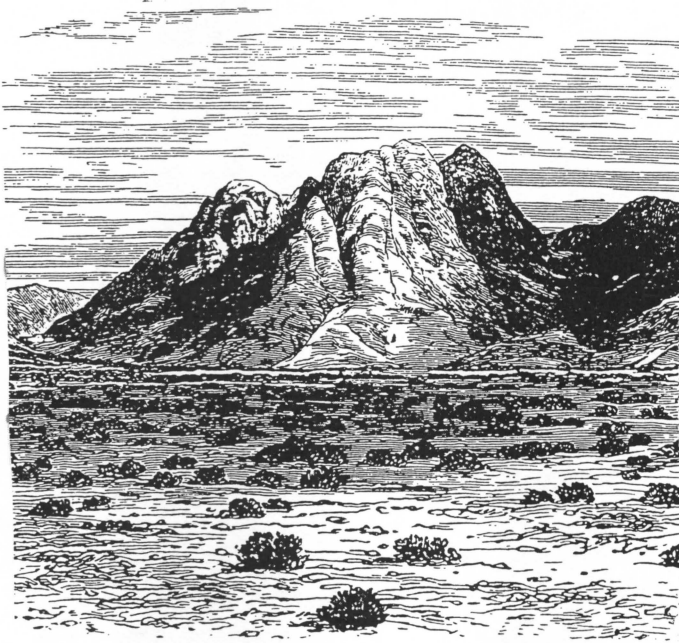
**He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth:
He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers
is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.**

When God expects something of us which we are unable to understand, do we ask, "Why?" or "Why me, God?" or do we trust in His kindness and wisdom and remain **silent** and **submissive**?

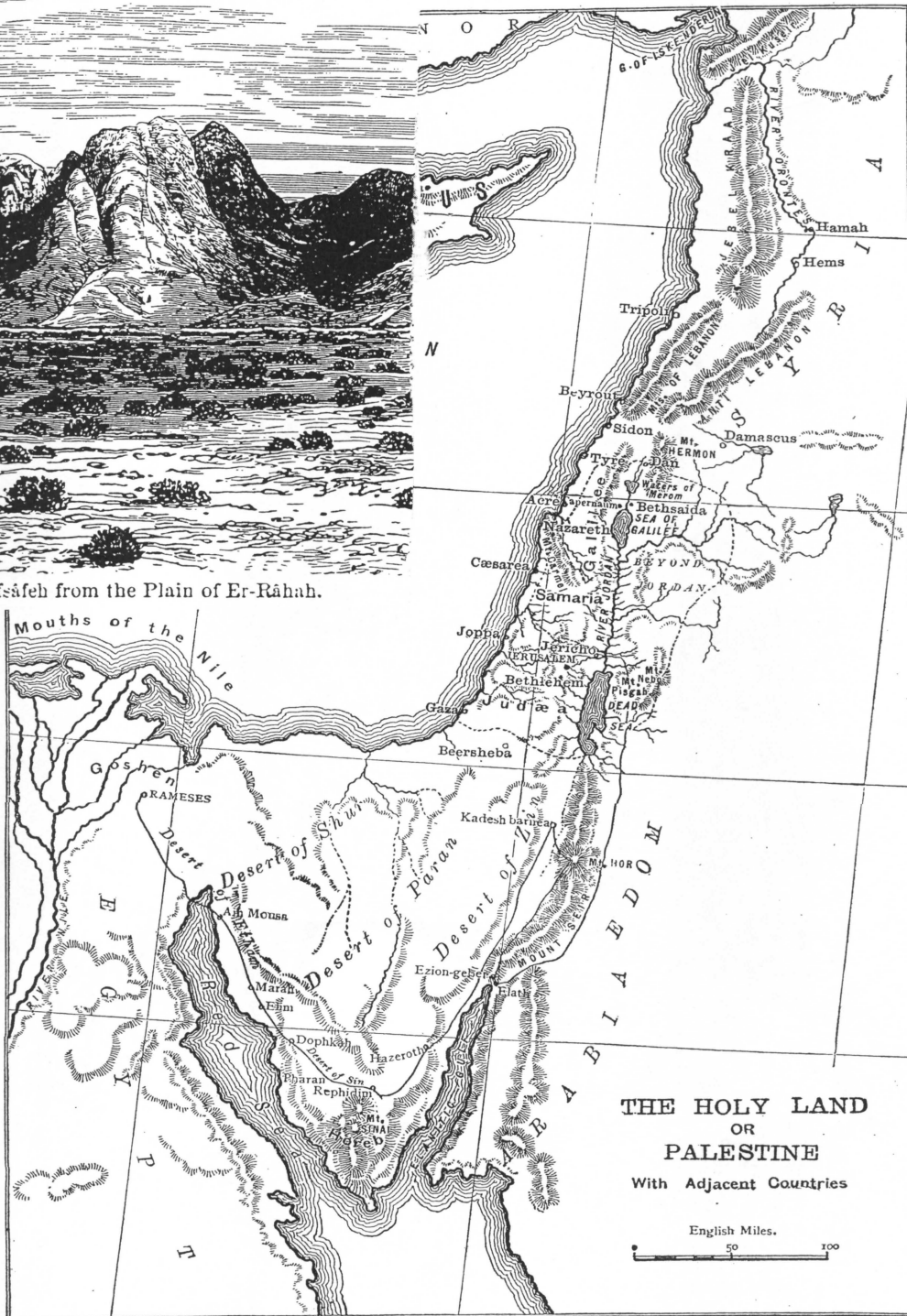
It is good to remember the comforting dictum of Robert Thomas Ketcham:

*Your heavenly Father is too good to be
unkind and too wise to make mistakes.*

Mt. Sinai – Terror, Trumpets, Trembling and Tablets



Ras es-Sufsáfeh from the Plain of Er-Ráhah.



Mt. Sinai – Terror, Trumpets, Trembling and Tablets

1A. THE CONTROVERSIES CONCERNING THE EXODUS:

1b. The duration of the Israelites in Egypt:

(c. 1871-1445 B.C.)

2b. The Pharaoh of the oppression:

(Thutmose III 1501-1447 B.C.)

3b. The Pharaoh of the Exodus:

Amenhotep II (1447-1421 B.C.)

4b. The route of the Exodus:

5b. The identity of the Red Sea:

Literally, "the Reed Sea" or "Sea of Reeds"

6b. The date of the Exodus: 1445 B.C. Liberal date: c. 1290 B.C.

7b. The location of Mount Sinai:

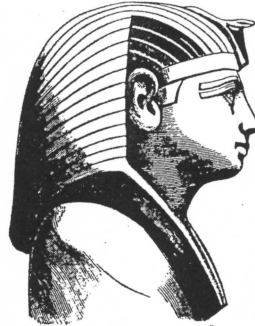


Fig. 47.—Bust of Thutmose III.



Fig. 54.—Amenophis II

2A. THE CONVICTIONS CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF ISRAEL:

1b. Leonard Rost, professor of O.T. in Erlangen, Germany

Only Judah and half the tribe of Benjamin left Egypt originally. Other tribes east of Canaan saw their success in conquest and joined them.

2b. Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asherman:

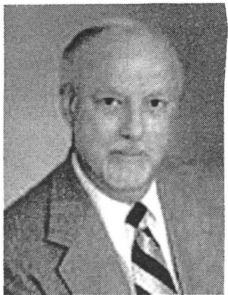
Both Jewish scholars regrettably deny Israel's rich history and question the biblical account concerning the dynasties of David and Solomon as well as the biblical account of the Exodus.

3b. William Dever:

Presently America's foremost archeologist at the University of Arizona, he insists that the Israelites were native Canaanites who decided to leave city life to settle in the country.

4b. Anson Rainey:

Dr. Rainey is an American scholar and archeologist who has lived in Israel for decades. He counters Dever's position by insisting that the Israelites came from the east of Jordan.



5b. The conservative, biblical view:

- 1c. Israel spent about 400 years in Egypt. Joseph arrived around 1871 B. C.
- 2c. After the 10 plagues (in 1445 B.C.), Moses led the 12 tribes out of Egypt.
- 3c. The 12 tribes of Israel became a nation at the foot of Mt. Sinai.
- 4c. Forty years later, or 1405 B.C., Moses died on Mt. Nebo.
- 5c. Under Joshua the 12 tribes conquered much of Canaan.
- 6c. Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh settled east of the Jordan.
- 7c. Jerusalem was not conquered from the Jebusites until David's time around 1000 B.C.

3A. THE COMMENTS OF SCRIPTURE CONCERNING THE EXODUS:

1b. The importance of the issue:

Much of Old Testament chronology hinges on the correct date of the Exodus and conquest, and to ignore the clear teachings of Scripture is to doubt the clarity and accuracy of God's Word.

2b. The statements of Scripture:

1. Kings 6:1

And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the Month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.



The biblical evidence states that the building of Solomon's temple was begun in the fourth year of his reign (i.e., 966 B.C. or shortly thereafter), which was the 480th year after the Exodus. This would give the precise date for the Exodus as 1445 B.C. in the third year of Amenhotep II (c. 1447-1421 B.C.). The Israelite conquest of Canaan which commenced with the destruction of Jericho would logically have been around 1405 B.C.

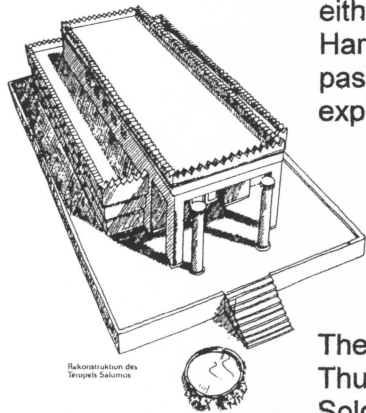
Judges 11:26

While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years? Why therefore did ye not recover them within that time?

Jephthah reminds the Ammonite invaders that Israel had been in possession of Gilead for 300 years. Jephthah's period is earlier than that of Saul, first king of Israel, who began his reign around 1050 B.C. This certainly pushes the Israelite conquest back to 1400 B.C.

3b. The critics and chronology:

Unfortunately, even a number of conservative scholars espouse a late date of the Exodus (1290 B.C.) and Conquest (1250 B.C.). To arrive at the late date, they either ignore biblical data or explain it away. Very illustrative is the way R. K. Harrison handles the I King 6:1 passage. The period of 480 in the I King 6:1 passage is reduced to 300 years by making the figure 480 symbolic. Harrison explains:



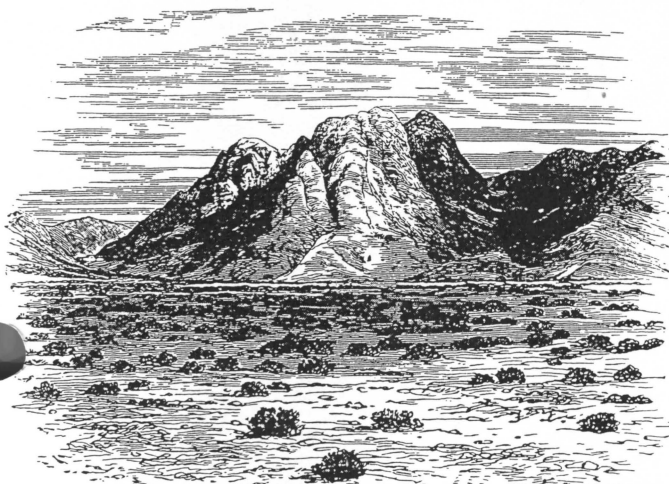
The phrase “forty years” was synonymous with the concept of a “generation,” . . . When the reference in I Kings 6:1 is examined from this standpoint, it is found to comprise a matter of twelve generations of forty years each (*Old Testament Times*, 131).

The ideal generation is 40 years in length; the real generation only 25 years. Thus 12 generations of 25 years each is 300 years. The construction of Solomon's temple began in 965 B.C. Calculating only 300 rather than 480 years backwards results in a date for the Exodus of 1265 B.C.

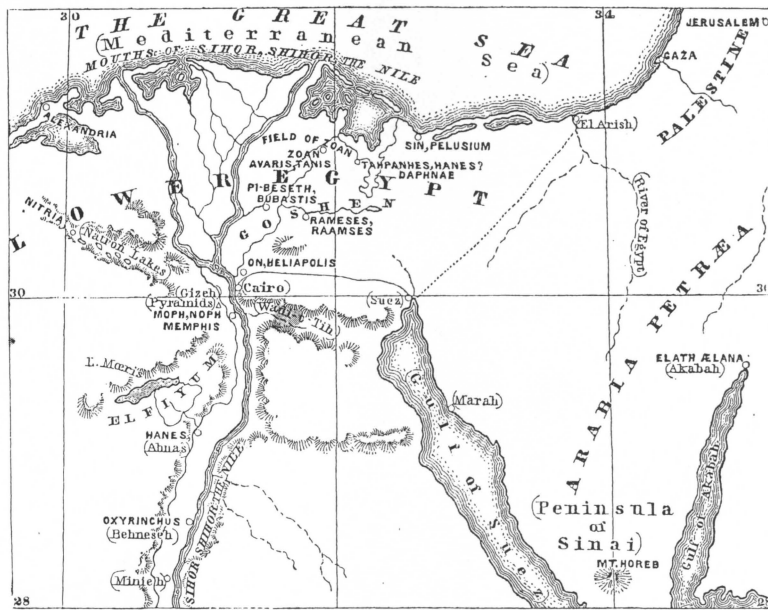
4A. THE CONTROVERSY CONCERNING THE IDENTIFICATION OF MT. SINAI:

At least 18 different mountains have been suggested as the real Mt. Sinai. Three mountains apart from the traditional Mt. Sinai are Jabal al Lawz in northern Arabia, Jebel Serbal (6730 ft.) in the western Sinai and Har Harkom in the northeastern Sinai.

The position that Jabal al Lawz is Mt. Sinai is based in part upon the belief that the Israelites did not cross the western branch of the Red Sea, the Gulf of Suez, but the eastern branch known as the Gulf of Aqaba or Gulf of Eilat. Many in the fundamentalist and conservative camp subscribe to the idea that Mt. Sinai is really found in northern Arabia. The insuperable difficulty with this position is that whatever body of water the Israelites crossed, when they reached the eastern shore, they were not in northern Arabia but they were in the northern Sinai in the **Wilderness of Shur** (Ex. 15:22). (For a refutation of the claim by Ron Wyatt and others that Mt. Sinai is Jabal al Lawz, see Gordon Franz at www.ldolphin.org/franz-sinai.html, “Is Mount Sinai in Saudi Arabia?”)



Ras es-Sufsafeh from the Plain of Er-Rahah.



MAP OF LOWER EGYPT.

If your friends insist on locating Mt. Sinai in northern Arabia, just ask two questions: (1) **How many times did the Israelites cross the Red Sea?** Of course, the obvious answer is, "Just once." (2) **Where were they when they reached the other side of that body of water?** The biblical reference to the Wilderness of Shur is almost universally ignored. The text, however, is clear and the identity of the Wilderness of Shur as the barren desert in the northern Sinai is undisputed. So it is best to see Mt. Sinai as somewhere in the Sinai Peninsula and this writer does not see any reason to change its traditional location, though he is familiar with a good number of the opposing arguments.

5A. THE DESCRIPTION OF MT. SINAI:

Mt. Sinai or Horeb is the chief object of interest in the Sinai Peninsula. The two names are identical (Ex. 3:1; 18:5; Deut. 1:6; 5:2; 1. Kg. 19:8). The one probably designates the whole range, the other a particular mountain, as they do at the present day.

One of America's outstanding church historians, Philip Schaff, a German-American scholar, has written a very engaging book, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*. (New York: American Tract Society, 1878).

It might be well to quote extensively from his visit to and description of Mt. Sinai:

1b. The contrast between law and grace:

Mount Sinai, or Horeb, is the chief object of interest in the Sinaitic Peninsula. A visit to it is an ample reward for all the trouble and fatigue of the journey through the wilderness.

From the throne of the Mount of God the purest and sublimest code of laws was proclaimed for all ages of the world. The Decalogue is a **moral miracle** greater than the **physical miracles** wrought in Egypt, and is the best evidence of the divine legation of Moses—that mighty man of God who towers high above ancient and modern legislators. But there is One greater than Moses; and **the Sermon on the Mount, which contains the Magna Charta of Christ's kingdom**, is better, as it goes deeper and aims higher, than the Ten Commandments. There is a poetic fitness in the correspondence between these two codes and their locality. **Mount Sinai** in the frowning wilderness is the appropriate pulpit for the proclamation of the law which threatens death and damnation to the transgressor; the **Mount of Beatitudes** on the smiling lakeshore of Galilee is the best pulpit for the gospel of freedom, which promises life and salvation to the humble and penitent that hunger and thirst after righteousness.

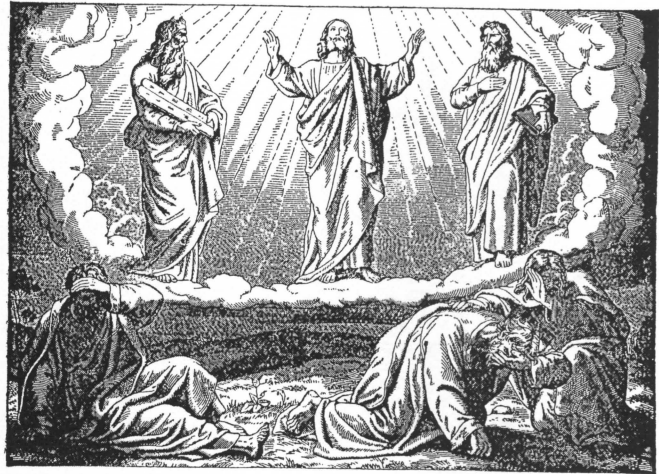
Sinai looks like "a huge altar" of incense. There it stands in solemn silence and solitary grandeur, surrounded by death and desolation, and reflecting the terrible majesty and holiness of God. In ascending Jebel Musa and Ras Sufsafeh, where Moses communed with the infinite Jehovah as no other mortal ever did, I was overwhelmed with this idea. Such a sight of terrific grandeur and awful majesty I never saw before, nor expect to see again in this world.

At the same time I felt more than ever before the contrast between the old and new dispensations: **the severity and terror of the law**, and **the sweetness and loveliness of the gospel**. Blessed be God that we "are not come unto the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet, . . . but unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12:18-24.)



Das Sinaigebirge (Mosesberg)

“The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Sinai is in bondage with her children; Jerusalem above is free (Gal. 4:22-26). But the law was the schoolmaster to lead us to Christ by bringing us to a knowledge of sin and a sense of the need of redemption. It contained, under a hard shell, the sweet kernel of the gospel. God could not command his poor fallen creatures to do his will without intending to give them the ability and showing them the way of salvation from the curse of the law. On the same Mount Sinai Jehovah appeared to Elijah, not in the raging storm, not in the earthquake, not in the consuming fire, but in the still, small voice (1 Kings 19:11, seq); thus foreshadowing the higher revelation of love and mercy in the gospel. Moses and Elijah, **the two prophets connected with Horeb, were permitted to meet, as the representatives of the covenant of law and promise, on the Mount of Transfiguration**, and there to behold the greater glory of Him who came to fulfill the law and the prophets, and to speak with him of that greatest of themes—the death which he should suffer at Jerusalem for the sins of the world.



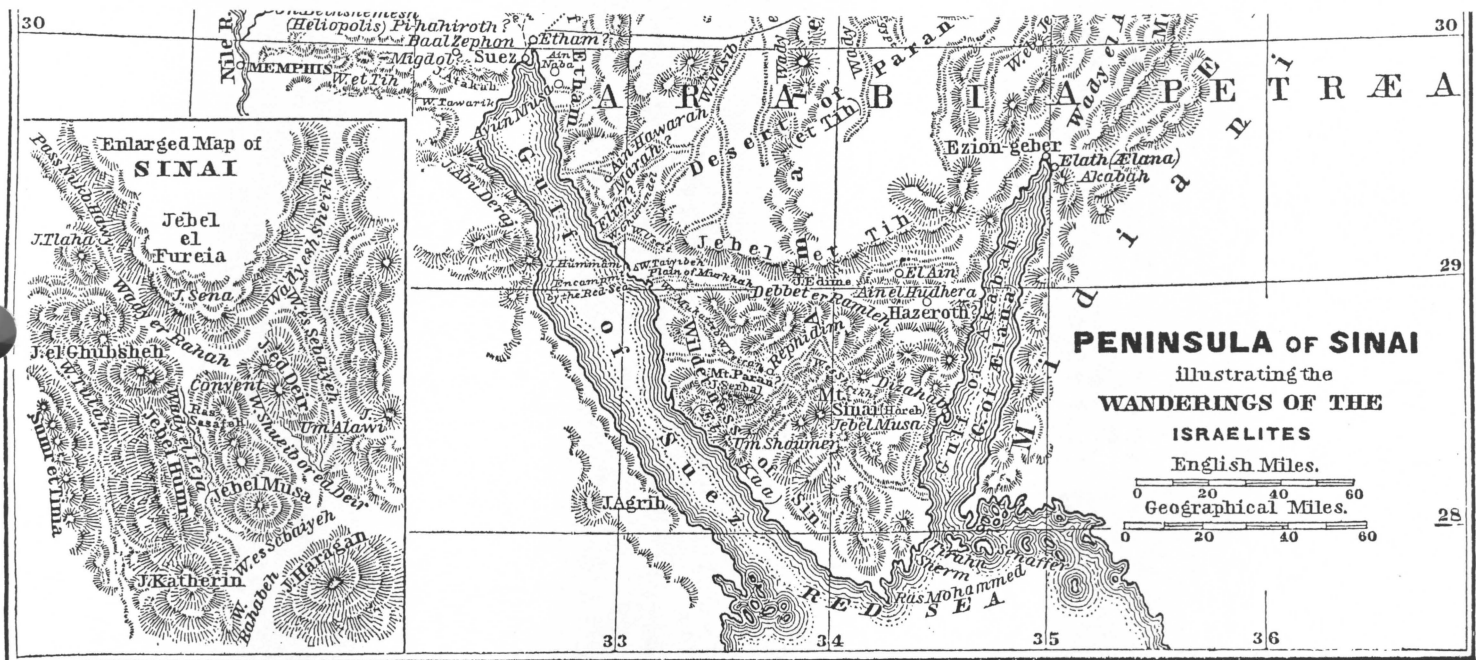
2b. The geography of the area:

Mount Sinai lies in the midst of a group of mountains, but is surrounded by valleys. It rises up precipitously from the bottom of the plain of sand and hard gravel to a height of over 2,000 feet, or over 7,000 feet from the level of the sea, and covers about two miles in length from north to south and one mile in breadth. It can be “touched,” and the people of Israel could stand “at the nether part of the mount” (in Wady Er Rahah) and listen to the voice of God speaking to them from the northern summit. It consists of two peaks; the southern peak is called *Jebel Musa*, or “the Mount of Moses;” the northern peak *Ras Sufsafeh*, or “the Peak of the Willow” (probably so called from an old willow-tree beneath the summit at the small chapel of the Virgin Mary). The former is the traditional, the latter, as I take it, the real spot of the giving of the law; but both together must be included in “the Mount of God,” and witnessed the grand and overwhelming theophany described by Moses. “There were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled; and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly” (Exod. 19:16, 18). Then it was that “Jehovah talked with Israel face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice,” and that Moses stood between Jehovah and the people to show them the Ten Words of Jehovah, and received them on the two tables of stone (Deut. 5:2,4,5,22). It was then that the heads of the tribes and the elders said unto Moses, “Behold, Jehovah our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this

day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now, therefore, why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of Jehovah any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived!" (Deut. 5:24-26). . .

3b. The suitability of the site:

I am fully satisfied by mind that Ras Sufsafeh is the platform from which the Law was proclaimed. Here all the conditions required by the Scripture narrative are combined. Moses may have received the Law on the higher Jebel Musa, but it must have been proclaimed to the people from Ras Sufsafeh, which can be seen from every part of the plain below. For Er Rahah is a smooth and gigantic camping ground protected by surrounding mountains, and contains—as has been ascertained by actual measurement—two millions of square yards, so that the whole people of Israel could find ample room and plainly see and hear the man of God on the rocky pulpit above (171-175, 178, emphasis and points of the outline added).



6A. THE COMMUNICATION OF THE LAW:

It would be difficult to find a more engaging and thoughtful description of the events surrounding the giving of the Law than that given by John McFarlane, in his classic book *The Mountains of the Bible*, (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1849). His word picture of the drama at Mt. Sinai merits a lengthy citations (with subtitles provided by this writer).

1b. The miraculous Exodus:

Mount Sinai. When the angel of the Lord had left communing with Moses, we are told that "he took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand." On his arrival in Egypt he convened the elders of Israel, and acquainted them with what had been disclosed to him on Horeb. His brother Aaron was, from this period, associated with him in the sacred office to which God had consecrated them. It is written, "the people believed; and when they heard that

the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." Upon the various plagues sent to Pharaoh and his people, to influence them to give the Hebrews an exodus from Egypt, we need not animadvert. That liberty was at length granted, and the Israelites marched out of the country of their long bondage, crossed the Red Sea miraculously, and continued their journey in **Arabia Petrea for nearly three months**, till they came into the wilderness of Sinai, and "there Israel camped before the mount;" that is, upon the low grounds before the double-peaked mountain formerly described. Horeb was the scene of the burning bush; but the promulgation of the law was made from the mountain of Moses, which is Sinai. To the sublime and altogether appalling circumstances in which that law was delivered let us now direct our meditations (109-110).

2b. The anxious expectation:

On the occasion of Jehovah's former visit to this wild region, only one of his people was present. At this time, six hundred thousand men, besides women and children, amounting to nearly three millions in all, were encamped before Sinai, and there witnessed **the grandest spectacle ever presented to the eyes of mortals**. It was now the purpose of God to come down from heaven and display his glory. But, previous to this, three days were to elapse, which were to be occupied in solemn preparations for meeting God, who, on the third day, was to come down in the sight of all the people. The Hebrews were to wash their clothes, to sanctify themselves, to set bounds around the mount, across which neither priests nor people were to step, on peril of perishing; yea, they were not to touch the mount, not even the border of it; "for whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death." We can easily conceive the intense interest with which that vast multitude would attend to these instructions, and their deep solicitude about the intentions of that awful Being who was to manifest his glory before them. Within every tent this would be the topic of conversation, and within every mind this would be the predominant subject of thought. Many eager looks, during these days of preliminary arrangement, would be directed to that bleak and frowning mountain, and many conjectures would be formed about the moment and the mode of the grand descent on its summit! (110-111, emphasis added).

3b. The terrifying encounter:



The morning of the third day dawned—all Israel was astir; there was a going to and fro among the people. We may believe no sluggard folded his arms to sleep then. At every tent-door throughout the wilderness, were groups of gazing spectators. Fathers were there whose hands had been hardened in the oppressions of Egypt; mothers were there whose hearts had sunk within them over the tears and cries of their enslaved children; and children were there who did not yet understand the ways of the Lord, but who were destined to become the future warriors that should take possession of the land of promise. As they thus stood, the order of Moses circulated throughout the camp that they should all come forth and meet with God. And they all came forth and "stood at the nether part of the mount." Now, every tongue is silent, every murmur hushed, and every eye is fixed on Sinai. The stillness that pervades the vast assembly is fearfully profound, when, lo! A distant rumbling noise disturbs that stillness. It is the noise of thunder. The people draw closer to one another, for thunder has a solemnizing effect; it is the voice of the Lord God omnipotent. Then after the thunder, came vivid and terrific flashes of lightning. The people turn pale, and fix themselves more firmly on the ground. The mother hides her babe in her bosom, the children cling to their parents, and the parents fear for themselves and offspring. After the thunders and lightnings, came down a thick cloud upon the mount. By and by, Sinai is enveloped, from its summit to its base, in smoke; which some "ascended as the smoke of a furnace."



Sinai is now invisible, and the people, whom fear has wedged more closely together, gaze in astonishment, wondering what prodigies must next appear. As they looked upon that dense mass of cloud, within whose smoky folds the sacred hill lay concealed, they beheld strange fire descending from the higher regions of the air. That fire alighted on the summit of the cloud-clothed Sinai; and in that fire was the Almighty himself. Then, piercing through cloud and camp, was heard "the voice of a trumpet, exceeding loud;" and that voice sounded long, and waxed louder and louder. It was not the varying notes of the loud clarion playing with the gentle and musical echoes of the hills, but one long, long, monotonous, loud, and ever-waxing louder stream of awful sound, which drowned the very noise of the thunder itself. Then, not only the millions of Israel, but the ground on which they stood, trembled, and Sinai rocked to and fro as in a cradle! Angels were employed in this astonishing display; for "the Lord shined forth from Paran with the thousands of his saints," (that is of his angels,) and then "the earth trembled at the presence of the Lord," and "the mountains skipped like rams; yea, even Sinai melted from before the Lord God of Israel!" It is impossible to do justice, by description, to such a terrific and sublime scene as this. To describe it is to profane it. Let us, therefore, put off the shoes from our feet (111-113).

4b. The overwhelming experience of Moses:

But, in the midst of all the thundering, and flashing, and quaking, another sound, different from the rest, reaches the ear. It is the voice of one that speaks. They listen, and they hear some one commanding their leader to ascend to the very top of that mount. IT IS THE VOICE OF GOD! And will Moses have courage to go up, in the very midst of that fire, exposed to the terrors and perils of that dread artillery? For a moment every eye in the camp is fixed on him. Some fear that he may be destroyed, and others, perhaps, implore him to remain. But, behold! the man of God arises! How erect his person, and how tranquil his appearance! He proceeds to the sacred limit, steps over it, ascends,

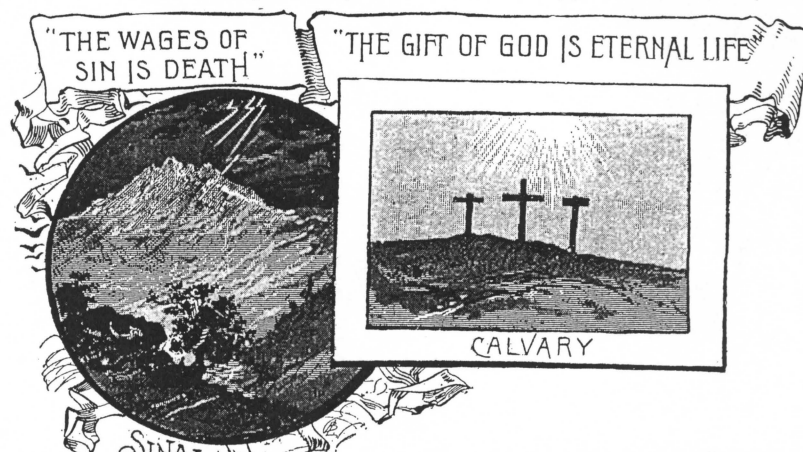
enters the cloud, and disappears! Moses rested not till he gained the very summit. And not a few men of God since then, have had to climb even the ascent of Zion encompassed with many legal terrors. Determined, however, to gain its merciful and blissful heights, whatever were the difficulties and the discouragements of the passage by the grace of God, they succeeded.

The scripture is not altogether silent as to what took place on the top of the mount, between Jehovah and his servant. Moses received a commandment to go down again, without delay, and prevent the people from looking through the prescribed bounds to gaze. Permission was, at the same time, given to bring up Aaron, when he should return. Moses descended; and immediately after he had resumed his proper position at the head of the congregation, the voice of God was again heard from within the cloud on the top of the mount; and it was at this time, and in those circumstances, that the moral law, which comprehends the ten commandments, was promulgated. Surely, never was there before, and never has there been since, such a sermon, and such a preacher, and such an audience. With the mountain top for his pulpit, and the firmament for its canopy, Jehovah here lifted up his voice, and became himself the preacher to millions of his people. Surely, too, every eye was fixed on that mysterious fire upon the summit of the mount, and every ear listened to these solemn commandments, and every heart beat in holy unison with the will of the preacher (113-114).

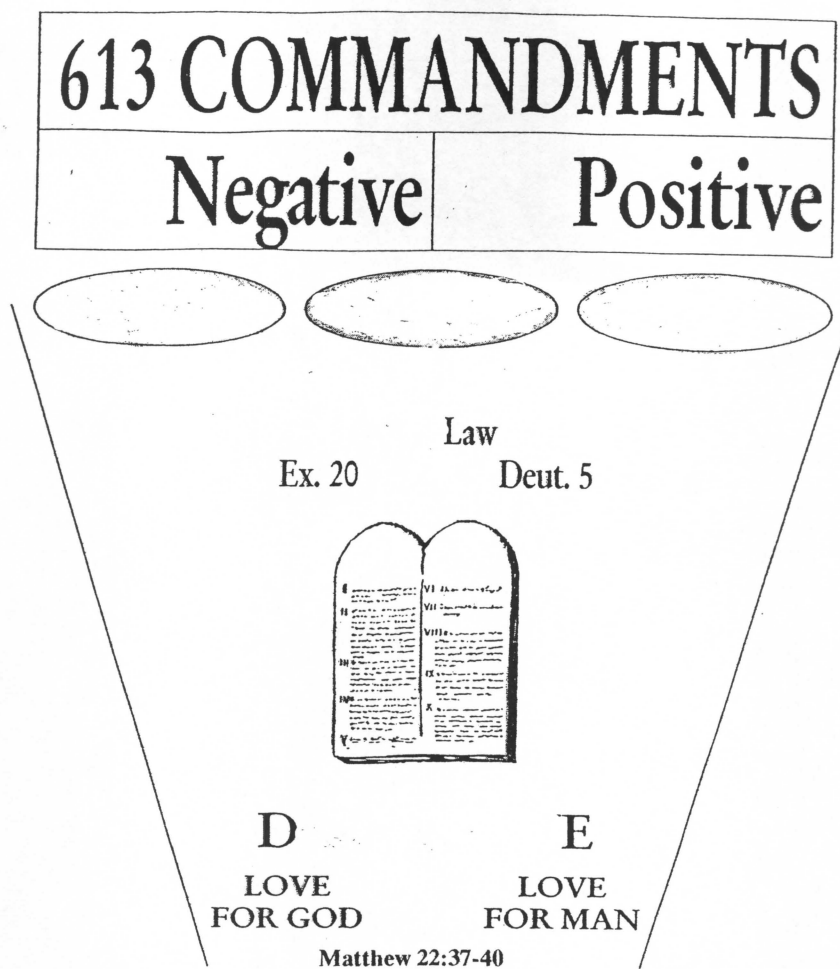
As Jehovah was repeating these holy, just, and good commandments, the solemnizing phenomena of thunder, fire, cloud, earthquake, and the sound of a trumpet accompanied his dreadful voice. The effect of this upon the people seems to have been overwhelming. So long as God kept silence, they had been able to listen and look without absolute consternation; but when this voice was heard, they seem to have become incapable of farther endurance: "And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." The people then retired farther and farther from the mount. But Moses "drew nearer and nearer unto the thick darkness where God was." It appears, then that the only portion of what was revealed on Sinai, which was heard by all the people was the moral law, or the ten commandments. To Moses, alone, the minutiae of the judicial or civil law was given (115-116).

5b. The gracious extension of the gospel:

The law came in the midst of terror-striking phenomena. The gospel was announced by an angel, in the stillness of the evening hour, to a few shepherds, on the plains of Bethlehem. Clouds and darkness were about the one; light and peace were about the other. The one made the earth to shake for fear; the other caused it to rejoice with exceeding great joy. The one was delivered in fire and thunder; the other was heralded, on the day of pentecost, by the descent of the Holy Spirit in fiery tongues on the apostles. The fires of Sinai were accompanied with smoke; but the fires of the gospel were without smoke, "befitting the clearness of the new dispensation, fire, not in flashes but in tongues, not to terrify, but to instruct." The mount itself was strictly protected, and it was on peril of life if it was even touched, while only to a very few the honor given of ascending so far up its rugged sides, and only one was it permitted to come near to God on its summit. In the gospel, however, no cordon of any description forbids our approach to Zion (128).



7A. THE CONTENT OF THE LAW:



"Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

8A. THE CESSATION OF THE LAW:

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



- 1b. The great theological problem in Christendom:

Most believers somehow think that we are still under parts of the Mosaic Law, at least the moral law, i.e. the Ten Commandments.

- 2b. Five propositions of the Mosaic Law:

- 1c. It was given as a union and not divided as commandments, ordinances, judgments.

613 COMMANDMENTS

365 Negative | 248 Positive

Judgments

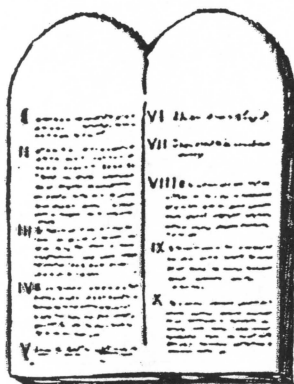
Commandments

Ordinances

Moral Law

Ex. 20

Deut. 5



DECALOGUE

LOVE
FOR GOD

LOVE
FOR MAN

Matthew 22:37-40

"Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

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- 1d. All parts are equally important: Ex. 20; 21; 25
- 2d. Breaking the law in one point means the breaking of all: James 2:10
- 3d. Penalties are equally severe:
 - 1e. Commandments: breaking the Sabbath: death: Nu. 15:32
 - 2e. Ordinances: Nadab and Abihu offering strange fires: death: Lev. 10:1-7.
 - 3e. Judgments: Ex. 21-24: death: Jer. 25:11

2c. It was given to Israel, not to Gentiles:

- 1d. O.T. proof: Lev. 26:43 between God and the children of Israel.
- 2d. N.T. proof: Rom. 2:14 Gentiles which have not the Law.
Rom. 9:4 to Israel is the giving of the Law.
Eph. 2:12 the Gentiles are strangers to the Law.

3c. All of the Law is done away: All 613 commandments.

- 1d. The Ten Commandments are especially mentioned: 2 Cor. 3:6, 7-11,
 “. . . the ministration of death, written and engraven in stone (v.7)
 . . . is done away” (v.11).

2d. A different priesthood necessitates a different law: Heb. 7:11-12.

“For the priesthood being changed (from the Aaronic to the Melchizedekian priesthood), there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”

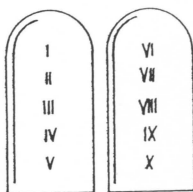
4c. In spite of this, the Law has a right use: to show a standard from God, to demonstrate His righteous demands.

- 1d. The Law is useful for the unsaved: 1 Tim. 1:9.
The Law was made for the unrighteous; it was to point the ungodly to Christ, Gal. 3:19-25.
- 2d. The Law is useful for the saved: to show what God thinks about things. As all Scripture is profitable, so is the Law.

5c. The Law has a real abuse:

- 1d. When it is used as a means of salvation:
 - 1e. Rom. 3:20 by deeds of law no flesh will be justified.
 - 2e. Acts 13:39 man could not be justified by the Law of Moses.
- 2d. When used as a means of sanctification:
 The Law stirred up Paul, did not lead to a sanctified life: Rom. 7.





We still have laws, but they are **not** the same as the Mosaic Law. Some of God's standards are repeated in the N.T., but they are a part of a new code of law. We are under a new priesthood, therefore have a new code. The old law, including the Ten Commandments, has been abrogated and is not for the church age believer. It never has been and never will be.

- 3d. It would be sinful to obey some of the laws today, such as the putting to death of anyone who did not observe the Sabbath day.

9A. THE COMMANDMENTS FOR THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE:

1b. We are not bound in any way by the Mosaic Law.

2b. This age has laws but not the Law:

1c. The names of this system of laws:

- 1d. **"the perfect law of liberty"** (Jas. 1:25)
- 2d. **"the royal law"** (Jas. 2:8)
- 3d. **"the law of Christ"** (Gal. 6:2)
- 4d. **"the law of the spirit of life"** (Rom 8:2)

2c. The nature of these laws;

The Law of Christ is a definite code containing hundreds of specific commandments. Freedom from the Mosaic Law is not lawlessness or license. The Apostle Paul wrote, "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21).

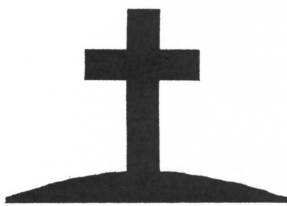
1d. Its precepts:

1c. **Positive commandments:** (1 Thess. 5:16-18)
 "16 Rejoice evermore. 17 Pray without ceasing. 18 In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

2c. **Negative commandments:** (Rom. 12:2)
 "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

3c. **Principles:**

- 1d. Is it a weight? Heb. 12:1 "lay aside every weight."
- 2d. Is it a habit? 1 Cor. 6:12 "not be brought under the power of any."
- 3d. Is it a stumbling stone? 1 Cor. 8, esp. v. 13.



- 4d. Is it winsome? Col. 4:5 “walk in wisdom toward them that are without.”
Give no offense to unsaved, 1 Cor. 10:32.

4c. **Rules:**

In some areas there are neither principles nor precepts given. In this area it is necessary to have special rulings. God has made provision for this by giving leaders to His church who rule in these matters (Eph. 4:11-12, 1 Tim. 3:5). These leaders are given authority to rule in spiritual matters (Heb. 13:7,17). If there are rulers, it is obvious that there are those ruled who must obey these rules (Heb. 13:17). Examples of this type of leadership would be the local church, a Christian camp, rules at school, such as dress, dating, conduct.

2d. Its power:

- 1e. The Spirit indwells permanently: John 14:17.
- 2e. The Spirit indwells every believer: Rom. 8:9.
1 Cor. 6:19—does not depend on spiritual maturity.
His presence is proof of salvation.
- 3e. The Spirit encourages the believer.
Nothing could be greater than the difference in spirit between the O.T. saint and Church age believer. In the O.T. **the believer obeys in order to be blessed** (e.g. Mal. 3:8-11). If he disobeys, he is cursed. In the N.T. **the believer obeys because he has been blessed** (e.g. Rom. 12:1-2). If he disobeys, he will lose rewards.

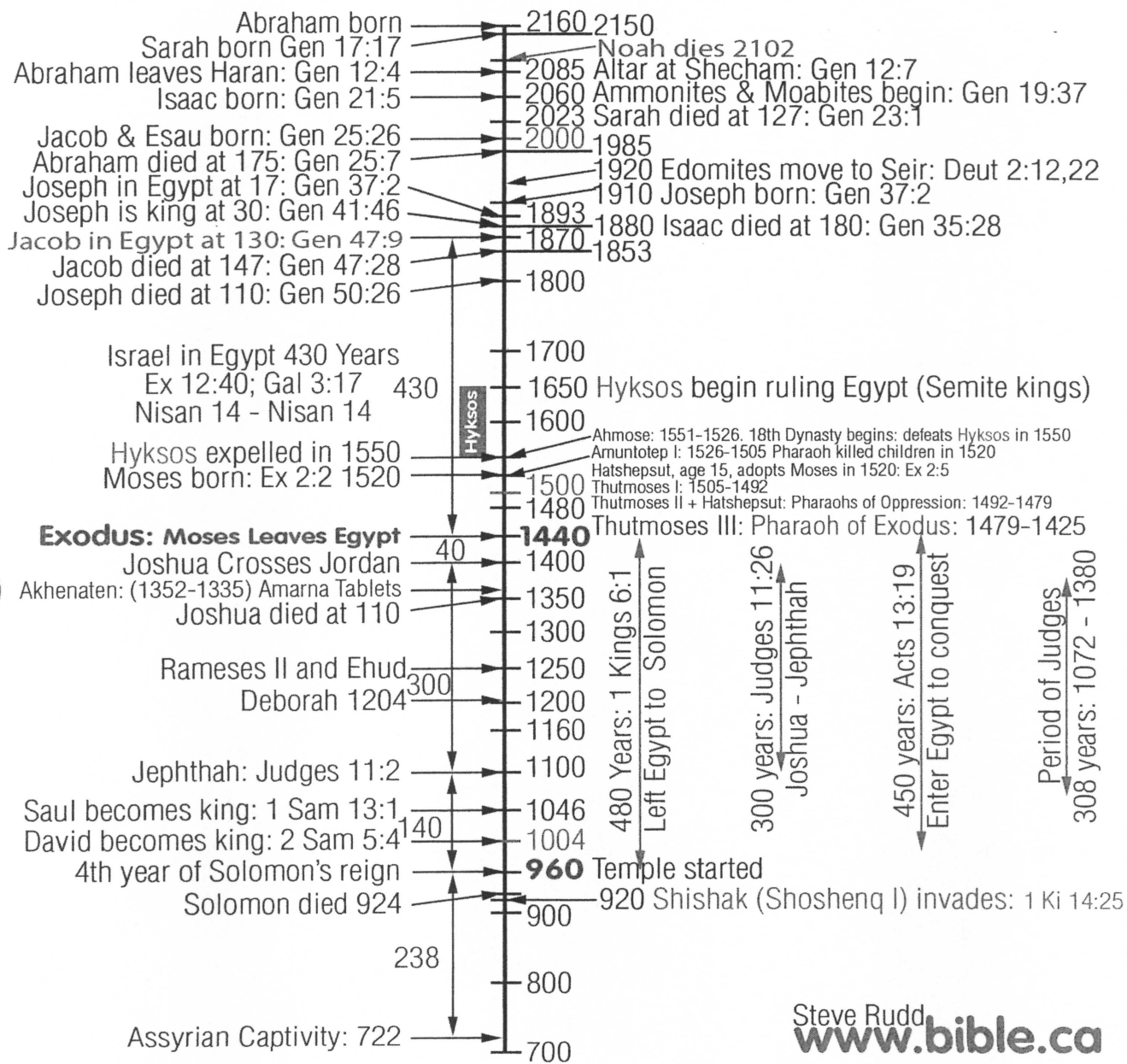
3d. Its purpose: Sanctification.

- 1e. A holy person resembles his heavenly Father: 1 Pet. 1:16.
- 2e. We know what God is like through Christ: John 1:18.

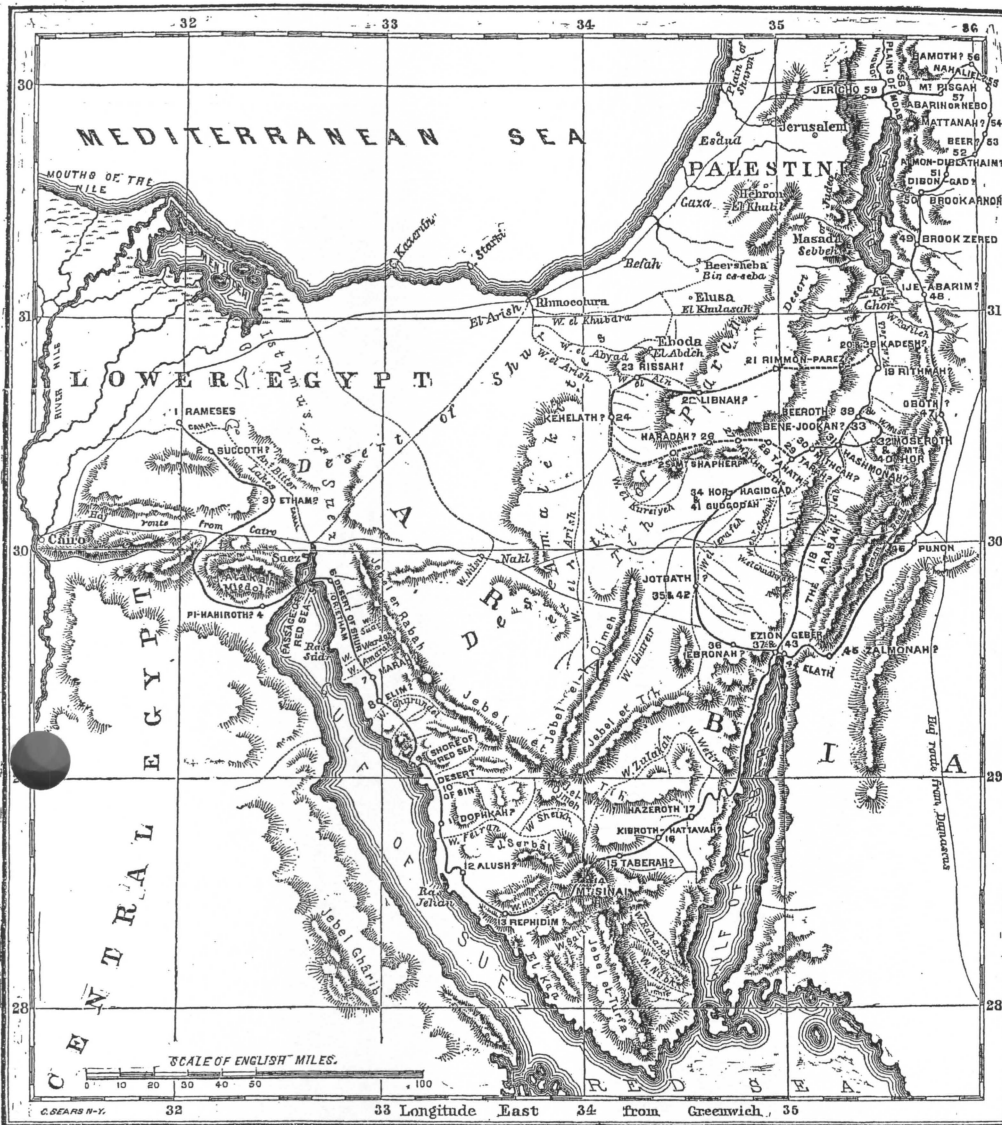
The person of Christ is our **example** for godly life;
the law of Christ is our **exhortation** to godly life.
- 3e. We are to bring glory to God: 1 Cor. 10:31.
(Glorifying God may be described as “displaying any or all of His attributes.” The glory of God “is God seen in some or all of His characteristics” Charles C. Ryrie, *Transformed by His Glory*, Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990. 19).

Exodus Timeline

The Exodus took place in 1440 BC



Steve Rudd
www.bible.ca



Map of the Arabian Peninsula, exhibiting the Route of the Israelites. (The dotted parts are uncertain. The numbers show the order and direction of the journeys.)

- (2.) From Sinai to Kadesh the second time. (NUMBERS x-xx). From the desert of Sinai (x, 12). [15.] Taberah (xi, 8; [Deut. ix, 22]). [16.] Kibroth-hattaavah (xi, 34), in the edge of the desert of Paran (x, 12). [17.] Hazeroth (xi, 35). [18.] The desert of 'Arabah, by the way of Mount Seir [Deut. i, 1, 2]. [19.] Kadesh, in the desert of Paran (xii, 16; xiii, 26; [Deut. i, 2, 19]. [Hence they turn back and wander for 38 years (Numb. xiv, 25 sq.) through the desert (Deut. ii, 1)]. [21.] Rimmon-parez (ver. 19). [22.] Libnah (ver. 20). [23.] Rissah (ver. 21). [24.] Kehelathah (ver. 22). [25.] Mount Shapher (ver. 23). [26.] Haradah (ver. 24). [27.] Makheloth (ver. 25). [28.] Tahath (ver. 26). [29.] Tarah (ver. 27). [30.] Mithcah (ver. 28). [31.] Hashmonah (ver. 29). [32.] Moseroth (ver. 30). [33.] Bene-jaakan (ver. 31). [34.] Hor-hagidgad (ver. 32). [35.] Jotbathah (ver. 33). [36.] Elbrona (ver. 34). [37.] Ezion-geber (ver. 35), by the way of the Red Sea [Deut. ii, 1]. [38.] Return to Kadesh, in the desert of Zin (Numb. xx, 1), by the way of Mt. Seir (Deut. ii, 1).

- (3.) From Kadesh to the Jordan. (NUMB. xx, xxi; DEUT. i, ii, x). From Kadesh (Numb. xx, 22). [39.] Beeroth Bene-jaakan (Deut. x, 6). [40.] Mount Hor (Numb. xx, 22), or Mosera (Deut. x, 6), where Aaron died. [41.] Gudgodah (Deut. x, 7). [42.] Jotbath (Deut. x, 7). [43.] Way of the Red Sea (Numb. xxi, 4), by Ezion-geber (Deut. ii, 8). [44.] Elath (Deut. ii, 8). [45.] Zalmonah (ver. 41). [46.] Punon (ver. 42). [47.] Oboth (Numb. xxi, 10). [48.] Ije-abarim (Numb. xxi, 11). [49.] The brook Zered (Numb. xxi, 12; Deut. ii, 13, 14). [50.] The brook Arnon (Numb. xxi, 13; Deut. ii, 24). [51.] Dibon-gad (ver. 45). [52.] Almon-diblathaim (ver. 46). [53.] Beer (well), in the desert (Numb. xxi, 16, 18). [54.] Mattanah (xii, 15). [55.] Nahaliel (xii, 19). [56.] Bamoth (xii, 19). [57.] Pisgah, put for the range of Abarim, of which Pisgah was part (xii, 20). [58.] By the way of Bashan to the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho (Numb. xxi, 33; xxi, 1).

- [45.] Zalmonah (ver. 41). [46.] Punon (ver. 42). [47.] Oboth (ver. 43). [48.] Ije-abarim, or Im (ver. 44, 45). [49.] The brook Zered (Numb. xxi, 12; Deut. ii, 13, 14). [50.] The brook Arnon (Numb. xxi, 13; Deut. ii, 24). [51.] Dibon-gad (ver. 45). [52.] Almon-diblathaim (ver. 46). [53.] Beer (well), in the desert (Numb. xxi, 16, 18). [54.] Mattanah (xii, 15). [55.] Nahaliel (xii, 19). [56.] Bamoth (xii, 19). [57.] Pisgah, put for the range of Abarim, of which Pisgah was part (xii, 20). [58.] By the way of Bashan to the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho (Numb. xxi, 33; xxi, 1).

The points indicated in the above route as far as Kadesh have already been identified with considerable precision. It remains to consider how far the residue are capable of identification. For this purpose we have a few coincidences with modern or well-known

CYCLOPÆDIA

BIBLICAL,

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LITERATURE.

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JAMES STRONG, S.T.D.

VOL. III.—E, F, G.

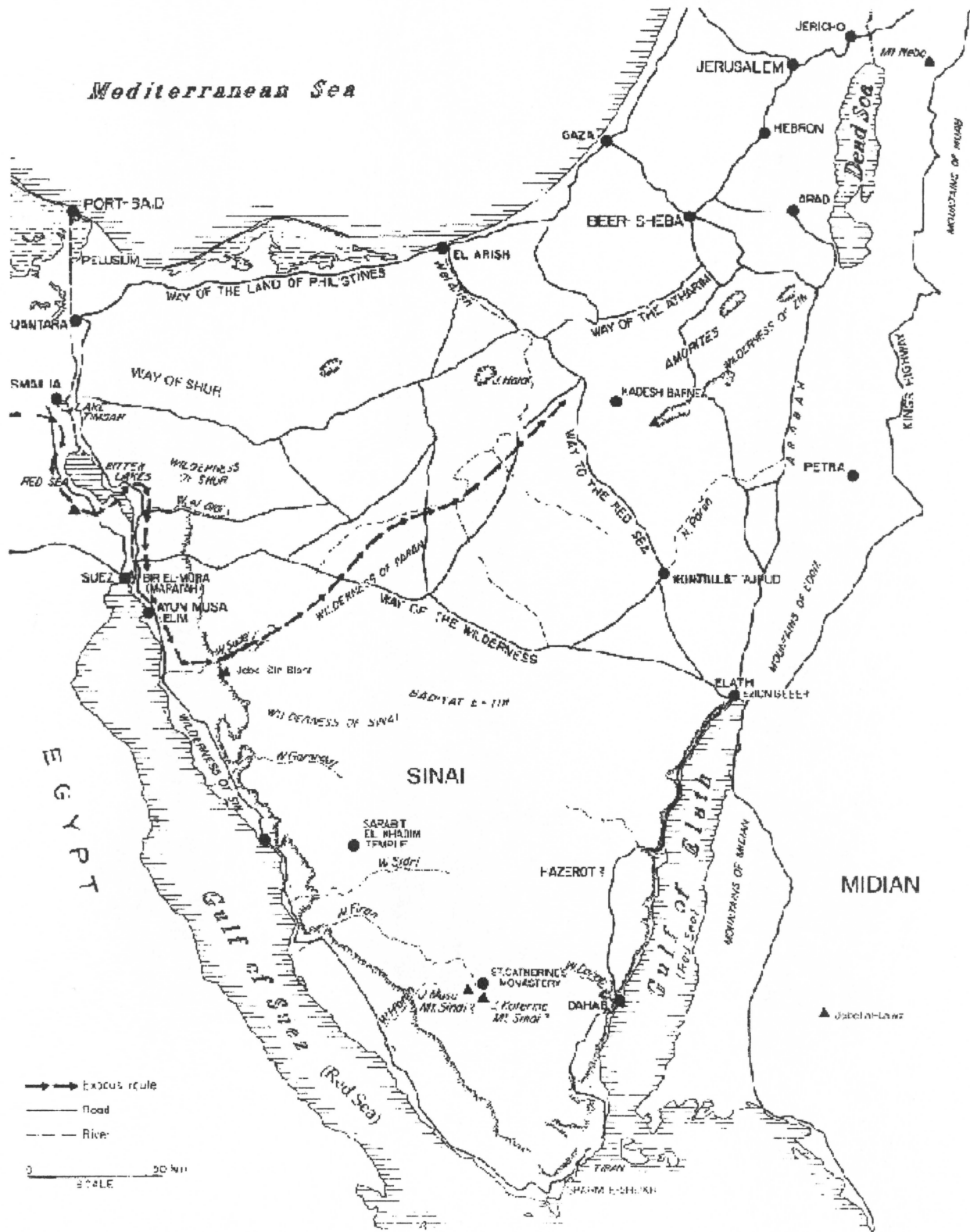
NEW YORK: HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE.

would serve as landmarks to determine the route. As it is, we do not altogether despair of finding some clew to the subject. [See below.] It may be of service to subjoin the following table of the places through which the Israelites passed (not all of them exactly stations) from the time of their leaving Egypt to their arrival in Canaan, which we take (with some alterations) from Dr. Robinson's paper in the *Biblical Repos.* for 1832, p. 794-797.

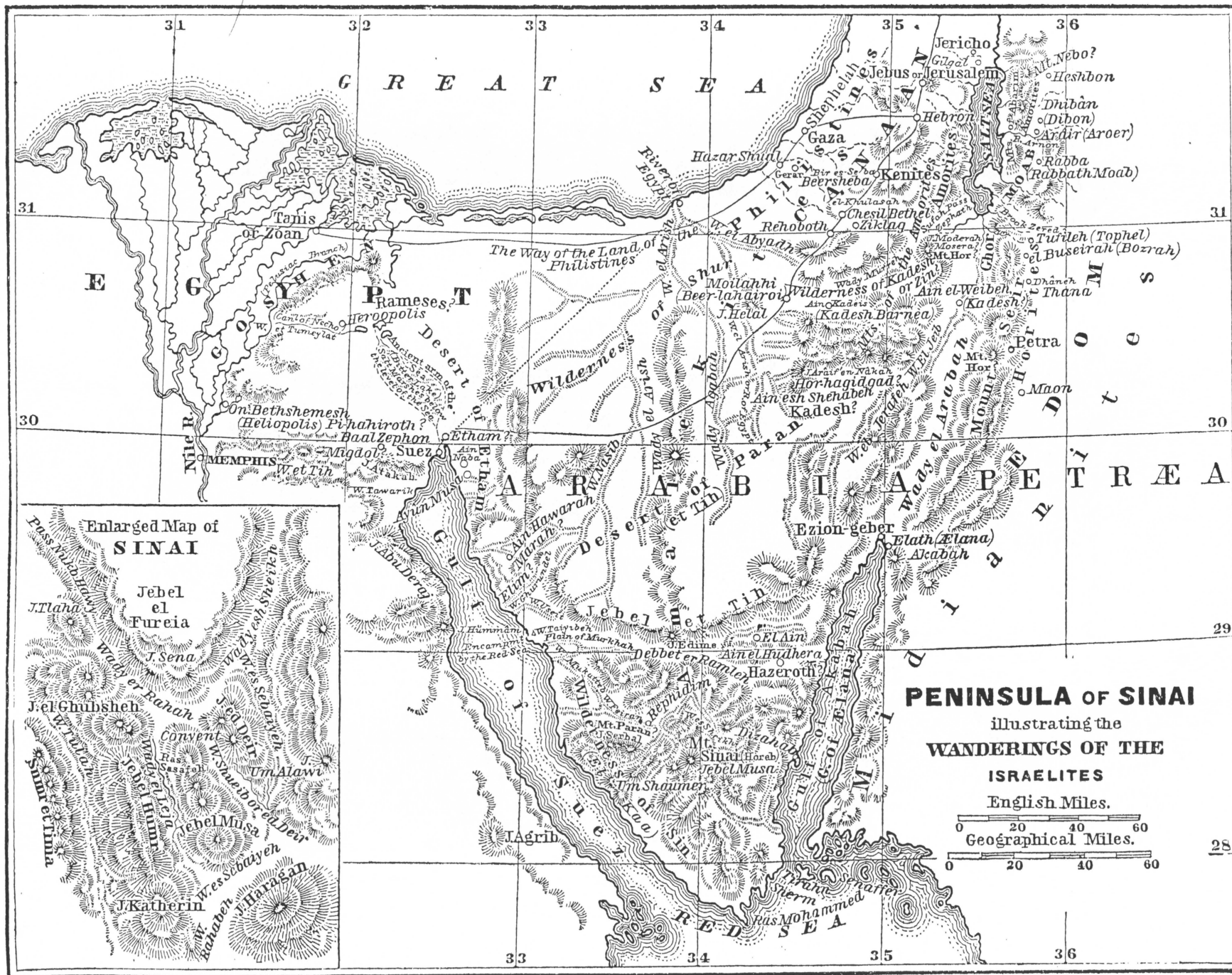
(1.) From Egypt to Sinai.

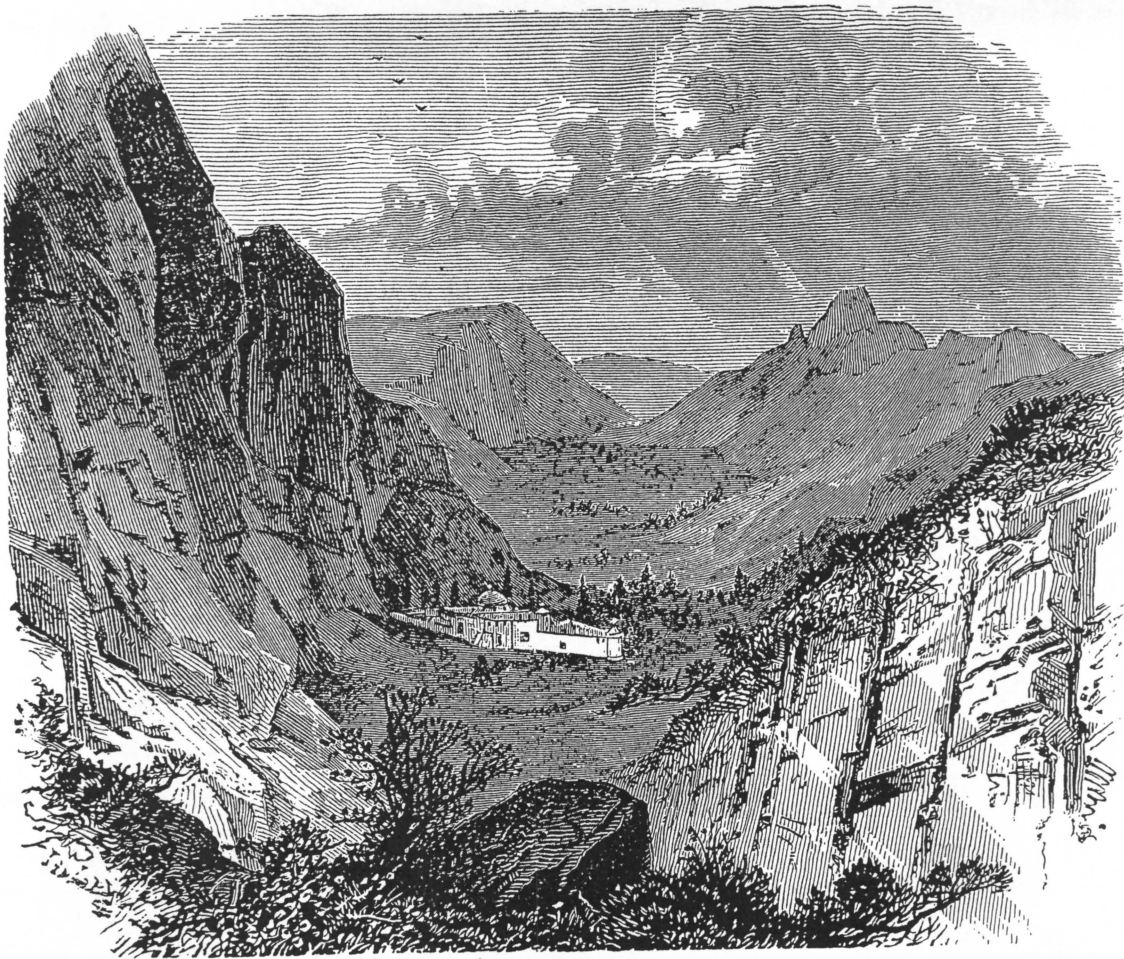
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| (Exodus xii-xix.) | (NUMBERS xxxiii.) |
| [1.] From Rameses (xii, 37). | From Rameses (ver. 3). |
| [2.] Succoth (xii, 37). | Succoth (ver. 5). |
| [3.] Etham (xii, 20). | Etham (ver. 6). |
| [4.] Pi-hahiroth (xiv, 2). | Pi-hahiroth (ver. 7). |
| [5.] Passage through the Red Sea (xiv, 22). | Passage through the Red Sea (ver. 8). |
| [6.] Three days' march into the desert of Shur (xv, 22). | Three days' march in the desert of Etham (ver. 8). |
| [7.] Marah (xv, 23). | Marah (ver. 8). |
| [8.] Elim (xv, 27). | Elim (ver. 9). |
| [9.] | Encampment by the Red Sea (ver. 10). |
| [10.] Desert of Sin (xvi, 1). | Desert of Sin (ver. 11). |
| [11.] | Dophkah (ver. 12). |
| [12.] | Alush (ver. 13). |
| [13.] Rephidim (xvii, 1). | Rephidim (ver. 14). |
| [14.] Desert of Sinai (xix, 1). | Desert of Sinai (ver. 15). |

Map of the route of the Exodus according to Dr. Menashe Har-El, professor of Historical and Biblical Geography, Tel Aviv University.

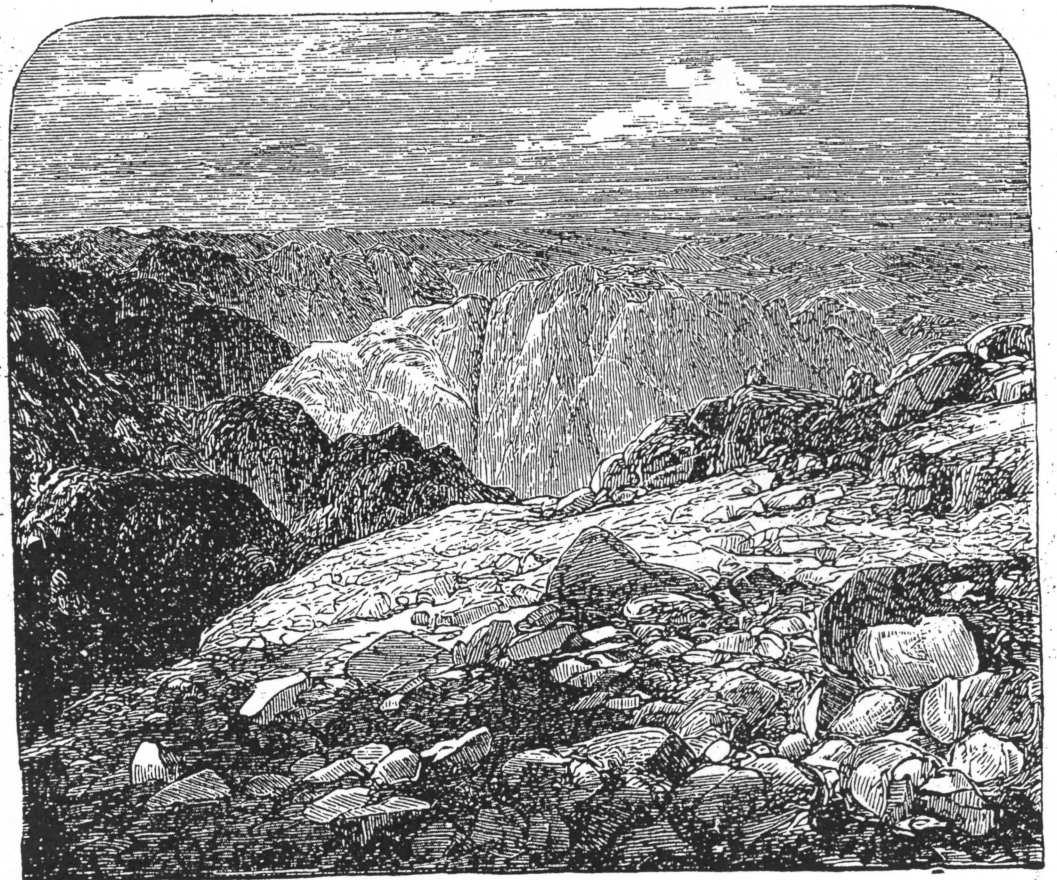


Individuals traveling in the Sinai on camelback average about 20 miles per day, or a little less (Davies 1979: 95-96). Donkey and camel caravans can average between 16 and 23 miles per day





St. Catharine's Convent, Mt. Sinai.



View from the Summit of Sinai.

Moses bringt dem Volke Israel die neuen Gesetztafeln.



Wüste am Sinai.

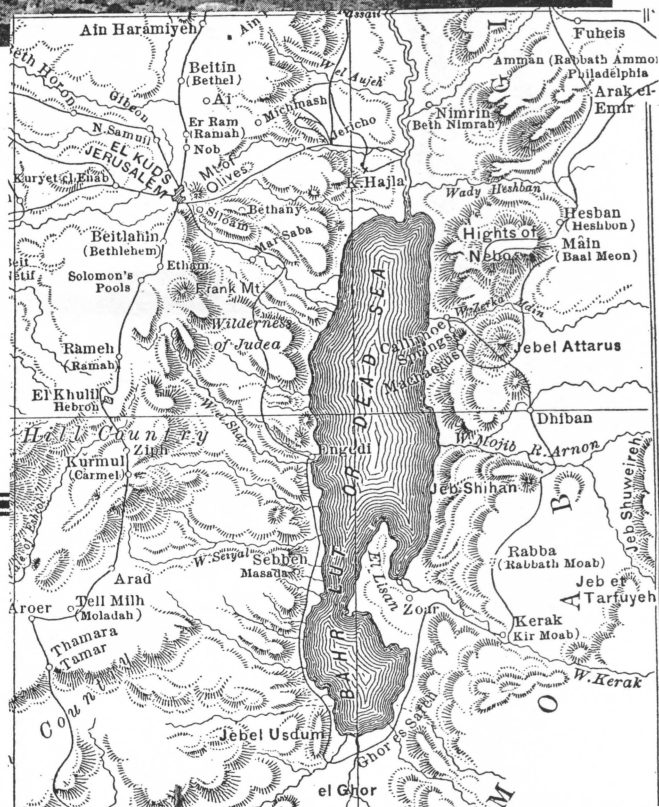
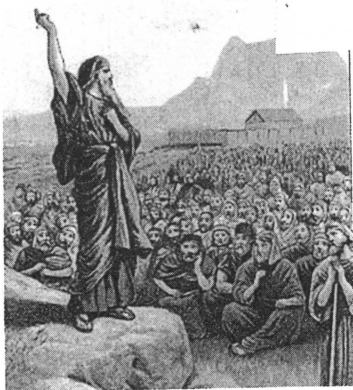
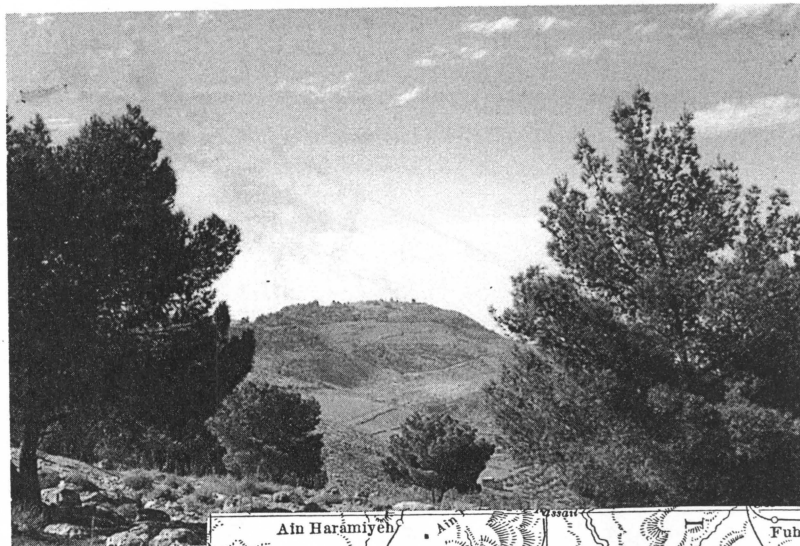
Mt. Nebo – Moses Rehearses Divine Wonders and Warnings

Deuteronomy 32:49

Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which *is* in the land of Moab, across from Jericho; view the land of Canaan, which I give to the children of Israel as a possession.

Deut 34:1

Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho.



Mt. Nebo – Moses Rehearses Divine Wonders and Warnings

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Deut 34:1

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Introduction:

Mount Nebo is mentioned in connection with the death of Moses. Just before the greatest of all Old Testament prophets faced death, he was permitted to view the promised land from Mount Nebo. The German scholar Kurtz gives a summary of the activity of the last day of Moses' life.



Jehovah now announced most distinctly to Moses, what he had already dimly suspected and feared,—namely, the future apostasy of the Israelites. He also commanded him to write a song with this as the subject, and to impress it upon the memory of the people, in order that when the curse denounced should come upon them, this song might testify against them as a witness (chap. xxxi. 21). On the same day, therefore, Moses went, according to the command, and wrote, from the fullness of the Spirit which dwelt within him, a *song*, as majestic in form, as it was terribly earnest and electrifying in its substance (chap. xxxii.) (1). Being warned once more of his approaching end, he pronounced his *blessing* upon the tribes of Israel (2), as Jacob had formerly done upon his death-bed, and then betook himself to Mount *Nebo*, where he was permitted to enjoy an extensive view of the promised land (3). There Moses, the servant of Jehovah, died, being 120 years old; and Jehovah Himself *buried* him, so that no man has ever been able to discover his tomb (4).

(J. H. Kurtz, *History of the Old Covenant*, Vol. III, Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1859. 490-91 [emphasis in the original]).

The Song of Moses:

One Old Testament scholar called the Song of Moses "one of the most impressive religious poems in the entire Old Testament." (William F. Albright³⁴⁶) It contrasts the faithfulness and loyal love of God with the unfaithfulness and perversity of His people. As other important poems in the Pentateuch (e.g. Gen. 49; Exod. 15; Num. 24), it also teaches major themes.

Keil and Delitzsch³⁴⁷ observe fittingly: "The song embraces the whole of the future history of Israel, and bears all the marks of a prophetic testimony from the mouth of Moses, in the perfectly ideal pictures which it draws, on the one hand, of the benefits and blessings conferred by the Lord upon His people; and on the other hand, of the ingratitude with which Israel repaid its God for them all."

(Thomas Constable, *Notes on Deuteronomy*, 2012 Edition, 101).

1A. The Confusion Concerning Mount Nebo:

Until recent decades, scholars have labored over the identification of Mount Nebo, which is only mentioned twice in the Scriptures (Deut. 32:49; 34:1).

1b. The location of the mountain:

John McFarlane has perhaps the best explanation for the three names that are used in connection with the mountain, Mount Abarim, Mount Nebo and Mount Pisgah:

Mount Nebo is the name of one of that range, and Mount Pisgah was the most elevated and commanding peak of Nebo. The range of Abarim extended southward from the land of Canaan towards the river Arnon, and possibly to the range called Seir, of which Hor is one. Nebo is usually identified with mount Attarous, about ten miles north of the Arnon, and nearly the same distance east from the north-eastern extremity of the Dead Sea. It is a barren mountain, which offers nothing remarkable. It is, however, the most lofty elevation in the neighbourhood, and its summit is now distinguished by a large wild pistachio tree, overshadowing a heap of a stones. In the text we are told that Nebo was over against Jericho, which makes it evident, that from its summit the promised land could easily be viewed.

(The Mountains of the Bible: Their Scenes and Their Lessons. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1849, 175.)

Kurtz agrees that Abarim refers to the mountain range. However, he extends the range to the southern end of the Dead Sea.

Why should not the name "*Mountains of Abarim*" have been common to the whole of the Moabitish range of mountains along the entire eastern coast of the Dead Sea, from the Wady Ahsy to the latitude of Heshbon? This is just as likely as that the name "*Mountains of Seir*" should be given to the whole of the mountainous district of Edom, which covers twice as much ground (Kurtz, 371 [emphasis in the original]).

While the exact identification of Mount Nebo is not possible, Kurtz has given possibly the best explanation:

According to Num. xxxiii 47, Mount Nebo was in the MOUNTAINS OF ABARIM. In Deut. xxxiv. 1, on the other hand, it is said to have been upon the top of Pisgah, over against Jericho. The two statements may easily be reconciled, on the supposition that the Nebo was a peak of the *Pisgah*, and that this again was one portion of the larger range of mountains called *Abarim* (Kurtz, 369 [emphasis in the original]).

2b. The view from Mount Nebo:

Deut 34:1-4

Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead as far as Dan, ² all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, ³ the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴ Then the Lord said to him, "This *is* the land of which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there."

R. L. Alden comments on the passage:

In 34:1 one reads, "Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho." The places one can see from there are listed in this and the following verses: Gilead as far as Dan, Naphtali, Ephraim, Manasseh, all Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negeb, the Plain, the Valley of Jericho as far as Zoar. On

clear days most of these, as well as things beyond such as Mt. Hermon, can be seen. However, the mountain range on which Hebron and Jerusalem are situated obstructs the view of the Mediterranean. The easiest solution to this is to say that it is not literal. God "showed" them to Moses, but anyone else could not have seen them. Another solution is to understand that a mirage is meant. Sometimes it looks like water beyond the Palestinian watershed. Another explanation is to say the verse states only that Judah extends to the Western Sea—not that one can necessarily see that far. A fourth suggestion is that the Dead Sea is meant, not the Mediterranean.

(*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Vol. 4, Merrill C. Tenney, ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975, 297.)

Another explanation is possible for Moses' ability to see locations that are impossible to see from Mount Nebo:

John Urquhart, in his famous but little-noticed multi-volume work, *The New Biblical Guide*, writes the following:

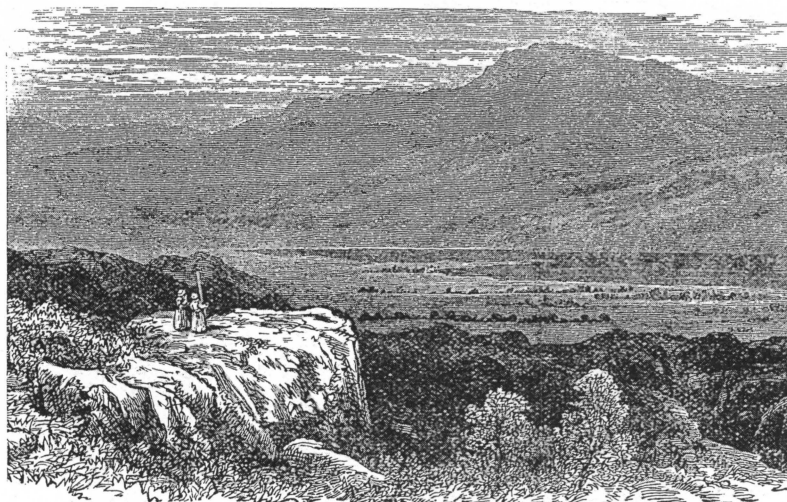
The land of Naphtali (extending to Tabor) can be seen, and the mountains of Gilead, the land of Ephraim and of Manasseh, of Judah, with the Negeb (the dry or South country), are seen for more than a hundred miles. Jericho, the city of palm trees, and its plain, is at our feet unto Zoar, which lies at the foot of the Moab chain. If we make the simple change of reading 'towards,' instead of 'unto,' in the cases of Dan and "the Western sea" (the Mediterranean)—a change not forbidden by the meaning of the Hebrew particle—the whole account read as correctly as that of an eye-witness; but it is certain that Dan (if the site near Banias be intended), and the utmost, or 'hinder,' or most Western sea, cannot be visible to any mortal eye.

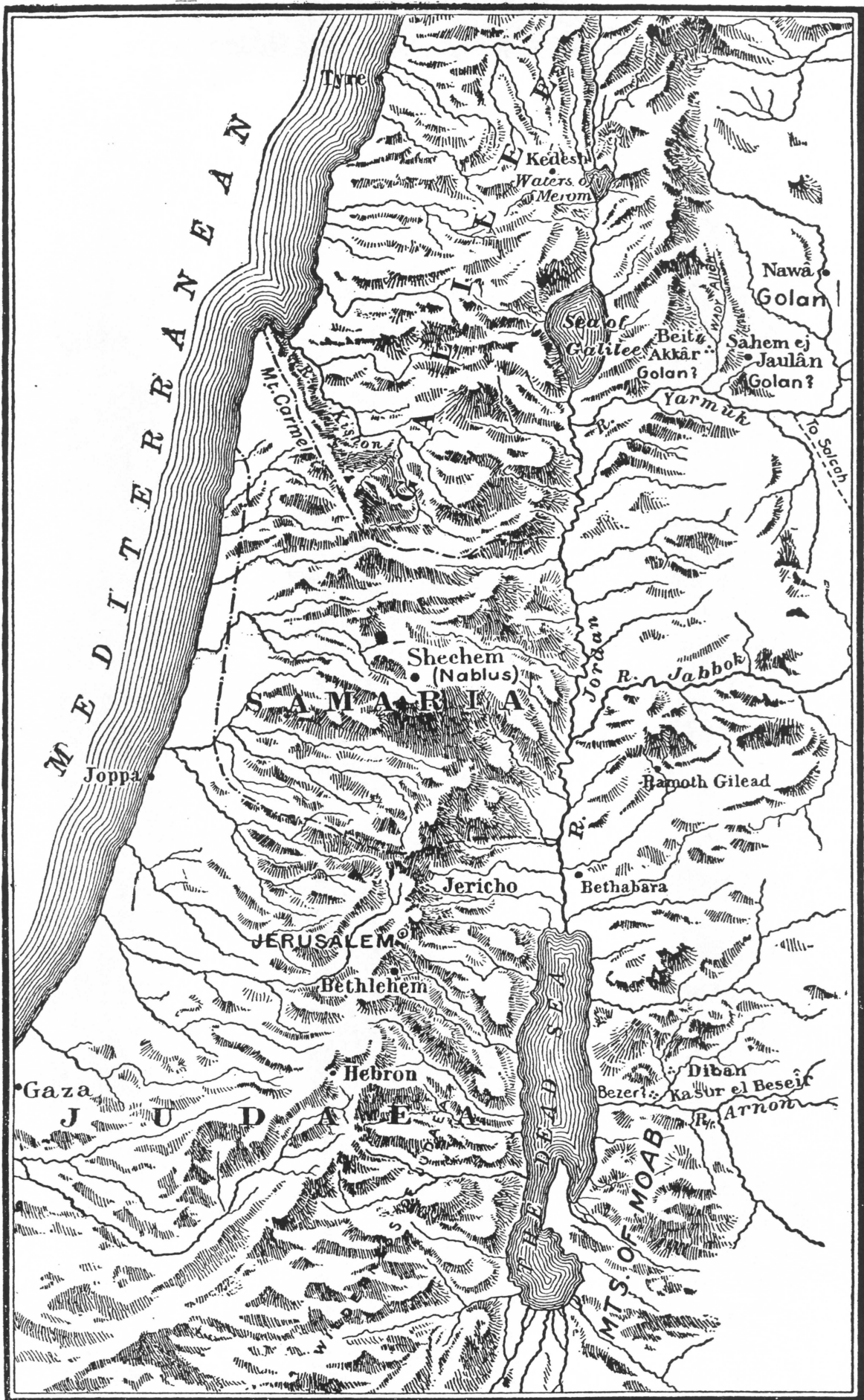
(*The New Biblical Guide. Popular Edition*, Vol. IV. London: S. W. Partridge & Co., n.d. 317.)

God permitted Moses to see the whole land of Canaan even though his sin at Kadesh prevented him from entering it. (Thomas Constable, 104).

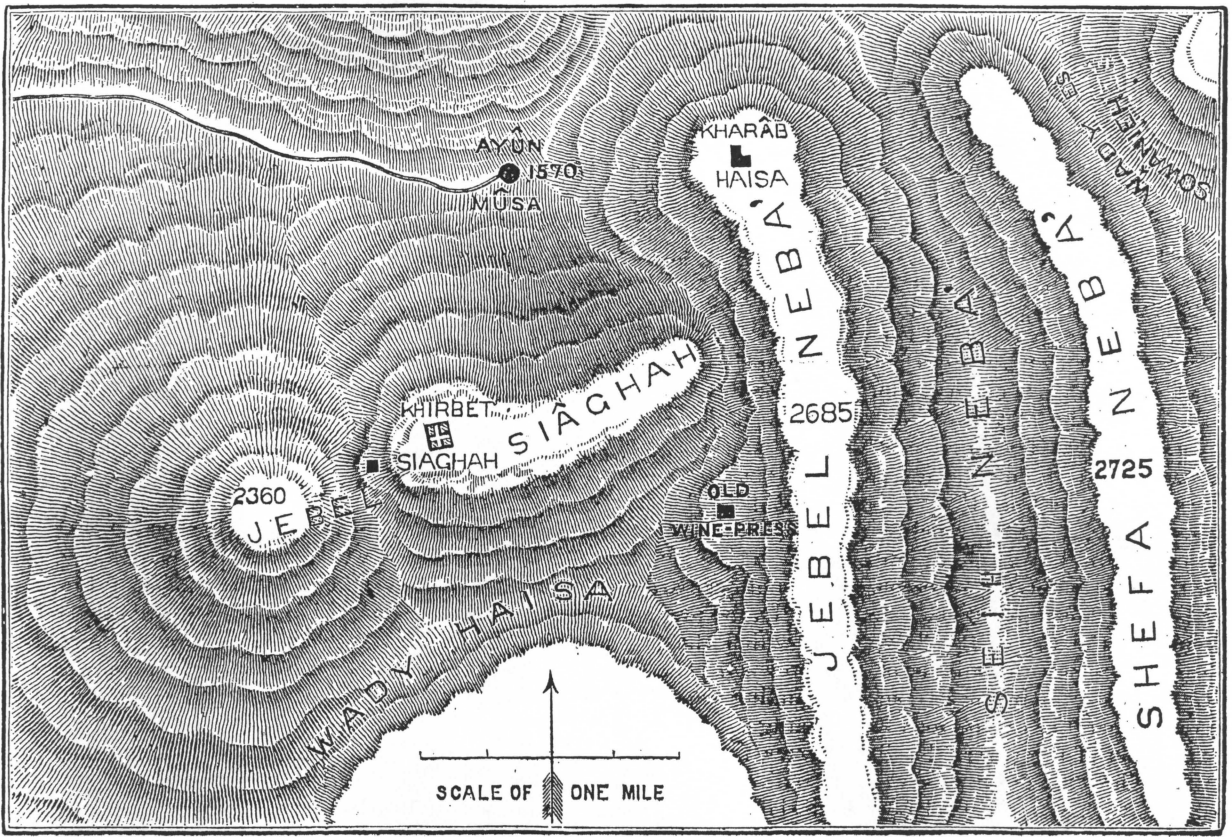
Eugene Merrill has a fitting explanation of Moses' sin:

The Lord had told him to speak to the rock (Num. 20:8), the mere act of speaking being designed to demonstrate the power of God who creates by the spoken word. To strike the rock was to introduce an interruptive element and thus to diminish the significance of the powerful word. By doing this, Moses betrayed not only anger and disobedience but he correspondingly reflected on the God whom he served by implying that God could not bring forth water by the divine word alone (cited by Dr. Constable's *Notes on Deuteronomy*, p. 104).

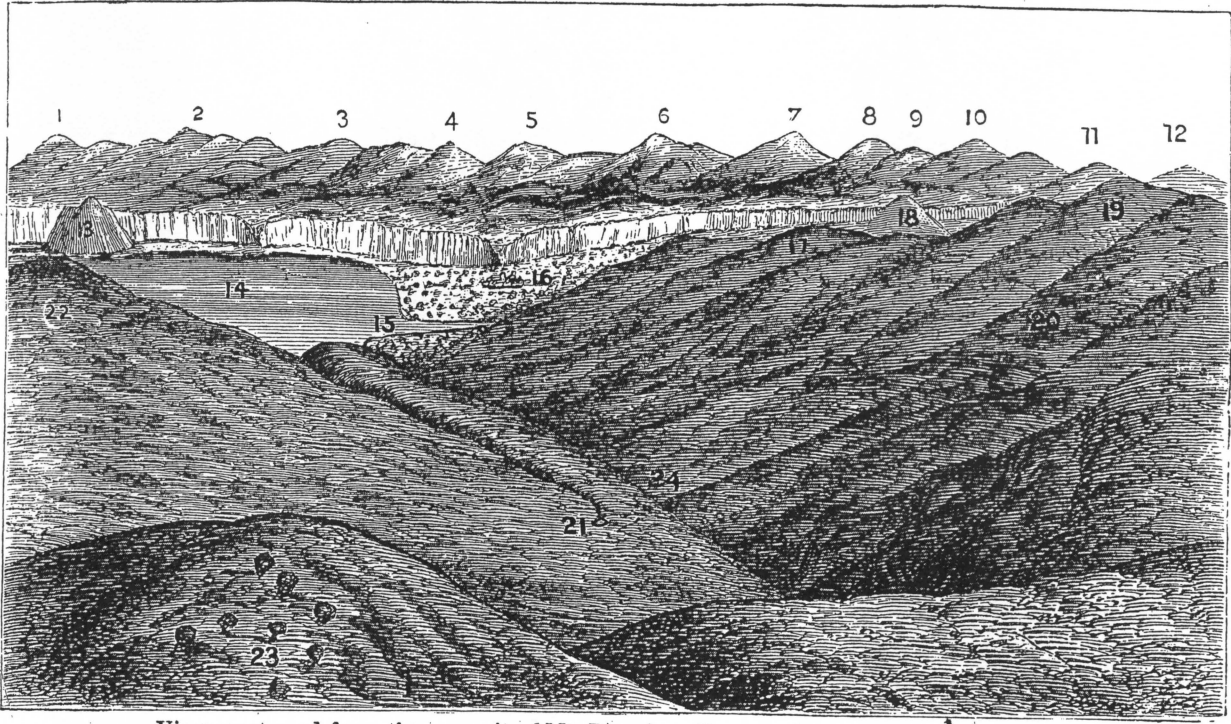




Map Showing the Location of the Cities of Refuge.



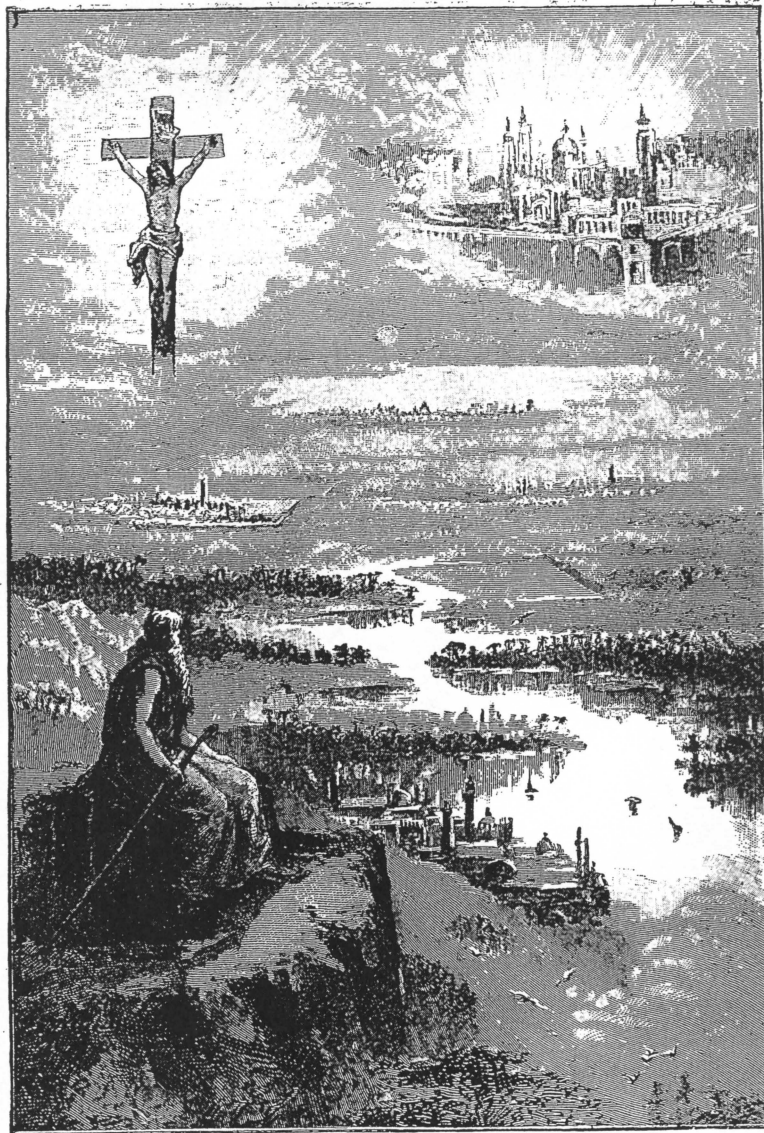
Map of Mount Pisgah.



View westward from the summit of Mt. Pisgah. (From a sketch taken on the spot.)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. The Negeb, or "South Country." | 7. Gerizim. | 13. Masada. | 19. Jebel Osha. |
| 2. Hebron. | 8. Ebal. | 14. Engedi. | 20. Mounts. of Gilead. |
| 3. Bethlehém. | 9. Mounts. of Samaria. | 15. Mouth of Jordan. | 21. Ayün Músa. |
| 4. Jerusalem and Mount of Olives. | 10. Carmel. | 16. Jericho. | 22. Mounts. of Moab. |
| 5. Nebi Samwíl. | 11. Gilboa. | 17. E. brow of Jordan Valley. | 23. Jebel Siaghah. |
| 6. Mounts. of Ephraim. | 12. Mounts. of Gallilee. | 18. Kurn Surtabeh. | 24. Wady Hesbân. |

McClintock & Strong, VIII, "Pisgah," 232 f (1894)



Moses erblickt das verheißene Land.

2A. The Content of the Song of Moses:

1b. Observation:

While volumes have been written on this marvelous song of Moses, it is difficult to know what to emphasize rather than looking at Israel's failure and apostasy. It is good to look at **God's providence, protection and provision for Israel**. The ultimate end is the salvation of His nation through regeneration, which in the Old Testament is suggested by the term "circumcising the heart." Deut 30:6: "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live." A brief outline of the song will help us in our final section, which will focus on God's mercy and Israel's uniqueness.

2b. Outline: *Deuteronomy 32*

1c. Admonition to remembrance: 1-14

1d. Prominence:



- 2d. Passion:
- 3d. Protection:
- 4d. Provision:
- 2c. Acknowledgement of apostasy: 15-42
 - 1d. Indifference: 15
 - 2d. Idolatry: 31:16
 - 3d. Ignorance: 32:28 "For they are a nation void of counsel, Nor is there any understanding in them."
- 3c. Announcement of redemption: 43-47
 - 1d. Repentance of the people:
 - 2d. Return to the land:
 - 3d. Regeneration of the nation: 32:43
 "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people;
 For He will avenge the blood of His servants,
 And render vengeance to His adversaries;
 He will provide atonement for His land and His people." (cf. 30:6, 10)

3A. The Centrality of the Nation of Israel (Deut. 32:8-10)

1b. Historically and geographically Israel is the center of the earth:

- 1c. God placed the nations in relationship to Israel:

Deut. 32:8 "When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. ⁹ For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

- 2c. Israel is placed in the center of the earth:

Ez. 38:12 "To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land (literally in the center of the earth)."

Ez. 5:5 "Thus saith the Lord God; this is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."

2b. Spiritually and presently Israel is the apple of God's eye:

- 1c. Israel is God's most priceless possession:

Deut. 32:10 "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed hi, he kept him as **the apple of his eye.**"

- 2c. Even in apostasy, Israel is the apple of God's eye:

Zech. 2:8 "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the **apple of his eye.**"

Rom 9:4-5 "Who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen."

Israel is blessed above all nations; they have the adoption; the glory, the covenants, the law, the service, the promises, the patriarchs and prophets and the MESSIAH (Rom. 9:4-5).

Rom. 3:1-2 "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

- 3c. God will deal with nations in accordance with how they treat the chosen people:

Gen. 12:3 "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

3b. **Prophetically and nationally Israel is the key to the future:**

- 1c. God will be merciful to HIS land and HIS people:

Deut. 32:43 "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people."

- 2c. God loved Israel above all people. The reason:

Deut. 7:6-8 "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

As difficult as it might be to understand, the Lord loved Israel because in eternity past He made a sovereign decision to love Israel. Similarly, He has loved His elect from with His sovereign elective love for the pas eternal eons (Jer. 33:3).

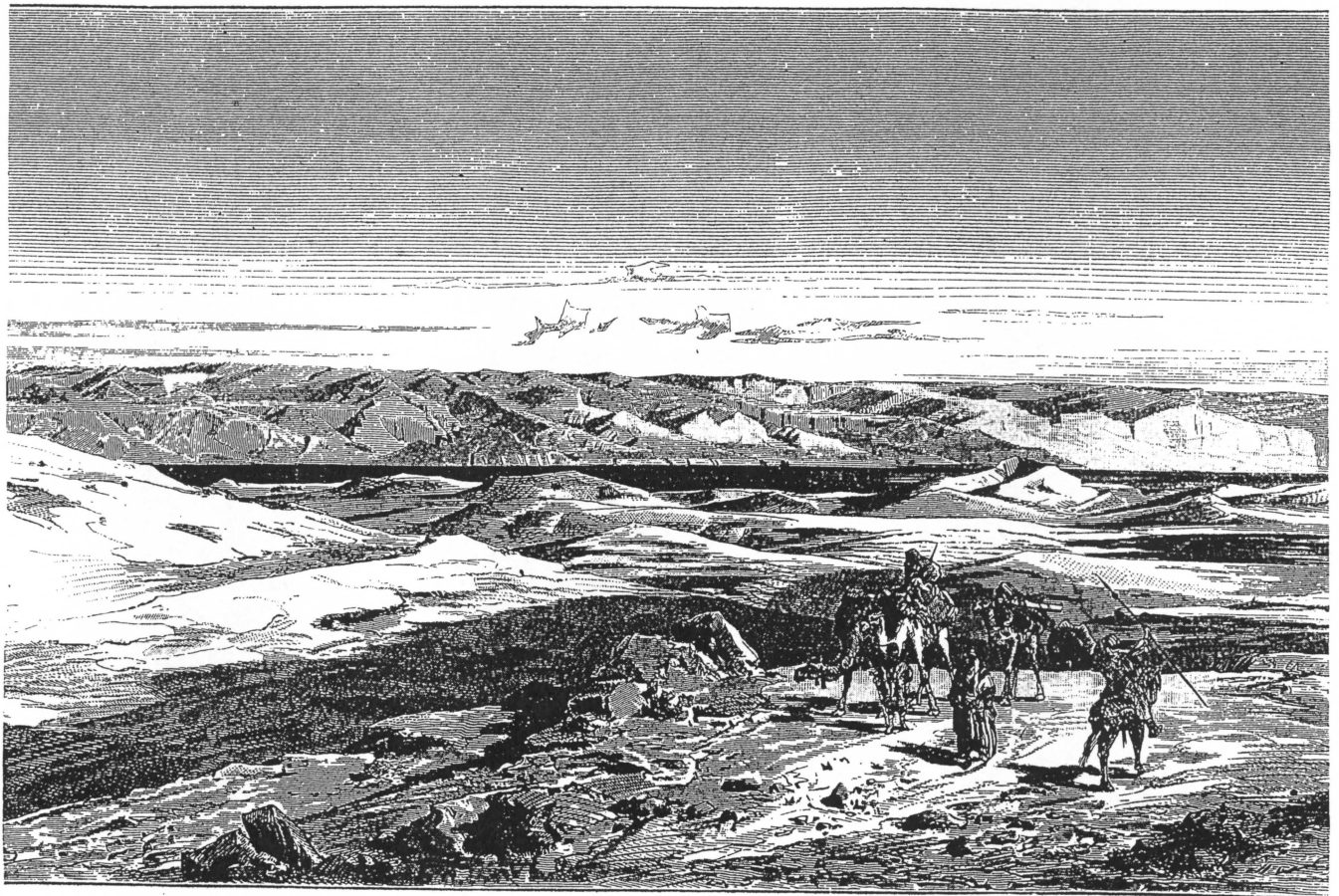
- 3c. God will be the glory in Jerusalem (v. 5), will dwell in it (v. 6), and inherit the land, with Jerusalem as the world's capital:

Zech. 2:5-6 "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

Ho, ho, come forth, an flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord.

FOR ISRAEL'S PEACE

Not just today, but every day
 For the peace of Israel we must pray,
 Driven and homeless, lonely, too,
 Their only crime to be born a Jew.
 Across our world resounds the cry
 Of a stricken race which cannot die,
 Through centuries the nations fall,
 But Jews still weep at the Wailing Wall.
 O Father above, the debt we owe
 To this race should cause our prayers to flow
 In a daily stream of faith that they
 Shall find release from hatred's flay.
 Give us the vision, Lord, to see
 That love for Jews is love for thee. —Clara Bernhardt



Das Tote Meer vom Ölberge aus.

When we visit Mount Nebo on our tour to the Holy Land, it is the first stop of the New Year. As we view the Promised Land, much as Moses did, we read the following poem to remember the great prophet and meekest man on the earth.

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
 East of the Jordan's wave,
 In a vale in the land of Moab,
 There lies a lonely grave.
 And no man knows that sepulcher,
 And no man saw it e'er,
 For the angels of God upturned the sod,
 And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
 That ever passed on earth;
 But no man heard the trampling,
 Or saw the train go forth:
 Noiselessly as the daylight
 Comes back when night is done,
 And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
 Grows into the great sun.

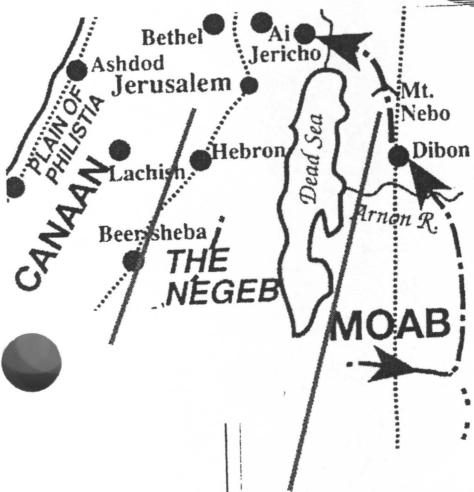
This was the truest warrior
 That ever buckled sword,
 This the most gifted poet
 That ever breathed a word.
 And never earth's philosopher
 Traced with his golden pen,
 On the deathless page, truths half so sage
 As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor?
 The hillside for a pall,
 To lie in state while angels wait,
 With stars for tapers tall,
 And the dark rock-place, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave,
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
 To lay him in the grave?

In that strange grave without a name,
 Whence his uncoffined clay
 Shall break again—O wondrous thought!—
 Before the judgment-day,
 And stand with glory wrapt around
 On the hills he never trod,
 And speak of the strife that won our life
 With the incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land!
 O dark Beth-Peor's hill:
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still.
 God has his mysteries of grace,
 Ways that we cannot tell;
 He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
 Of him He loved so well.

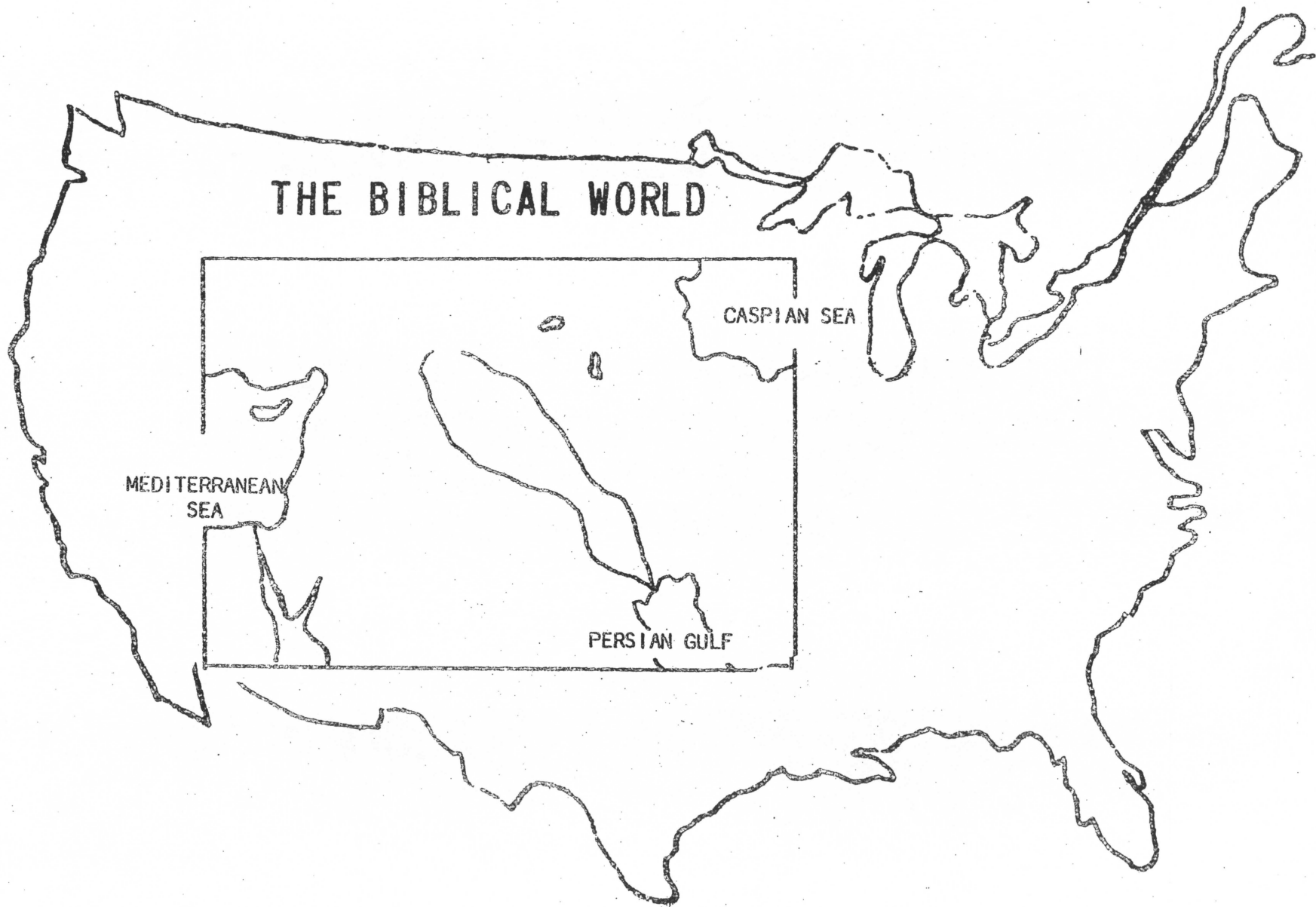




V. Mose. Kap. 34, Vers 1-4.

Moses Tod.





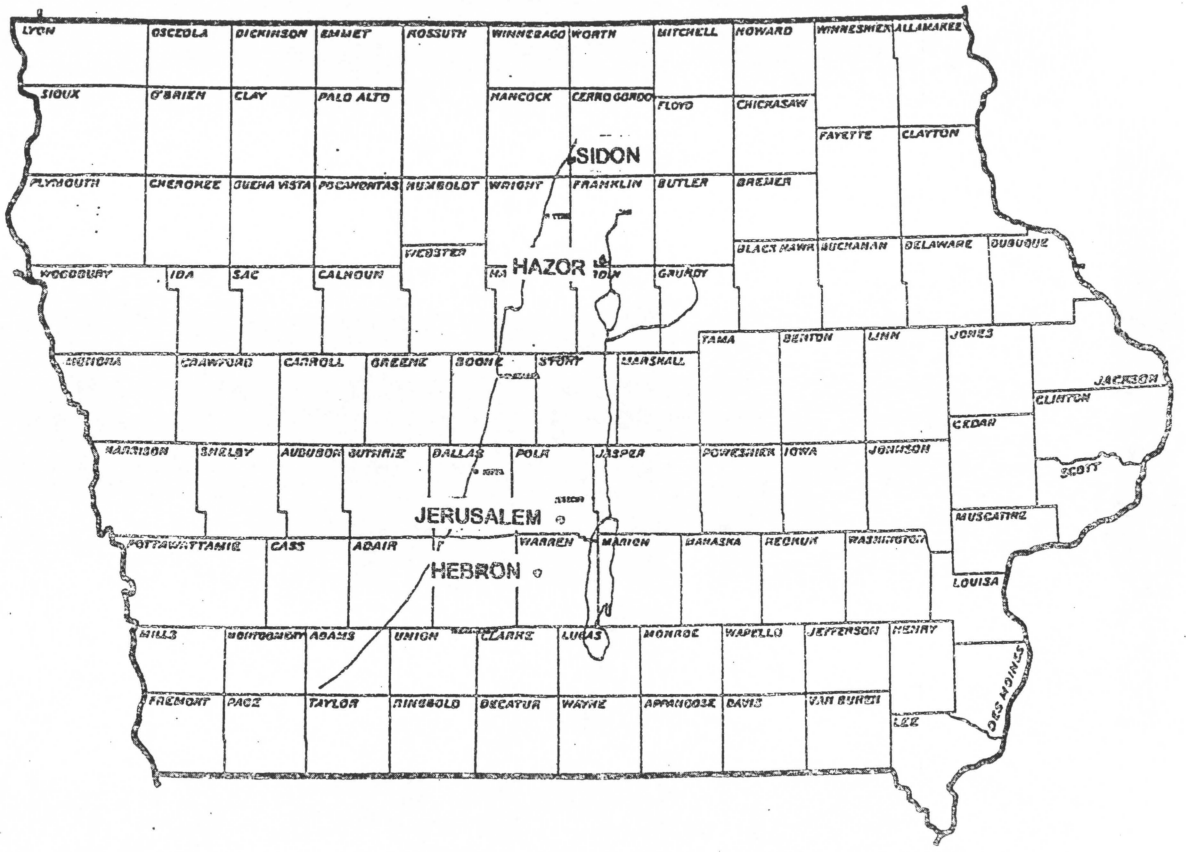
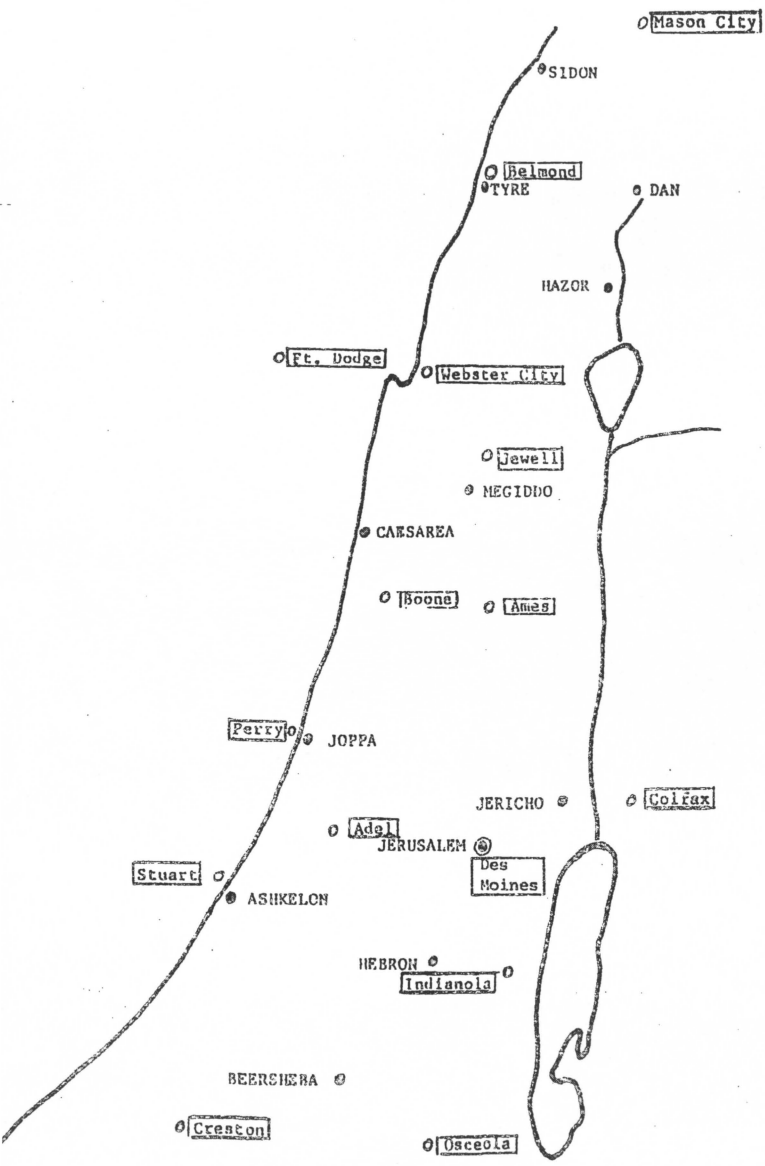
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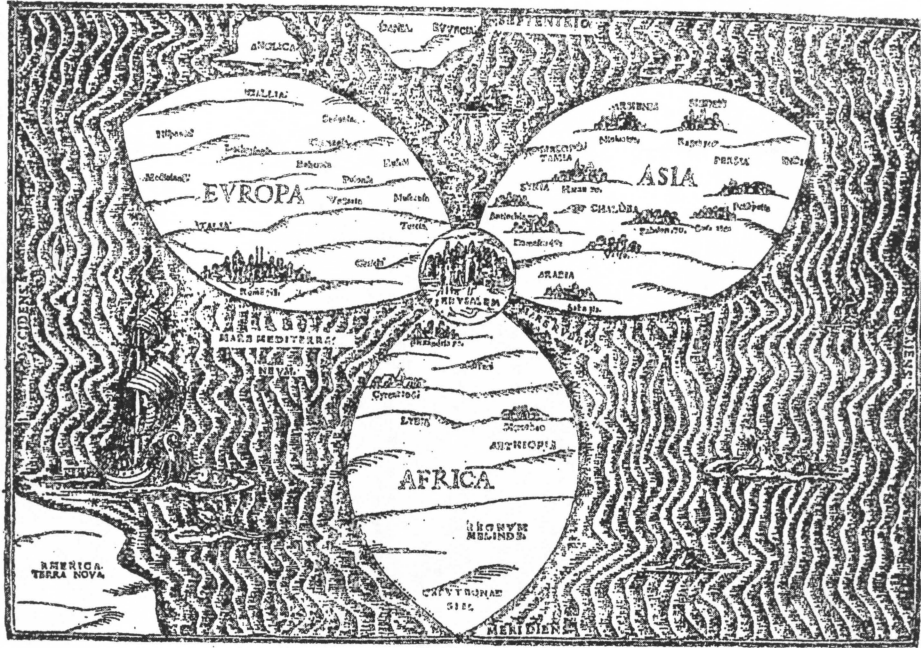
IOWA AND ISRAEL: A COMPARISON



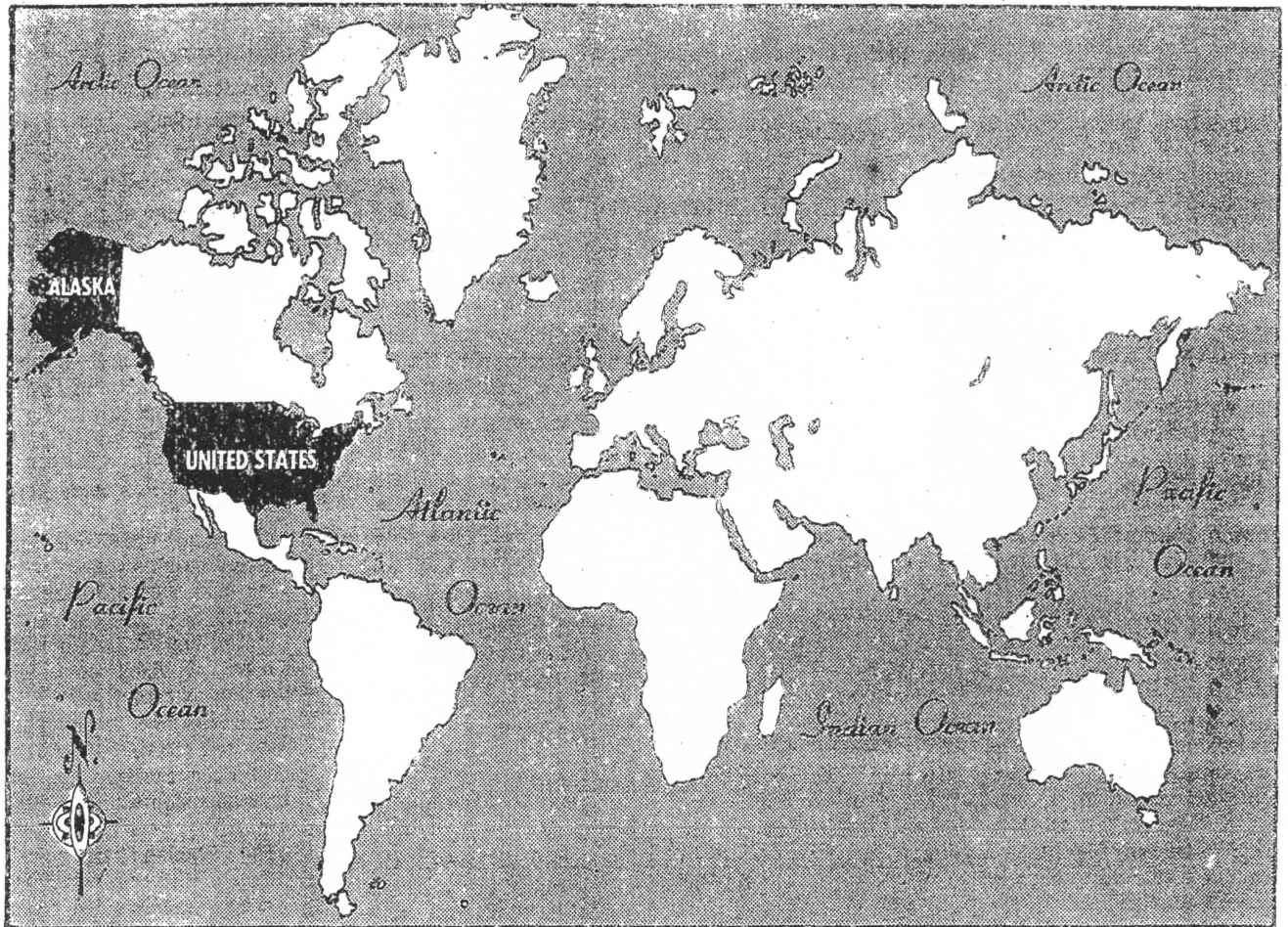
RELATIVE SCALE MAP COMPARING CITIES IN IOWA TO CITIES IN ISRAEL

Richard J. ...

Jerusalem in the Centre of the World

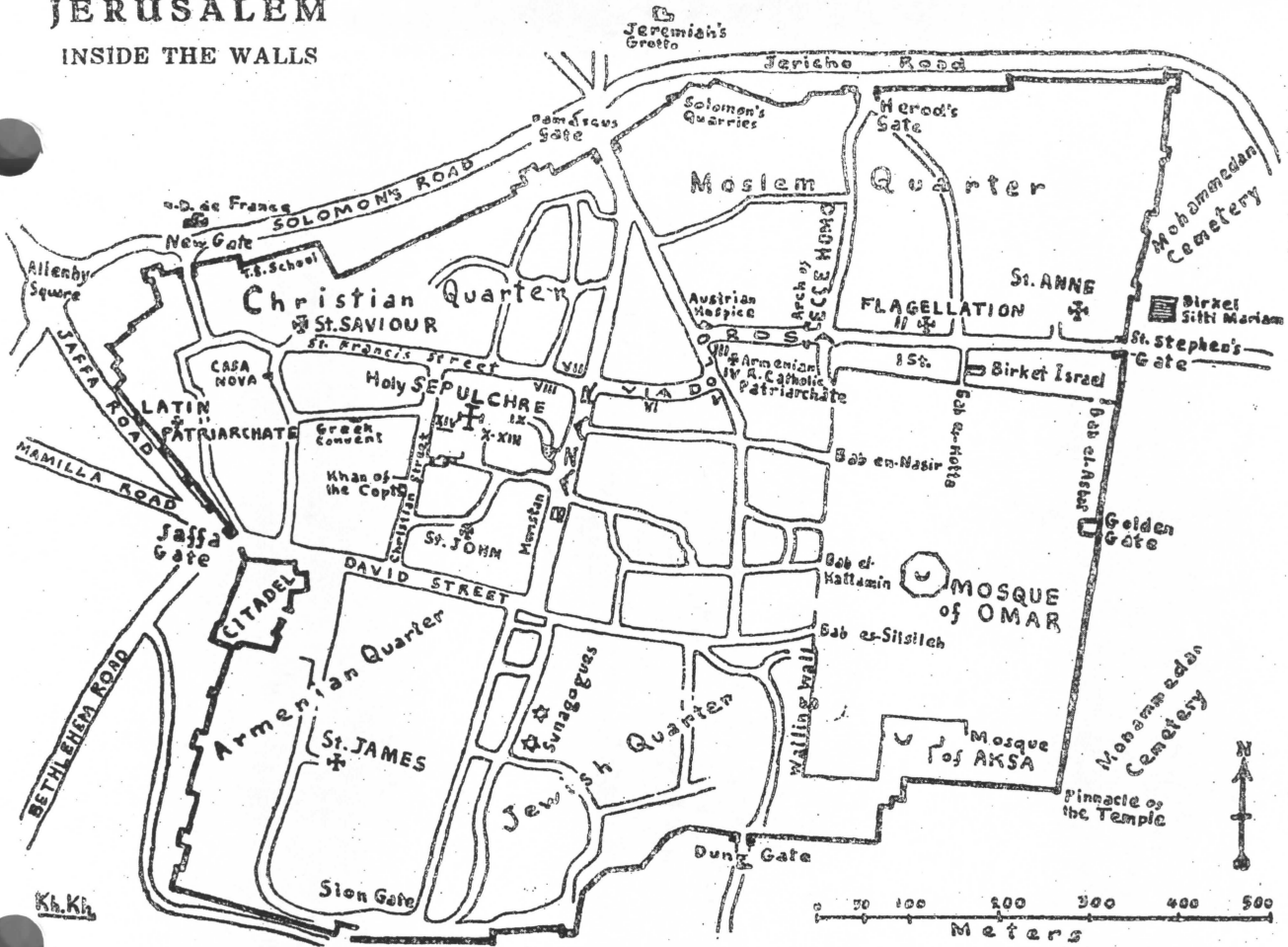


MAP OF THE YEAR 1530. In the left corner, America Terra Nova — The New Land.



JERUSALEM

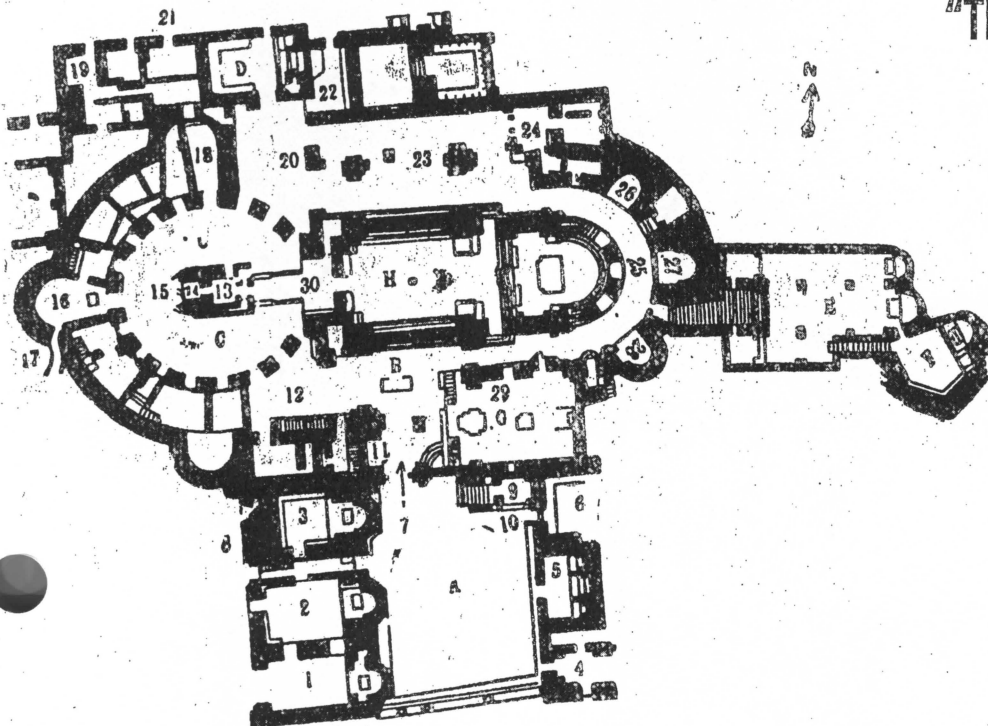
INSIDE THE WALLS



The Church of the Holy Sepulcher

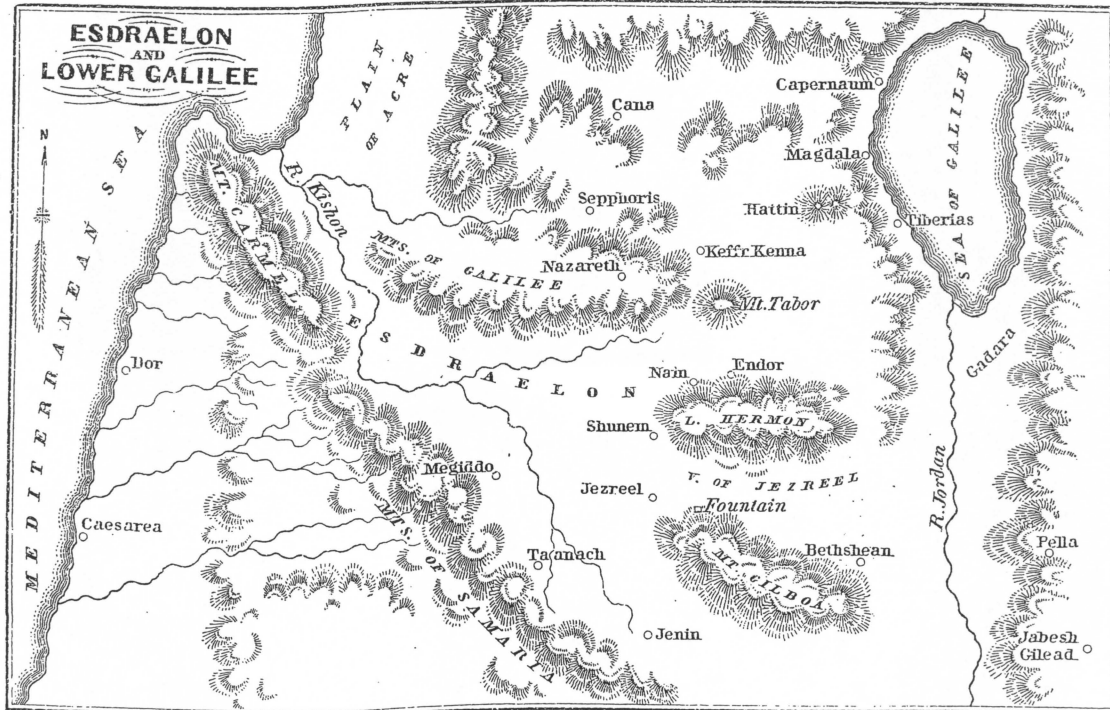


"The Navel of the Earth"



Jerusalem is situated in the heart of Israel. The center of Jerusalem is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, located over Calvary. At the center of the church stands, since Crusader days, a mysterious object in the shape of a human navel. The place where our Savior died is, indeed, the center or "navel of the earth".

Mt. Carmel - Elijah's Victory Over 800 Theologians



Mt. Carmel – Elijah's Victory Over 800 Theologians

1A. The Introductory Description of Mt. Carmel:

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia has a very helpful and brief description of Mt. Carmel:

A beautifully wooded mountain range running for about 13 miles in a south-easterly direction from the promontory which drops on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea near Haifa, at the southern extremity of the plain of Acre, to the height of *el-Mahrakah* which overlooks the plain of Esdraelon. On the top of the promontory, at a height of 500 ft. the monastery of St. Elias stands. From this point there is a gradual ascent until the greatest height is reached at *Esfiyeh* (1,742 ft.), the peak at *el-Mahrakah* being only some 55 ft. lower. The mountain—usually named with the art., “the Carmel”—still justifies its name, “the garden with fruit trees.” The steep slopes on the N. and E., indeed, afford little scope for cultivation, although trees and brushwood grow abundantly. But to the S. and W. the mountain falls away to the sea and the plain in a series of long, fertile valleys, where the “excellency” of Carmel finds full illustration today. There are a few springs of good water; but the main supply is furnished by the winter rains, which are caught and stored in great cisterns. The villages on the slopes have a look of prosperity not too often seen in Syria, the rich soil amply rewarding the toil of the husbandmen. Oak and pine, myrtle and honeysuckle, box and laurel flourish; the sheen of fruitful olives fills many a hollow; and in the time of flowers Carmel is beautiful in a garment of many colors. Evidences of the ancient husbandry which made it famous are found in the cisterns, and the oil and wine presses cut in the surface of the rock.

Orr, James, General Ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960, I, 579.

2A. The Biblical Witness to Mt. Carmel:

1b. Vine culture:

2 Chron 26:10

Also he built towers in the desert. He dug many wells, for he had much livestock, both in the lowlands and in the plains; he also had farmers and vinedressers in the mountains and in **Carmel**, for he loved the soil.

2b. Symbol of beauty:

Song of Solomon 7:5

Your head crowns you like **Mount Carmel**,
And the hair of your head is like purple;
A king is held captive by your tresses.

Micah 7:14

Shepherd Your people with Your staff,
The flock of Your heritage,
Who dwell solitarily in a woodland,
In the midst of **Carmel**;
Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead,

As in days of old.
 Is. 35:2
 It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice,
 Even with joy and singing.
 The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
 The excellence of **Carmel** and Sharon.
 They shall see the glory of the Lord,
 The excellency of our God.

3b. Symbol of majesty:

Jer. 46:18
 "As I live," says the King,
 Whose name is the Lord of hosts,
 "Surely as Tabor is among the mountains
 And as **Carmel** by the sea, so he shall come.

4b. Symbol of a happy and prosperous life:

Jer. 50:19
 But I will bring back Israel to his home,
 And he shall feed on **Carmel** and Bashan;
 His soul shall be satisfied on Mount Ephraim and Gilead.

5b. The languishing of Carmel speaks of God's vengeance upon the land:

Nah. 1:4
 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
 And dries up all the rivers.
 Bashan and **Carmel** wither,
 And the flower of Lebanon wilts.

6b. The decay of Carmel implies utter destruction:

Amos 1:2
 And he said:
 "The Lord roars from Zion,
 And utters His voice from Jerusalem;
 The pastures of the shepherds mourn,
 And the top of **Carmel** withers."

Is. 33:9
 The earth mourns and languishes,
 Lebanon is shamed and shriveled;
 Sharon is like a wilderness,
 And Bashan and **Carmel** shake off their fruits.

3A. The Topographical Importance of Mt. Carmel:

Here, too, ISBE has a helpful summary of the topography and geography of Carmel:

Roughly triangular in form, with plains stretching from its base on each of the three sides, the mountain, with its majestic form and massive bulk, is visible from afar. Its

position deprived it of any great value for military purposes. It commanded none of the great highways followed by armies: the passes between Esdraelon and Sharon, to the E. of Carmel, furnishing the most convenient paths. But the mountain beckoned the fugitive from afar, and in all ages has offered asylum to the hunted in its caves and wooded glens. Also its remote heights with their spacious outlook over land and sea; its sheltered nooks and embowering groves have been scenes of worship from old time. Here stood an ancient altar of Jeh (1 K 18:30). We may assume that there was also a sanctuary of Baal, since the worshippers of these deities chose the place as common ground for the great trial (1 K 18). The scene is traditionally located at *el-Mahrakah*, "the place of burnt sacrifice," which is still held sacred by the Druzes. A Lat chapel stands near, with a great cistern. A good spring is found lower down the slope. Just below, on the N. bank of the Kishon stands the mound called *Tell el-kissis*, "mound of the priest." From the crest of Carmel Elijah descried the coming storm, and, descending the mountain, ran before the chariot of Ahab to the gate of Jezreel (1 K 18:42 ff). Under the monastery on the western promontory is a cave, said to be that of Elijah. An older tradition locates the cave of the prophet at *al-Deir*, near *Ain es-Sih*. It may have been the scene of the events narrated in 2 K 1:9ff. Elisha also was a familiar visitor to Mt. Carmel.

(Adapted from the *ISBE*, I, 579, with points of the outline added by this writer.)

4A. The Traditional Place of Sacrifice:

Frank DeHass sets the stage for the contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal:

Mukhrakah, the place of burning, and traditional site of Elijah's sacrifice, is a truncated cone not over one hundred yards in diameter on the top, at the extreme south-eastern point of the Carmel range. It was probably at one time covered with a forest of oaks, as the trunks of several large trees are still standing; and it is just such an eminence as the followers of Baal would select for their worship. Some old foundations, a large open cistern, with many dressed stones lying round, would indicate that some kind of a temple had once crowned its crest. On the summit, where the Tishbite's altar is supposed to have stood, the native rock crops out, forming a natural platform which can be seen from almost every point on the mountain and terrace below. The locality, the name, and all the surroundings, favor the supposition that this is the identical spot where it was demonstrated by fire from heaven that there was still a God in Israel.

Buried Cities Recovered, or Explorations in Bible Lands, Philadelphia: Bradley, Garretson & Co., 1883, 247.

5A. The Unparalleled View from Mt. Carmel:

Every pilgrim to the top of Mt. Carmel revels in the incredible view. On a clear day, one can easily see Mt. Hermon almost 100 miles to the northeast; this writer has seen Israel's highest mountain from Mt. Carmel on many occasions. DeHass describes the vista in a very pleasing manner:

The view from this point is very grand. On the west and south all the plain of Sharon, and the sea-coast for fifty miles, can be seen; to the north the verdant mountains of Galilee, with Great Hermon in the distance, head and shoulders above his fellows, radiant in midsummer with the snows of winter. Eastward the view is unsurpassed; at your feet flows the Kishon, where the priests of Baal were slaughtered, and beyond it the

great plain of Esdraelon, not only the battle-field, but the granary of Palestine, yellow with its rich harvest ripe for the sickle. Tabor rises up beautifully directly in front of you, with the Jordan valley and mountains of the Hauran in the background. Next comes Little Hermon on the right, with the villages of Nain and Endor on her slopes, and Shunem at her base. One can almost fancy he sees the prophet's room upon the wall, and the Shunammite riding across the plain in the heat of the day, to tell Elisha of her son's sudden death. Then comes Gilboa, Mount Gilboa, where Saul and his three sons fell in the battle, and the shield of the mighty was cast away. On a low spur of the mountain jutting out into the plain are the ruins of Jezreel. This is the site of Naboth's vineyard. Here Ahab built his ivory palace, and three successive kings of Israel reigned. Here, also, Joram was pierced to the heart by Jehu, and the profligate Jezebel trodden under foot and thrown to the dogs. (*Ibid.*, 247-248).

6A. The Suitability of Mt. Carmel for the Contest:

The 450 prophets of Baal, and the 400 prophets of the groves (the pillars which represented Jezebel's goddess, Venus). All these would be clothed in their priestly "white robes and peaked turbans, and all the bravery of their sacrificial vestments."

Over against these stood (in the words of Geikie) "the solitary prophet of Jehovah, his rough sheepskin mantle over his shoulders, his simple linen tunic held together by a strap of hide, and his long hair hanging down his back or blown by the mountain breeze."

MT. CARMEL was the best place in all Israel for Elijah's purpose. Prof. George Adam Smith in his *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* speaks of its visibleness from all quarters of the country, — from Jaffa, from Tyre, from Mt. Hermon, from the hills of Naphtali, and even from the hills behind Gadara and Gilead, east of the Jordan. "In its separation from other hills, in its uselessness for war or traffic, in its profusion of flowers, its high platforms and groves with their glorious prospect of land and sea, Carmel must have been a place of retreat and of worship from the earliest times. Here the awful debate, whether Jehovah or Baal was supreme lord of the elements, was fought out for a full day in face of one of the most sublime prospects of earth and sea and heaven. It was a pulpit from which Elijah could preach to all Israel.

It must have taken some days to gather the people together on Carmel, with the 850 prophets of Baal from Samaria.

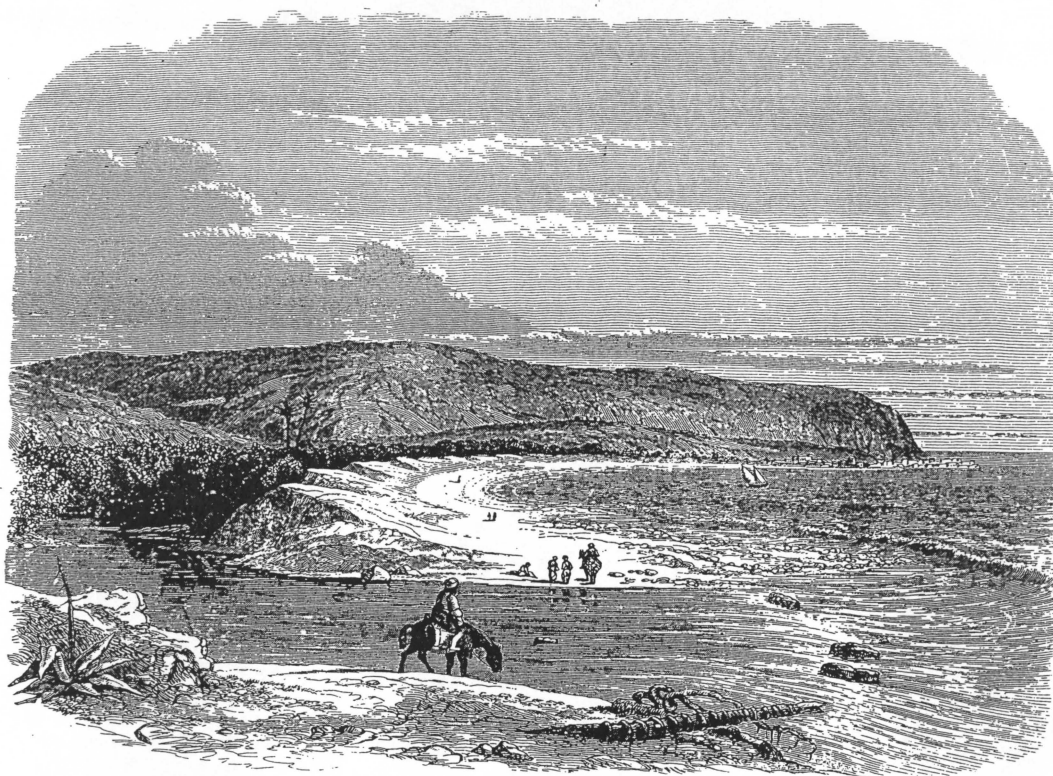
"On Carmel's crown now swarms a countless throng,
With one brave soul to stand for God 'gainst millions in the wrong." — *Geo. L. Taylor.*

Then early one morning the prophet in his simple garb is seen coming over the brow of the mountain. There is silence throughout the great assembly. Then "with a tongue every word of which was a thunderbolt," Elijah's voice rings out

How long halt ye between two opinions?

F. N. Peloubet and Amos Wells, *Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Lessons for 1915*, Chicago: The Westminster Press, 1915, 266.

Alexander Maclaren says that "the purpose, and the actors in this scene make it the grandest in history. A nation with its king has come together at the bidding of one man to settle no less a question than whom they shall worship" (*Ibid.*, 265).



MOUTH OF THE RIVER KISHON.

Biblia . Wittemberg 1534 . Hans Lufft



7A. The Significance of Carmel in the Ministry of Elijah and Elisha:

Bible students are well familiar with the biblical incident related to this pleasant and prominent mountain range. It is good, however, to rehearse briefly some of the main events relating to the mountain, associated with Elijah and Elisha:

Carmel is chiefly celebrated as the scene of Elijah's sacrifice. The exact spot is marked by local tradition, by the agreement of its physical features with the Scripture narrative, and by its name, *el-Muhrakah*, "The Sacrifice." It is about six hours' ride from the convent, over the crest of the ridge. I visited it from the Plain of Esdraelon, on the opposite or eastern side. It is on the brow of the mountain, and commands the whole plain to Jezreel and Tabor. Close to the base of the range, below the spot flows the river Kishon, where the prophets of Baal was (sic) slain; and just above the spot is a projecting peak, from which Elijah's servant saw the "little cloud, like a man's hand, rising out of the sea," (1 Kings xviii.)

Another episode of Bible history I read with new interest in this place. Elisha was here when the Shunamite's son died. Looking down one afternoon from his commanding position, he saw her "afar off" on the plain. He sent his servant to meet her; but she pressed up the mountain said "to the an of God." Dismounting hastily, she threw herself on the ground before him, "and caught him by the feet"—just as an Arab woman would still do under similar circumstances. Elisha, on hearing her tale of sorrow, sent away Gehazi with his staff to raise the dead child; but she, with all a mother's earnestness, exclaimed, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose and followed her," (2 Kings iv.)

Carmel was the favourite retreat of both Elijah and Elisha. In the stirring times in which they lived, it was a fitting place for the prosecution of the great work of reform for which they laboured and prayed. It was central in position, and easy of access from all parts of Palestine. It afforded in its deep dells and dense thickets sufficient privacy for such as wished to pay secret visits to the men of God; and it offered a secure asylum to all compelled to flee from the persecutions of the idolatrous Ahab, and the cruelties of the infamous Jezebel. The situation of *el-Muhrakah* also struck me as peculiarly suitable for the head-quarters of the prophets. It could only be reached by a long and steep ascent. No man could approach it unseen; and any hostile party would be visible at a great distance. Beside it is a well with an unfailing spring, and upon it are the remains of a massive ancient building. (Porter, J. L. *The Giant Cities of Bashan and Syria's Holy Places*, London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1891, 236-238.)

8A. The Permanent Impact of the Vista Upon Visitors:

The Rev. J. L. Porter has captured what every observant pilgrim to the site (and many others) experiences:

Sitting on that commanding height, on a bright spring evening, I felt persuaded I was upon the scene of Elijah's great sacrifice. Beside and under me were probably the very stones of which God's altar was built, and over which played the heavenly flame. A few paces beneath me was the well from which the water was drawn, that the prophet's servants poured upon the altar. Around me were the thickets from which the wood was cut. Away at the foot of the mountain flowed the Kishon in its deep bed, which on that day ran red with the blood of Jehovah's enemies. There, stretching out before me, was the plain across which Ahab dashed in his chariot; and yonder, on its eastern border, I saw the little villages which mark the sites and still bear the names of Jezreel and

Shunem. Is it strange that when one thus visits the “*holy and historic places of Palestine*,” the grand events of Bible history should appear to be enacted over again, and should become to him living realities?

”Land of fair Palestine, where Jesus trod,
Thy runs and thy relics tell of God:
Thine everlasting hills with awe proclaim
The holy records of Jehovah’s name:
Thy fallen cities, crumbled into dust,
Pronounce the judgment of Jehovah’s just.” (Porter, *Ibid.*, 238.)

9A. The Important Contest on Mt. Carmel:

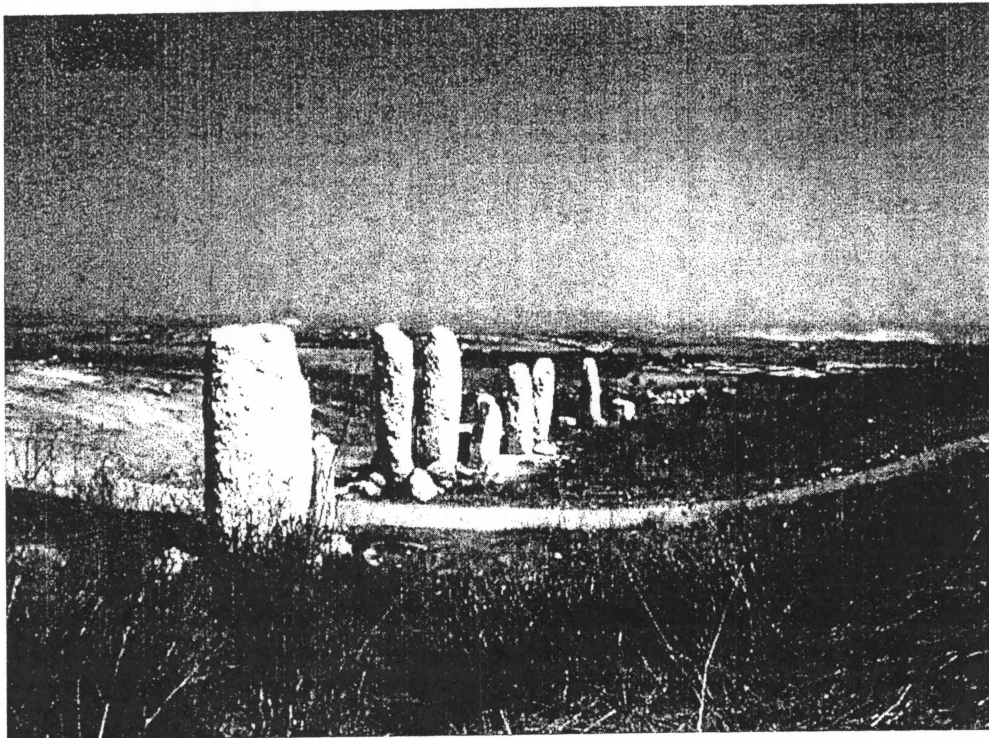
It is difficult to find a better summary of the contest between Elijah and the pagan priests on Mt. Carmel than that given by W. M. Thomsen in his classic volume, *The Land and the Book*. As a missionary for decades in Palestine and Syria, his insight into biblical places and biblical events are unequalled. Those believers unable to travel to Bible lands would be well served by securing Thomson’s work, either the one volume or three volume opus.

Near the close of this dreadful drought the king said to Obadiah, the governor of his house, “Go into the land, unto all the fountains of water, and unto all brooks; peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. So Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.” The latter went westward from Jezreel to the marshy grounds near Carmel, at the bottom of Esdraelon; and there Elijah met him, and said, “Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.” The good man was terrified at the thought of carrying such a message to the enraged king. “As the Lord thy God liveth,” said he, “there is no nation or kingdom whither my Lord hath not sent to seek thee.” Elijah replied, “As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day.” Ahab seems to have been near at hand, for he quickly obeyed the summons; and when he saw Elijah he exclaimed, in anger, “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” “I have not troubled Israel,” was the reply of the Tishbite; “but thou and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now, therefore, send and gather me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of the groves, four hundred, which eat at Jezebel’s table.” The wicked but weak-minded king sank before the daring servant of God, his more wicked and resolute wife not being by his side. He hastily gathered the people to a remarkable and well-known spot on the eastern end of Carmel, where sacrifice had been offered to Jehovah in ancient times. But never before was there such a meeting as this, never such a momentous question to be discussed, such a mighty controversy to be settled. Elijah came unto all the people and said, “If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” But the people, conscience-smitten, yet afraid of the king, answered him not a word. Then the prophet, to compel a choice, proposed the test of sacrifice, “and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.” The irresolute multitude ventured to approve; the king could not resist; the priests dared not refuse. (Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1884, 481.)

At this point it would be well to insert an observation on Elijah’s purpose for saturating the sacrifice and altar with water. William Smith, in his classic *The Student’s Scripture History. The Old Testament History*, hints at the subterfuge of the pagan priests which Elijah endeavored to forestall:

Elijah stood alone: but God was with him. His challenge is all the bolder, considering the juggling tricks with which the heathen priests were familiar, and which the king would be ready to abet. But it is on the side of Elijah that we find precautions taken against such tricks, and taken by his own desire. (Smith, *The Old Testament History*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1872, 522.)

Archeologists speculated that pagan priests used subterfuge in starting fires on altars. At Gezer 10 high stone pillars or *mazevoth* were found and examined. It seems as though secret tunnels led under what appears to be a pagan sanctuary. It is reasonable to suppose that the priests would use the tunnels to move under the altar and sacrifice and from there ignite the wood. The duped idolatrous worshippers would thus be led to believe that their god Baal, the god of fertility and fire, occasioned the conflagration. One can thus understand Elijah's precaution.



Now to continue with Thomson's fine description of the contest on Mt. Carmel:

Quickly the victims are upon the altars, and the priests call upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us! But there was no voice, nor any that answered." Then Elijah mocked them: "Cry aloud, for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or *peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened.*" The poor priests, goaded to madness by this scorching irony, leaped in frantic despair upon the altar, crying aloud, "O Baal, hear us! and they cut themselves with knives and lancets after their manner, till the blood gushed out upon them." But in vain. "There was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." Thus they continued until the time of the evening sacrifice. Then Elijah repaired the *altar of Jehovah, which was broken down*, placing twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob. A trench was dug round it, the wood arranged, the sacrifice upon it, and all was ready for the great decision; but, to make the trial doubly convincing, barrel after barrel of water was poured on, until it ran round about the altar and filled the trench. Then comes the solemn invocation: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I thy servant have *done all those things at thy word.* Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." The whole multitude fell on their faces, crying out, "Jehovah, he is the God! Jehovah, he is the God!" And Elijah said to the people, "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." They did so, and brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there, near the base of that high Tell Kussis which you see in the mouth of the valley. Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain." Elijah himself returned to the top of Carmel, cast himself upon the ground, put his face between his knees and prayed—prayed earnestly for the rain; but it came not until his servant had gone up to the top and looked out on the Mediterranean seven times. Then the little cloud, as large as a man's hand, was seen to rise out of the sea, and Elijah sent word to the king, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. In the meanwhile the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Thus the long drought of three years and a half was brought to a close. But the work of the prophet on this most eventful day was not yet ended. "Ahab rode and went home to Jezreel; and the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel." This is the last, most strange, and most unexpected act of this great drama; and perhaps there is no one day's work in the whole history of man more wonderful than this. (Thomson, 481-482. [emphasis in the original])

9A. A Sober Reflection for Believers Today:

A little-known volume on mountains in the Bible by a German pastor poses a sobering question:

If Elijah were to step in front of us, would he not voice the serious lament as then and ask, "How long will you halt between two opinions?" Are not our hearts in many cases divided between God and the world? One wants to be a little religious, but not be completely serious with following the Lord. The procurator was a little religious, of whom we read that not much was lacking for Paul to convince him to become a Christian. But he remained what he was. The rich young ruler was a little religious, who came to Jesus with a question, but then departed because he did not like the answer. It is sad to observe such little-bit religion. The Lord is not satisfied with a little bit of faith. He does

only complete work and wants to have all of us. May the Lord deliver us from our little-bit with His abundant grace. Our God wishes to have our entire heart. (G. W. Ulrich-Kerwer, *Heilige Berge, [Holy Mountains]* Konstanz: Buch-und Kunstverlag von Carl Hirsch, A. G., 1913, 104-105, translated by this writer.)

SPIRITUAL PROGRESS OF A SINFUL PEOPLE



AT THE PRAYER OF ELIJAH, FIRE FROM HEAVEN CONSUMES A SACRIFICE.

I Kings 16:26

For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with **their idols**.

I Kings 18:21

And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the **LORD is God**, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But **the people answered him not a word**.

I Kings 18:24

"Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the **LORD**; and the God who answers by fire, He is God."

So all the people answered and said, "**It is well spoken.**"

I Kings 18:39



Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said, "**The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!**"

SPIRITUAL PROGRESS OF A SINFUL PEOPLE IN 1. KINGS



AT THE PRAYER OF ELIJAH, FIRE FROM HEAVEN CONSUMES A SACRIFICE.

IDOLATRY 1. Kgs. 16:26

For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols.

INDIFFERENCE 18:21

And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." **But the people answered him not a word.**

INTEREST 1. Kgs. 18:24

"Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God."

So all the people answered and said, "**It is well spoken.**"



INVOCATION 1 Kgs. 18:39

Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said, "**The LORD, He *is* God! The LORD, He *is* God!**"

Mt. Carmel – Elijah's Confrontation with the Pagan Priests – 1 Kings 18:17-40

1A. Elijah's Confrontation with Ahab: 17-20

- 1b. Ahab's accusation: 17
- 2b. Elijah's answer: 18
- 3b. Elijah's request: 19
 - 1c. Polluted people of Israel:
 - 2c. Pagan prophets of Baal – 450
 - 3c. Palace prophets of Asherah – 400
- 4b. Ahab's response: 20

2A. Elijah's Comments to the People: 21-24

- 1b. His charge to the people: 21
 - 1c. His demand for a decision.
 - 2c. Their refusal to respond.
- 2b. His commitment to the Lord: 22
 - 1c. One prophet of Yahweh:
 - 2c. 450 prophets of Baal:
- 3b. His contest with the idolaters: 23-24
 - 1c. The preparation: 23
A bullock, wood, an altar.
 - 2c. The prayer: 24
 - 1d. The idolaters pray to their gods:
 - 2d. The prophet Elijah prays to Yahweh:
 - 3c. The proof: worship the god who sends fire
 - 4c. The people:

3A. Elijah's Challenge to the Prophets of Baal: 25-26

- 1b. His request: 25
 - 1c. Prepare the bullock.
 - 2c. Pray to Baal.
 - 3c. Provide no fire.
 - 2b. Their response: 26
 - 1c. They prepared the sacrifice.
 - 2c. They prayed to Baal.
 - 3c. They pounded on the altar.
 - 3b. The ridicule: Cry louder because
 - 1c. Your god is busy.
 - 2c. Your god is conversing.
 - 3c. Your god is easing himself.
 - 4c. Your god is traveling.
 - 5c. Your god is sleeping.
 - 4b. The response of the prophets of Baal: 28
 - 1c. Their shouting.
 - 2c. Their self-mutilation.
 - 5b. The response of Baal: 29
 - 1c. No voice.
 - 2c. No fire.
 - 3c. No sign.
- 4A. Elijah's Conduct Before the People: 30-37**
- 1b. A call to the people: 30a
 - 2b. A construction of the altar: 30b-31
 - 1c. The situation.
 - 2c. The stones.

- 3c. The significance.
- 3b. The covering with water: 32
 - 1c. The trench.
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 - 3c. The repetition.
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5A. Elijah's Confidence in God: 36-37

- 1b. The approach to God: 36a
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 - 1c. God's personal appellatives.
 - 2c. God's national allegiance.
 - 3c. Elijah's special anointing.
 - 4c. Israel's direct acknowledgement. 37

6A. God's Conflagration Upon the Sacrifice: 38-39

- 1b. The consumption of the sacrifice and altar:
 - 1c. An incredible scene.
 - 2c. An irrefutable sign.
- 2b. The confession of the people of Israel:
 - 1c. Worship.
 - 2c. Witness.

7A. Elijah's Charge to the People: 40

- 1b. Arrest the idolatrous prophets:
- 2b. Avoid the escape of a single individual:
- 3b. Accompany them to the Brook Kishon:
- 4b. Assist in the execution of the religious renegades:

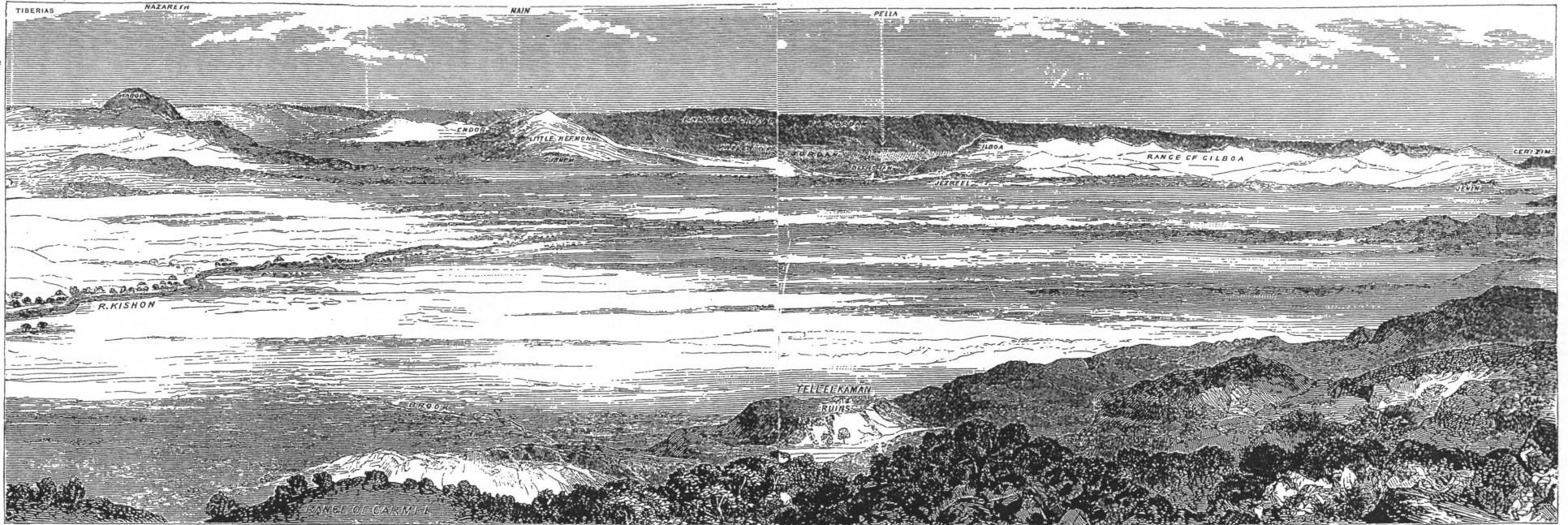
Elias tötet die Baals-Priester.



I. Buch von den Königen. Kap. 18, Vers 36—40.

NABLUS TO THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

SAUL AND THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

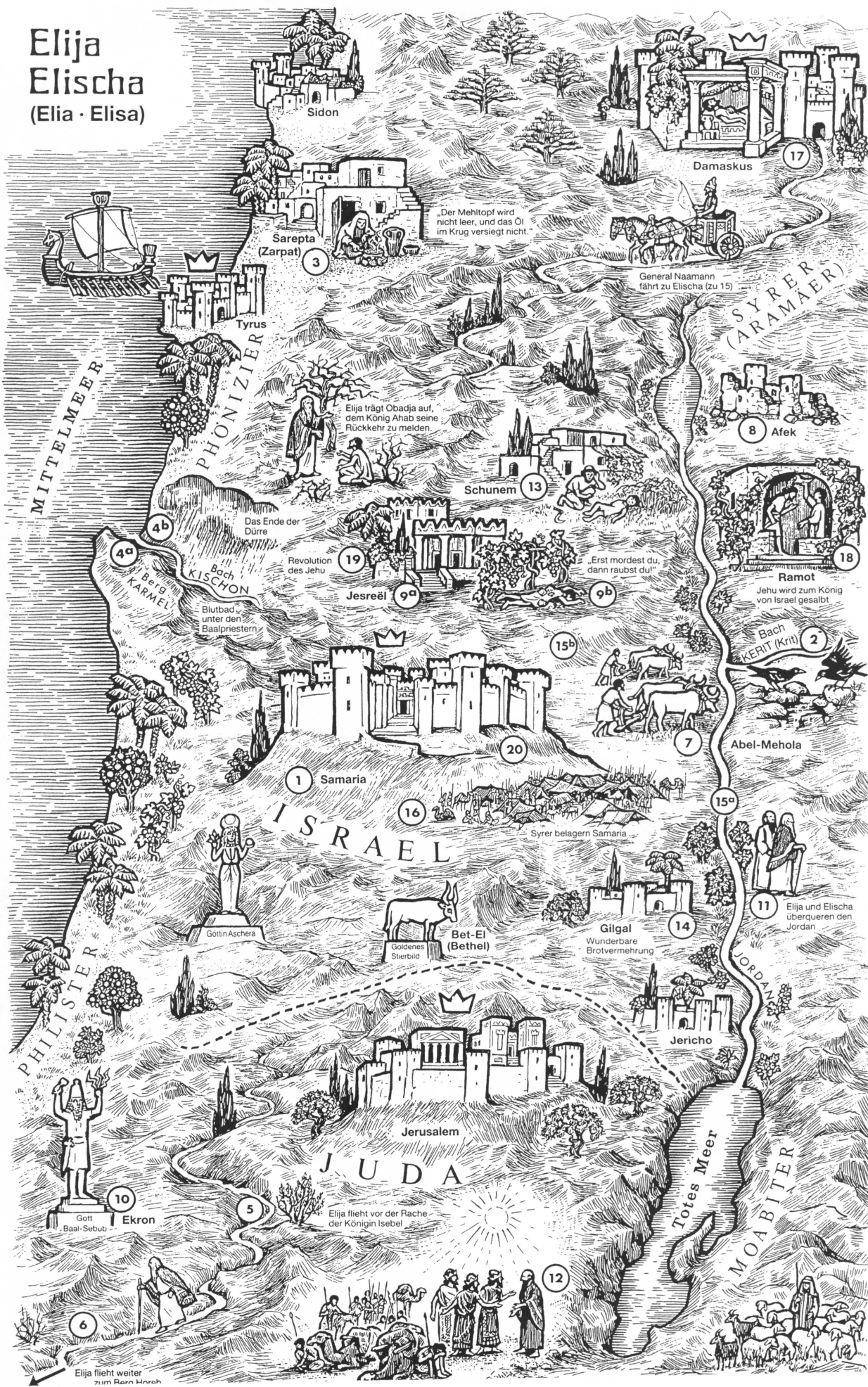


SKETCH PLAN OF THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON AND THE

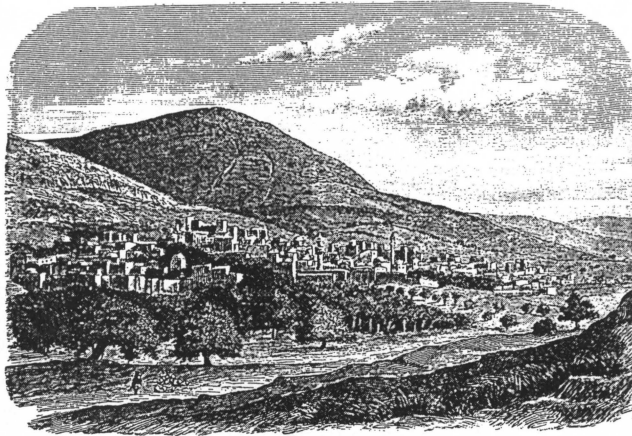
SURROUNDING DISTRICT FROM EL-MUHRAKAH.

From a Drawing by J. G. Crace, Esq.

Elija Elischa (Elia · Elisa)

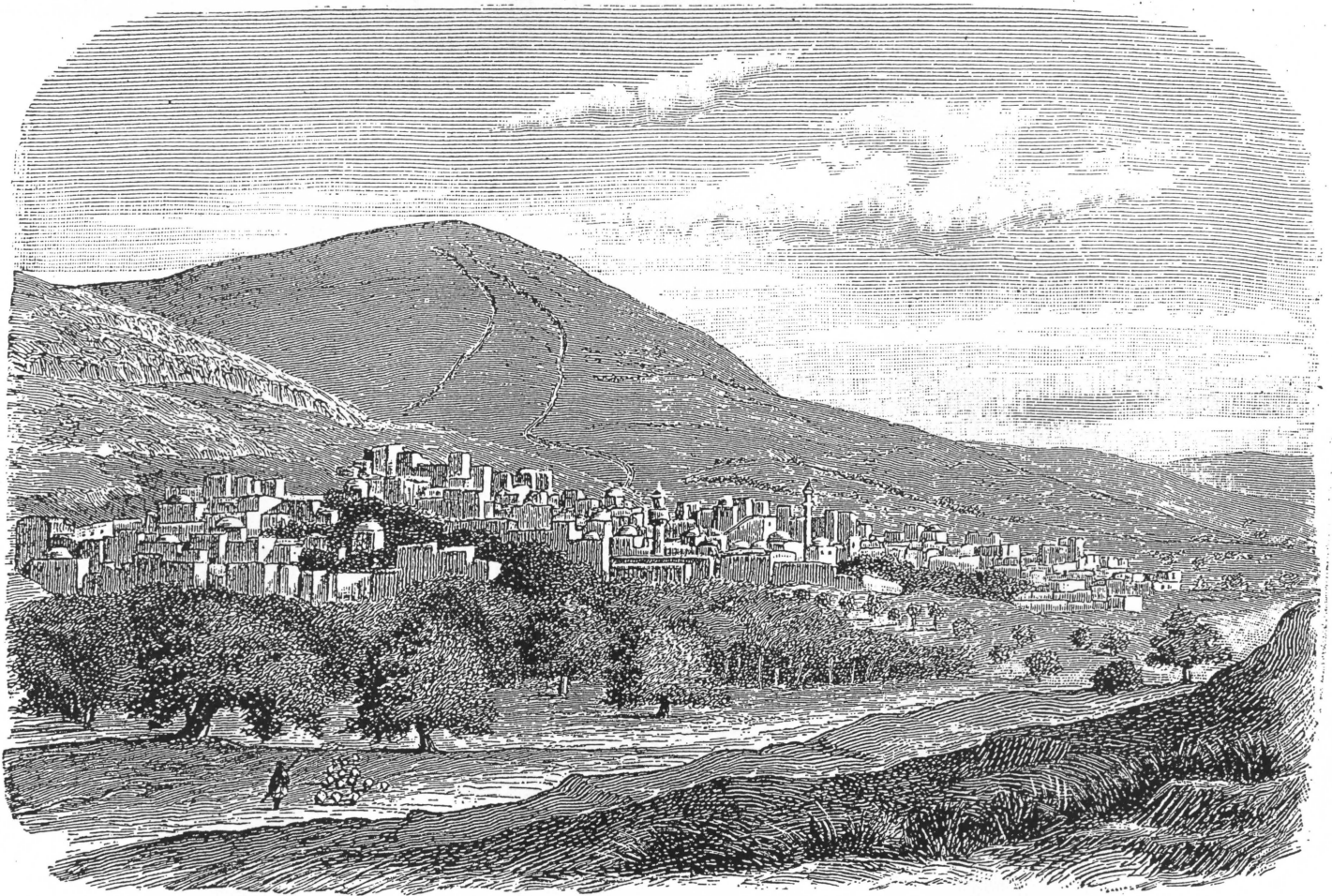


Mt. Gerizim - The Woman, the Well and True Worship

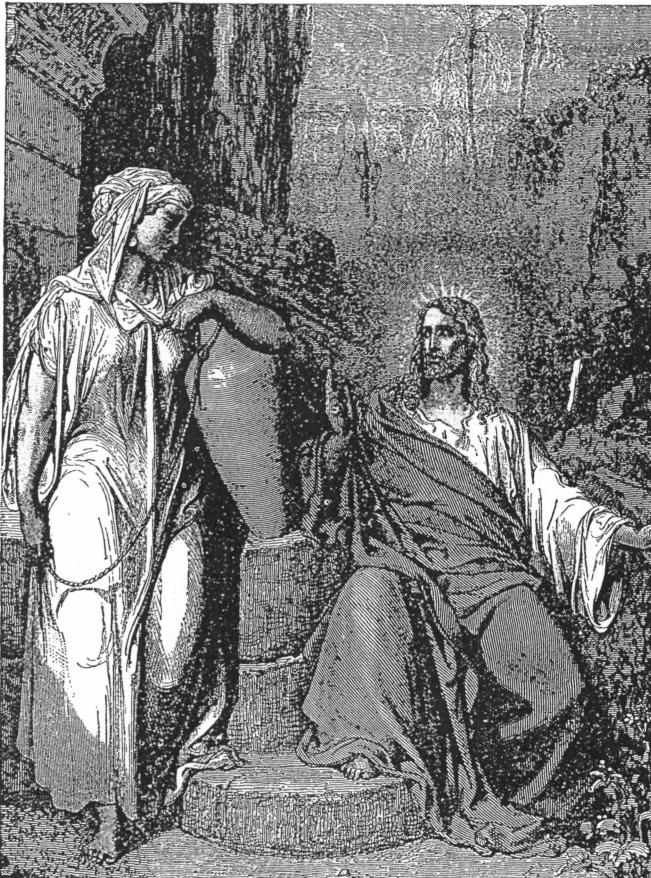


Der Berg Gerizim (Gazim).

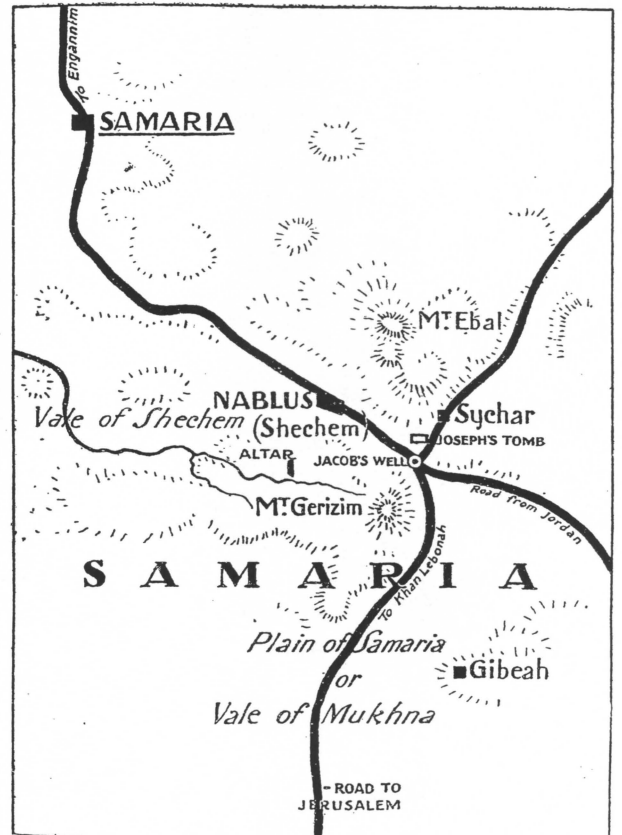




Der Berg Grifsim (Garizim).



THE DISCOURSE AT THE WELL.—Drawn by Doré.



COUNTRY ROUND JACOB'S WELL (GREEK CITIES UNDERLINED), PICTURE 3.

Mt. Gerizim – The Woman, the Well and True Worship

1A. The Significance of Mt. Gerizim:

1b. The importance for biblical worship::

A mountain in central Samaria, near Shechem and about ten m. SE of the city of Samaria, esp. important as the center of worship for the Samaritans. From Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal (about three m. NE) the sacred sites of Shechem and Jacob's well are visible.

The most important reference to Mt. Gerizim is in John 4:20-23. The woman referred to "this mountain" as the worship center for the Samaritans. She said, "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain." Jesus answered "neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. . .but. . .in spirit and in truth" shall men worship the Father.

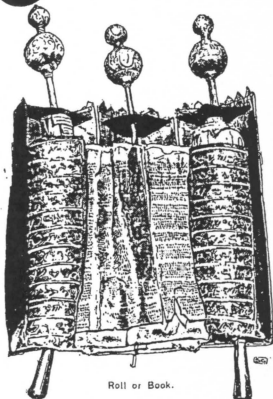
The area is sacred to Jews as well as Samaritans. Here, Abraham and Jacob entered the Promised Land (Gen. 12:6; 33:18). Jacob built an altar, dug a well, and purchased a burial ground at Shechem. The Israelites used it for a burial ground for the bones of Joseph (Josh 24:32). Both Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal were the sites used when Joshua gathered all the people of Israel to Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal for the ceremony of taking possession of the Promised Land. According to the command of Moses (Deut. 11:29; 27:11-14) Gerizim was to be the mount to pronounce the blessing on godliness, while Ebal would be the mount from which would be declared the curse of God upon wickedness. There Joshua read the law of Moses in full to the whole assembly (Josh. 8:30-35) gathered before Gerizim and Ebal, but he built an altar only on Mt. Ebal (Josh. 8:30).

Joshua called Israel back to Shechem, under the shadow of Gerizim and Ebal, to renew the covenant, which he did in this manner: "he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak in the sanctuary of the LORD" (Josh 24:26). This site was sacred to the Israelites in the early days of their occupation of the Promised Land. In the movement toward centralization of worship at Jerusalem under David and Solomon, other worship centers were not looked upon with favor. When the division of the kingdom took place, Jeroboam made Shechem the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kings 12:25), discouraged worship at the Temple in Jerusalem, and substituted calf worship at Bethel and Dan. He thereby instigated a new and separate religion, centering at Shechem and Mt. Gerizim. (Merrill C. Tenney, Ed., *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Vol. 2, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, J. C. DeYoung "Gerizim," 701-703.)

2b. In relation to biblical events:

An older, somewhat dated volume, gives some additional details about the area:

A mountain of Ephraim opposite to Mount Ebal, in close proximity to Shechem. It became very important in the history of Israel, because from it the blessing was pronounced upon the people after the entrance into the promised land, Deut. xi, 29: xxvii, 1-13; while from the opposite mountain, Ebal, the curse was thundered against all transgressors, Josh. viii, 30-34. At Ebal a copy of the law, engraved



on limestone tables, was erected in the valley, and an altar raised to commemorate the renewal of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel, and to receive the first thank-offering for the occupation of the land of promise. The priests stood at the altar with their faces toward the East; on the left of these, at Ebal, six of the tribes; on the right, at Gerizim, the other six, and these evidently the most important and favored; these last, as standing on the favored *right* side of the altar, responded to the blessings spoken from the altar with amen, while the first six tribes answered and affirmed the curses. That a greater holiness did not at this time already attach to Gerizim above Ebal is evident from this, that the altar was erected at Ebal and not at Gerizim, Deut. xxvii, 4; and the curse was not pronounced upon the mountain, nor upon those standing upon it, but upon transgressors of the law. In Judg. ix, 7-21, we have the noted parable which Jotham addressed to the men of Shechem from "the top of Mount Gerizim."

After the exile the Samaritans obtained leave from Darius Nothus to erect a temple on Gerizim, and here they worshiped till the temple was destroyed by Hyrcanus. Still, however, they had here an altar, and cherished a determined hatred against the Jews, John iv, 20, 21. At the present day the few remnants of this people still living at Nablus visit the holy mountain at the four yearly festivals, when not prevented by Turkish fanaticism. (*Handbook of Bible Geography*, New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1877, 148-149.)



DESCENDANTS OF THE SAMARITANS AT WORSHIP.

2A. The Relation of the Samaritans to the Jews:

The history of the Samaritans is closely interwoven with that of the neighboring Jews. A few excerpts from a detailed article on the Samaritans must suffice:

In the New Testament Samaria is subordinate to Judea and Galilee. Since the exile a mixed race with a mixed creed had taken the place of the Ephraimites; the descendants of Joseph and Rachel who had remained or who returned from exile, intermarried with Greek and Syrian colonists. Henceforward the Samaritans were hated and abhorred as semi-heathen heretics and schismatics by the Jews of pure blood, and they hated them in turn. Christ broke through the national prejudice, held up a despised Samaritan as an example of true charity, revealed to a poor Samaritan woman of quick wit and light heart, the nature of spiritual and universal worship; and in view of the ripening grain around Jacob's Well he predicted a large harvest of converts, which was reaped by the apostles. (Philip Schaff, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*, New York: American Tract Society, 1878, 311.)

It is no wonder that the Jews consider the Samaritans as hybrid heretics who re-wrote biblical history to fit their own religious errors.

J. C. Kelso has a fine discussion of the Samaritan religion and its marked differences from Judaism in the *Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary*:

The Samaritan theology of NT times (as nearly as can be traced from scanty records) seems to be similar to that of the Jews. (1) Both considered themselves to be true Yahweh worshipers. (2) Both placed the supreme emphasis on the Pentateuch not only as Scripture but as a detailed way of life. The Samaritans rejected the remainder of the Jewish canon; but, according to the records available, the Jews never specifically

indicted them for this heresy. One might conjecture that the Samaritans did not include the other OT books in the canon because of the emphasis on the major importance of Jerusalem as a central sanctuary, and the relation of that city to the Messiah. The Samaritans, however, as did the Jews, looked for a Messiah, as is seen in the Samaritan woman's reference to Him (John 4:25).

(3) The major point of difference concerning the Pentateuch was that the Samaritans insisted that Mt. Gerizim was the only true central sanctuary for all Israel. The text of the Samaritan Pentateuch in Deuteronomy 27:4 reads Gerizim, not Ebal as in the Heb. MT. The Genesis passages that emphasized Jerusalem as the place of Abraham's offering of Isaac, and the Melchizedek episode were no problem to the Samaritans, who located these events at sites of similar name near Mt. Gerizim. Their interpretation may date from NT times, or even later. Following the Ten Commandments in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the Samaritan text adds another commandment requiring the building of an altar on Mt. Gerizim and the celebration of a sacrificial service there.

(4) Samaritans of OT times prob. held the same views of Moses as did the Jews, but when the Samaritans developed their own theology after A.D. 400, they exalted Moses excessively and gave him titles that Christians reserve uniquely for Christ.

(5) Like the Jews, the Samaritans looked for a final judgment with rewards and punishments in charge of the Messiah. Both Jews and Samaritans emphasized circumcision, the Sabbath, and the Kosher law. Thus Jews could stay in a Samaritan home for two days, eating their food and drinking water from Jacob's well (John 4:1-42). (1975, Vol. 5, 246-7.)

3A. The Worship on Mt. Gerizim:

A description of the top of Mt. Gerizim in Thomson's classic volume is worth citing here:

It was doubtless to this mountain, with its ruined temple, that our Saviour pointed when he enunciated that cardinal truth in religion, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in *this mountain*, nor yet a Jerusalem, worship the Father. God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Josephus tells us that this temple was destroyed about a hundred and twenty-nine years before the birth of Christ; but the site of it has been the place where the Samaritans have continued to "worship the Father" from that day to this, *not* in spirit nor in truth, it is to be feared, but in form and fanaticism, according to the traditions of their elders. (*The Land and the Book*, London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1884, 477 [emphasis in the original].)

4A. The Discoveries on Mt. Gerizim:

For those interested in excavations on Mt. Gerizim over the past 25 years, with amazing discoveries brought to light, I'll refer to an article "Bells, Pendants, Snakes & Stones," in the *Biblical Archaeology Review*..

The archeologist Yitzhak Magen shows that a number of O.T. events were changed in the Samaritan Pentateuch.

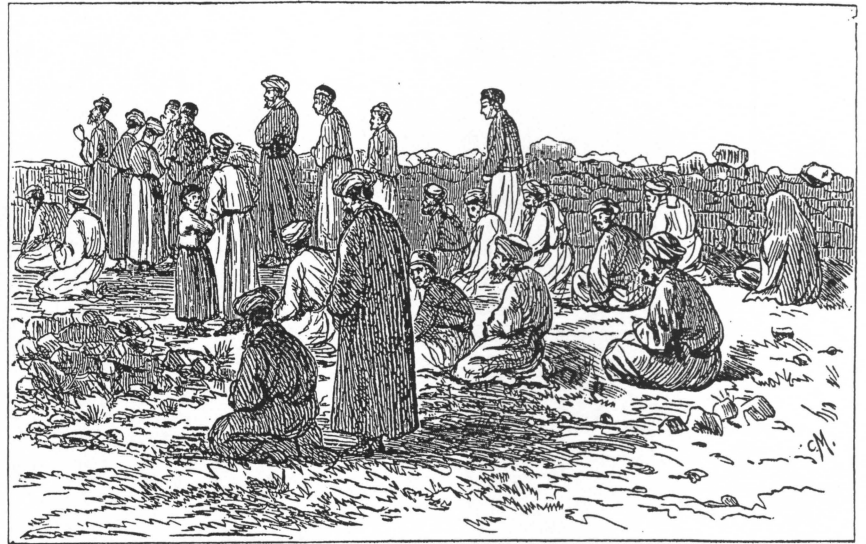
In the Masoretic Text [the traditional Hebrew text], upon entering the Holy Land the Israelites are commanded to build an altar on Mt. Ebal (Deuteronomy 27:4), opposite Mt. Gerizim; in the SP [Samaritan Pentateuch], the altar is to be built on Mt. Gerizim. In Samaritan tradition, the Israelites' Tent of Meeting (or Tabernacle) was set up on Mt. Gerizim. In the MT, it is set up in Shiloh (Joshua 18:1). More importantly, wherever the

MT has “the place the Lord (Yahweh) *will* choose” (envisioning Jerusalem, which had not yet been conquered), the SP has “the place the Lord *has* chosen,” (referring to Gerizim). The SP even has an additional commandment to worship on Mt. Gerizim.

The SP makes no claim, however, that a temple was built on Mt. Gerizim. That happened only centuries later. (November/December 2010, Vol. 25, No. 6, 28. [emphasis in the original]).

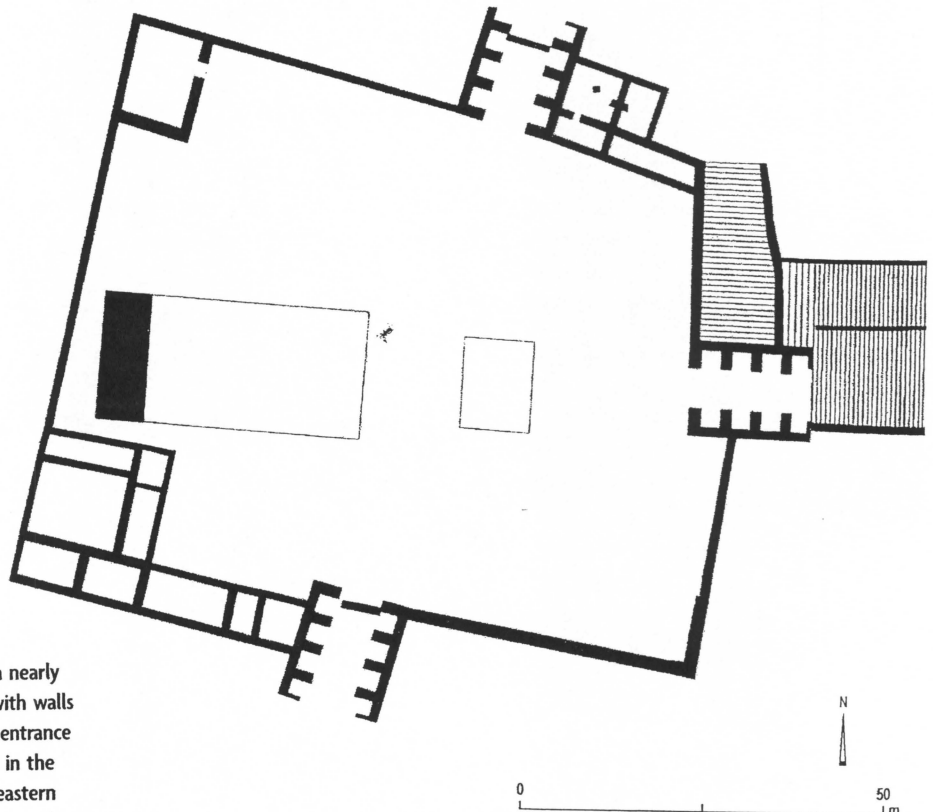
Although we have not found the temple itself, we have found the sacred precinct or compound in which the temple was located. IT is a nearly square compound (321 x 315 ft) that sits on the highest point on the mountain. The walls are more than 3 feet thick. Two sides of the enclosure (northern and western) are preserved for their entire length, sometimes to a height of nearly 7 feet.

Three of the four walls of the sacred precinct had impressive gates. The best preserved is in the center of the northern wall. All three are six-chambered gates (three chambers on each side of the gate). The path through each gate was nearly 50 feet long, and the gate with its chambers was almost as wide. There was no gate in the western wall, however, despite the fact that the site was easily accessible from this side. The reason for this is no doubt because the back of the Samaritan temple with its “holy of holies” faced this wall.



Samaritans at Prayer on Mount Gerizim. (From a Photograph.)

Plan of the Persian and Hellenistic period sacred precinct.



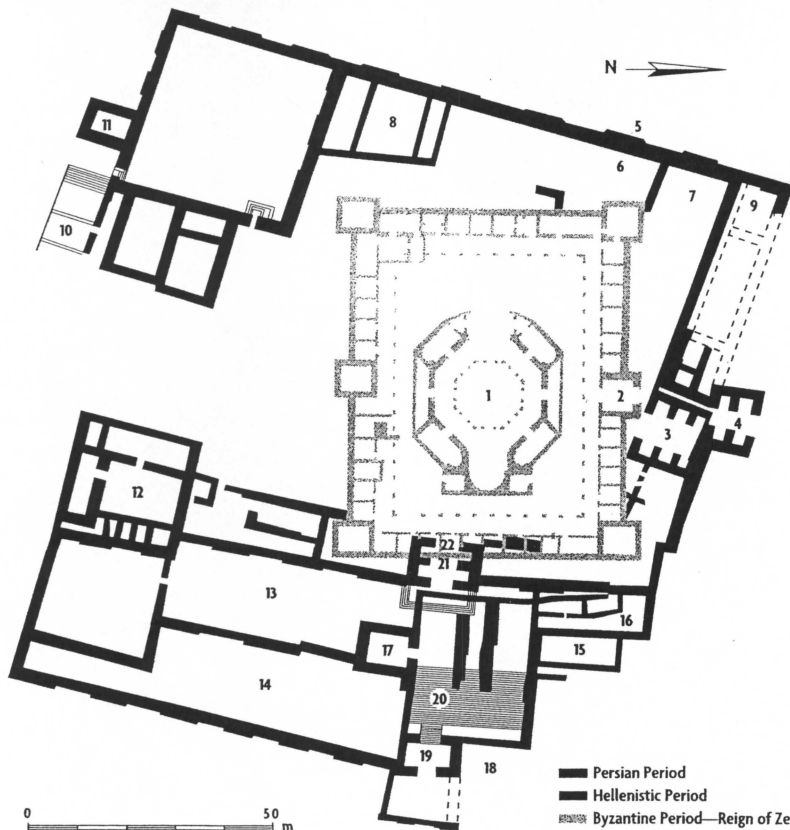
Hypothetical reconstruction of the Persian period sacred precinct.

THE SACRED PRECINCT from the Persian period was a nearly square compound more than 300 feet on each side with walls over 3 feet thick. Impressive six-chamber gates (with entrance halls)—similar to those at Gezer, Hazor and Megiddo in the First Temple period—were located on the northern, eastern and southern walls of the Samaritan precinct. The assumed proximity of the temple’s holy of holies to the western wall explains the absence of a gate on that side of the complex.



ALBATROSS PHOTOGRAPHY LTD., ISRAEL

A MORE COMPLEX COMPLEX. As construction continued in later periods, some of the earlier phases of the sacred precinct were demolished—especially in the central temple area. The Samaritan holy site reached its peak in the Hellenistic period (shown in dark blue below), doubling in size and adding new gates, gatehouses, buildings and monumental staircases on the eastern (pictured at left) and southwestern sides. The construction of the octagonal Church of Mary Theotokos in the Byzantine period (shown in pale green below) effectively destroyed all remains of the Samaritan temple that once stood on the site.



- 1 Church of Mary Theotokos and fortress
- 2 Gate of the fortified church enclosure
- 3–4 Northern gates of the sacred precinct
- 5–6 Walls of the sacred precinct
- 7–8 Courtyards in the corners of the sacred precinct
- 9 Northwestern tower of the sacred precinct
- 10 Western gate of the Hellenistic sacred precinct
- 11 Tower protecting the western gate
- 12 Southeastern citadel
- 13–16 Courtyards for accommodating pilgrims
- 17 Tower protecting the ascent to the sacred precinct
- 18 Paved street leading to the lower eastern gate
- 19 Hellenistic lower eastern gate of the sacred precinct
- 20 Monumental staircase leading to the eastern gate
- 21 Eastern gate of the sacred precinct
- 22 Remains of an altar, apparently Persian period

AFTER FELIX PORTNOV/COURTESY THE STAFF OFFICER OF ARCHAEOLOGY

5A. The Area of Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal:

1b. The valley between the mountains:

While Van Dyke discusses the amazing view from Mt. Ebal, the vista from Mt. Gerizim is equally impressive:

About a mile from Jacob's Well, the city of Nablus lies in the hollow between Mount Gerizim on the south and Mount Ebal on the north. The side of Gerizim is precipitous and jagged; Ebal rises more smoothly, but very steeply, and covered with plantations of thornless cactus, (*Opuntia cochinillifera*), cultivated for the sake of the cochineal insects which live upon the plant and from which a red dye is made.

The valley is well-watered, and is about a quarter of a mile wide. A little east of the city there are two natural bays or amphitheatres opposite to each other in the mountains. Here the tribes of Israel may have been gathered while the priests chanted the curses of the law from Ebal and the blessings from Gerizim. (Joshua viii:30-35.) The cliffs were sounding-boards and sent the loud voices of blessing and cursing out over the multitude so that all could hear.

It seems as if it were mainly the echo of the cursing of Ebal that greets us as we ride around the fierce little Mohammedan city of Nablus on Friday afternoon, passing through the open and dilapidated cemeteries where the veiled women are walking and gossiping away their holiday. The looks of the inhabitants are surly and hostile. The children shout mocking ditties at us, reviling the "Nazarenes." We will not ask our dragoman to translate the words that we catch now and then; it is easy to guess that they are not "fit to print."

Our camp is close beside a cemetery, near the eastern gate of the town. The spectators who watch us from a distance while we dine are numerous; and no doubt they are passing unfavourable criticisms on our table manners, and on the Frankish custom of permitting one unveiled lady to travel with three husbands. The population of Nablus is about twenty-five thousand. It has a Turkish governor, a garrison, several soap factories, and a million dogs which howl all night.

At half-past six the next morning we set out on foot to climb Mount Ebal, which is three thousand feet high. The view from the rocky summit sweeps over all Palestine, from snowy Hermon to the mountains round about Jerusalem, from Carmel to Nebo, from the sapphire expanse of the Mediterranean to the violet valley of the Jordan and the garnet wall of Moab and Gilead beyond.

For us the view is veiled in mystery by the haze of the south wind. The ranges and peaks far away fade into cloudlike shadows. The depths below us seem to sink unfathomably. Nablus is buried in the gulf. On the summit of Gerizim, a Mohammedan *weli*, shining like a flake of mica, marks the plateau where the Samaritan Temple stood. (Henry Van Dyke, *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948, 205-208.)

This vivid description of the area by Van Dyke permits the reader almost to visualize the beauty and uniqueness of that area of the world.

2b. The effects upon the traveler:

George Adam Smith describes his impressions from the heights of Mt. Ebal, although the same emotions would be elicited by the vistas from Mt. Gerizim:

It is on Ebal too that we feel the size of the Holy Land—Hermon and the heights of Judah both within sight, while Jordan is not twenty, nor the coast thirty miles away—and that the old wonder comes strongly upon us of the influence of so small a province on the history of the whole world. But the explanation is also within sight. Down below us, at the mouth of the glen, lies a little heap of brown stones. The road comes up to it by which the Patriarchs first entered the land, and the shadow of a telegraph post falls upon it. It is Jacob's well: Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father: but rather the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. (George Adam Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1972, 96-97).

A traveler's report on Samaritan distortions:

It is interesting and surprising to note with what fire and conviction the high priest still dilates upon the, to him, obvious fact that Gerizim is the only place where men ought to worship Jehovah. He points out that the ark was left there by Joshua, that all accounts of its removal are in spurious records of the Jews; that the whole story of Shiloh and Samuel and Eli are "inventions of the Evil One"; and the temple of Jerusalem, with the supposed sanctity of Mount Moriah, nothing less than a fraud, it being on Gerizim that Abraham would have offered up his son Isaac.

Even at his advanced age he is actively engaged in the disseminating what he believes to be the truth on this subject, and points you to the ruins on Mount Gerizim, above his head, of the magnificent temple built by Sanballat, the Horonite, in opposition to the temple which Nehemiah was restoring at the time in Jerusalem. There, to this day, the Paschal lamb is sacrificed as nowhere else in the whole world, and is indeed perhaps the most interesting sight of a religious nature to see in all Palestine. (Alfred T. Schofield, *Palestine Pictured*, London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., n.d., 70-71.)

3b. Jacob's well:

1c. The mystery of the well:

Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim now rise before us in their naked bulk; and, as we mount toward the valley which lies between them, we stay for a while to rest at Jacob's Well.

There is a mystery about this ancient cistern on the side of the mountain. Why was it dug here, a hundred feet deep, although there are springs and streams of living water flowing down the valley, close at hand? Whence came the tradition of the Samaritans that Jacob gave them this well, although the Old Testament says nothing about it? Why did the Samaritan woman, in Jesus' time, come hither to draw water when there was a brook, not fifty yards away, which she must cross to get to the well?

Who can tell? Certainly there must have been some use and reason for such a well, else the men of long ago would never have toiled to make it. Perhaps the people of Sychar had some superstition about its water which made them prefer it. Or perhaps the stream was owned and used for other purposes, while the water of the well was free.

It makes no difference whether a solution of the problem is ever found. Its very existence adds to the touch of truth in the narrative of St. John's Gospel. Certainly this well was here in Jesus' day, close beside the road which He would be most likely to take in going from Jerusalem to Galilee. Here He sat, alone and weary, while the disciples went on to the village to buy food. And here, while He waited and thirsted, He spoke to an unknown, unfriendly, unhappy woman the words which have been a spring of living water to the weary and fevered heart of the world: "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (Henry Van Dyke, 203-205).

2c. The visit to the well:

George Adam Smith offers several solutions why the woman went past several water streams to obtain her water at Jacob's well:

Granted that Sychar is either Shechem, the present Nablus, or 'Askar, is it likely that a woman from either, seeking water, should have come past streams in their immediate neighborhood to the distant, deep and scanty well of Jacob? There is a fountain in 'Askar: and a stream, turning a mill, flows down the valley "a few rods" from Jacob's well. This the woman, if from 'Askar, must have crossed, while, if from Shechem, she must have passed near it and other sources of water. Jacob's well is over one hundred feet deep, and often dry.

In answer to this, it may be said that the difficulty is not why the woman should have come to the well, but why the well should be there at all. That anyone should have dug so deep a well in the neighbourhood of many streams is perplexing, unless in those far away summers the streams ran dry, and the well was dug so deep that it might catch their fainting waters below the surface. Be that as it may, the well is there, testifying past all doubt the possibility of the woman's use of it. Dug for man's use by man, how impressively among the natural streams around it explains the intensity of the woman's words: *Our father Jacob gave us the well. It was given, not found.* The signs of labour and expense stand upon it the more pathetically for the freedom of the waters that rattle down the vale; and must have had their share in increasing the fondness of that tradition which possibly was the attraction of Jacob's fanatic children to its scantier supplies.

It is impossible to say whether the well is now dry, for many feet of it are choked with stones. Robinson says there is a spring in it, Conder that it fills by infiltration. If either is correct, we can understand the double titles given to it, both of which our version renders by *well*. It is *Jacob's fountain*, Πύλην (iv. 6); but the pit ῥοφῆσις deep (iv. 11); and *Jacob gave us the pit* (iv. 12). By little touches like these, and by the agreement of the rest of the topography—Mount Gerizim, and the road from Judea to Galilee—(as well as by the unbroken traditions of three religions), we feel

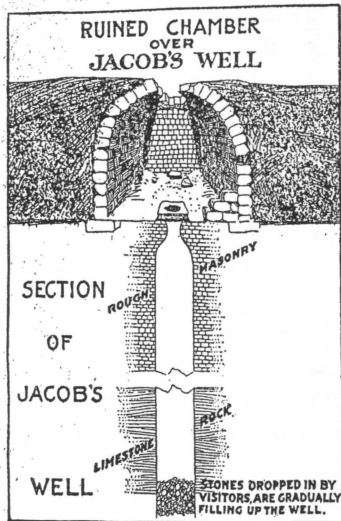
sure that this is the Jacob's well intended by the writer, and that he had seen the place.

(George Adam Smith, 244 [emphasis in the original].)

It is not certain when the well was cleaned, but the gentle reader should be assured that Jacob's Well it is functioning again and has for at least 40 years. In antiquity travelers at times reported its either being almost filled with rubble or completely dry, but this writer can attest to the fact that anyone can visit the well now and drink from its living waters—clear, cool, refreshing--reliving somewhat the scene of John 4.

Smith further quotes a medical missionary to Nablus who suggests why the woman might have by-passed several waters to draw her water from Jacob's well:

Apart from the sacred character of the Well, its waters have a great reputation for purity and flavour among the natives of El-'Askar and Nablus. . . From the nature of the soil the springs at Nablus are mostly very hard water, 'heavy' as the natives say. . . Now Jacob's Well has . . . the reputé of containing cool, palatable, refreshing water, free from the deleterious qualities of their other supplies (24-246).



Ruined Chamber over Jacob's Well.
Palestine Exploration Fund.

3c. The certain identification of the well:

One is inclined to ask why Jacob dug a well when there is such a copious spring, Ai Balata, a few rods distant. But we must remember that his property here was limited, and that the Canaanites would probably object to the foreigner using their stream. After the well Jacob builds an altar to Elohim, having taken the precaution to purchase the land,—as the Church requires an edifice to be paid for before consecrating it.

Tradition, like an endless chain, has passed on from generation to generation the site of Jacob's well, and here at the beginning of the twentieth century after Christ we stand in the presence of the twentieth century before Him. Yes the world is old; but how it comes back to the old mother-breasts of Nazareth and Bethlehem, of Shechem and Shiloh, and how wrinkled we find them and how milkless! Look! There is not one drop of water in the well of Jacob and of the Samaritan woman. **No spot in all the Holy Land is better authenticated. Nowhere can we surer say, "Here the feet of the Man-God have trodden and rested"** (Rev. J. T. Durward, *Holy Land and Holy Writ*, Baraboo, Wisconsin: The Pilgrim Publishing Company, 1913, 102, emphasis added).

4c. The significance of the well:

Here our Savior sat, weary from traveling, hungry and thirsty for the salvation of souls. . . Here he delivered that marvelous discourse with the Samaritan woman, which no thoughtful traveler will omit to read and to

ponder on the spot. The patriarchal memories are absorbed in the memories of Him who is greater than "our father Jacob," and who is himself and alone the never-failing fountain of life eternal. There is no reasonable doubt as to the identity of the well. Jews, Samaritans, Mohammedans, and Christians are here agreed. The tradition is supported by the landscape, which is a living illustration of the narrative of John. The well is a natural resting-place on the highroad from Jerusalem to Galilee, over which Christ traveled, in the grain-field which Jacob bought, and which was then, as now, whitening to the harvest, near Joseph's tomb and the town of Shechem, and in full view of Mount Gerizim, to which the woman pointed as the true place of worship, as the Samaritans of the present day still do. The well is sunk in the living rock, 75 feet deep, but covered with rubbish and surrounded by the ruins of a Christian church, which is mentioned by Jerome, and was destroyed during the Crusades. The Palestine Exploration Fund has recently been furnished with money to restore the Well and to make it comfortably accessible alike to Protestants, Greeks, and Roman Catholics. (Schaff, 312-313.)

The Saviour of the world, came to redeem a fallen race, stops long enough in his great mission to preach to an audience of *one!* Think of it, ye great and mighty "canons" who must have cathedrals and great audiences and fine music. And how natural. "Give me to drink." Here was the well, and the woman then, as now, had come to draw water. We came upon such a scene at Bethany, where three young women vied with each other in offering their water-pots. But this woman in her astonishment (perceiving he was a Jew) desires a reason for such an unusual request. A bigoted Jew would have gone all the way to Shechem thirsty before he would ask a favor of a Samaritan. Not so with Jesus. Water from the hands of a Samaritan is just as acceptable to the Lord as Jew. An then commences that delicate, yet wonderful unfolding of her life until at length she sees in the wayside traveler the promised Messiah, and asks for that living water which springeth up unto life everlasting: (John Lemley, *The Land of Sacred Story*, Albany, New York: 1891, 208).

Give me to drink, O thou prophet!
That my soul thirst not again;
Wearied and faint and often
I have drawn of this well in vain.

I am weary of sin and labor,
And I long to be forgiven;
From this mountain of Samaria
Riseth my prayer to heaven.

I know when Messiah cometh
His blessing will be free,
But how speakest thou, O, prophet!
Ye deal not with such as we?

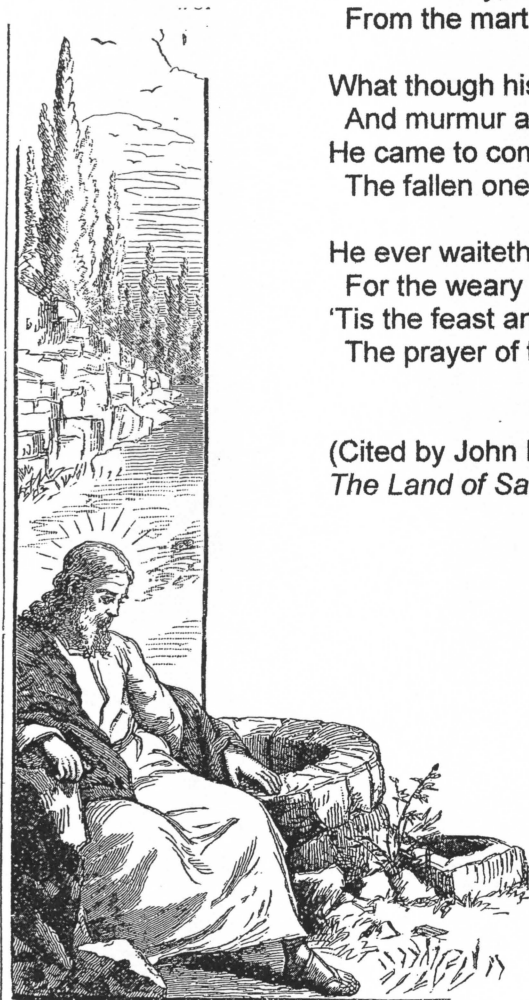
Then, Jesus in spirit feasting,
Forgetting all earthly need,
Gave of the heavenly manna,
The fainting woman to feed.

Gave of the living water
From the well of eternal life,
To the weary, wayside wanderer
From the mart of sin and strife.

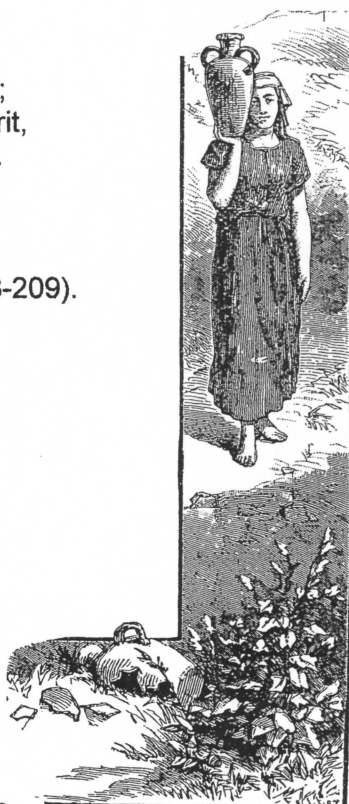
What though his disciples marvel,
And murmur against his ways;
He came to comfort the mourner,
The fallen one to raise.

He ever waiteth at Sychar
For the weary who draw near;
'Tis the feast and joy of his spirit,
The prayer of the lost to hear.

(Cited by John Lemley,
The Land of Sacred Story, 208-209).



tain that which
thou dost prom-
ise, make us to
love that which
thou dost com-
mand; through
Jesus Christ our
Lord. AMEN.



Christ and the Woman at the Well: John 4:1-42

1A. The Return to Galilee: 1-3

- 1b. The apprehension of the Pharisees:
- 2b. The activity of John the Baptist:
- 3b. The ascendancy of the disciples of Christ:

2A. The Route Through Samaria: 4

- 1b. The possibility of routes to Galilee:
 - 1c. The route Trans-Jordan:
 - 2c. The route Cis-Jordan:
- 2b. The purpose of the rest in Samaria:
 - 1c. The declaration of His Messiahship: 4:26
 - 2c. The refutation of the Samaritan error: 22
 - 3c. The regeneration of the woman and citizens: 39
 - 4c. The description of true worship: 23-24
- 3b. The place of the action in Samaria: 4-5
 - 1c. Outside the city of Sychar:
 - 2c. Near the property of Joseph:
 - 3c. By the well of Jacob:
 - 1d. The condition of the well:
 - 1e. Its antiquity:
 - 2e. Its appearance:
 - 3e. Its access:
 - 2d. The centrality of the well:
 - 3d. The circumstances at the well:

- 1e. A stressed Savior:
- 2e. A scorching sun:
- 3e. A searching sinner:

3A. The Request of the Savior: 7

- 1b. The approach of the damsel:
- 2b. The absence of the disciples:

4A. The Reasoning With the Woman: 9-26

- 1b. The woman's first question: 9
Why does a Jew ask a Samaritan for water?
- 2b. The Savior's answer: 10
Because who I am, I can give you even better water.
- 3b. The woman's second and third questions: 11-12
 - 1c. How can you get better water from this deep well?
 - 2c. In what way are you greater than our Patriarch Jacob?
- 4b. The Savior's answers: 13-14
I dispense water that has internal and eternal effects.
- 5b. The woman's response: 15
Please give me this miraculous water.
- 6b. The Savior's response: 16
Summon your spouse.
- 7b. The woman's response: 17a
I have no husband.
- 8b. The Savior's answer: 17b-18
You have been married five times and now live in sin.
- 9b. The woman's response:
 - 1c. I see you are a prophet.
 - 2c. Since you know theology: We Samaritans worship on Mt. Gerizim. You Jews worship in Jerusalem. Who is right?
- 10b. Christ's response: 21-24

- 1c. The time will come when worship will no longer be limited to two mountains: 21
 - 2c. The Samaritans are wrong in their worship: 22a
 - 3c. The Jews are right: 22b
 - 4c. **Salvation comes from the Jews:** 22c
 - 5c. Worship is in spirit and in truth: 23
 - 6c. True worship is rare.
 - 7c. Worship must be according to God's standard and truth: 24
- 11b. The woman's response:
- Ultimate truth and salvation will come from the Messiah (The Samaritans knew of a coming Messiah from Deuteronomy 18 and related passages.)
- 12b. The response of Jesus: 25
I am the Messiah.



Jesus am Jakobsbrunnen. (Joh. 4.)

5A. The Return of the Disciples: 27

- 1b. Their surprise:
- 2b. Their silence:

6A. The Response of the Woman: 28-29

- 1b. She departed in haste: 28
 - she left her water pot
 - as someone well observed:
"She left behind the water pot and went away with the well."
- 2b. She declared Christ: 29
 - 1c. Christ's perceptiveness;
 - 2c. Christ's person:

7A. Reasoning With the Disciples: 31-38

- 1b. The disciples' request: 31
- 2b. The Savior's response: 32
- 3b. The disciples' ignorance: 33
- 4b. The Savior's instruction: 34-38
 - 1c. The importance of His ministry: 34
 - 2c. The immediacy of His mission: 35-38
 - 1d. His discerning of the spiritual need:
 - 2d. His dissemination of the spiritual seed:
 - 3d. The reaping of souls:
 - 4d. The reaping of rewards:
 - 5d. The rejoicing of the sower and reaper:

8A. The Revival Among the Samaritans: 39-42

1b. The salvation of the sinners of Sychar: 39

1c. The Samaritans' salvation:

2c. The woman's witness:

2b. The searching out of the Savior: 40-42

1c. An urgent invitation: 40

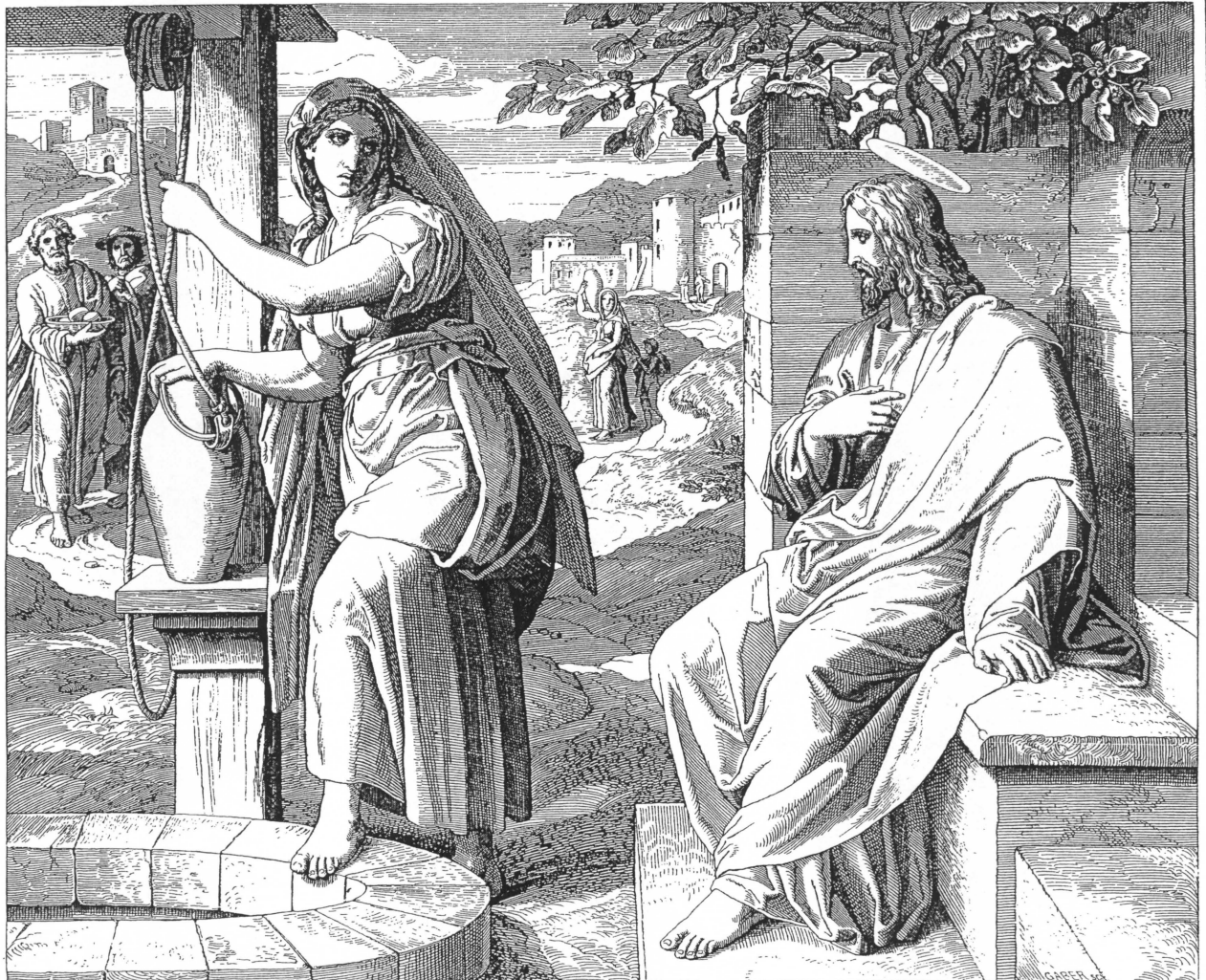
2c. An unscheduled interruption: 40

3c. An unusual revival: 41

4c. An unavoidable conclusion: 42

1d. A response to Christ's delightful words:

2d. A recognition of Christ's divine nature:





Nicodemus Comes to Jesus by Night.

Christ's Concern For Conversions



Jesus and the Woman of Samaria. Cupping.

<i>Nicodemus: John 3:1-21</i>		<i>The Woman of Samaria: John 4:1-42</i>
	The Person	
	The Location	
	The Amount of Verses	
	The Time of Day	
	The Religion	
	The Relationship to the Old Testament	
	The Place of Worship	
	The Number of Exchanges	
	The Confrontational Statements	
	The Prerequisite for Salvation	
	The Testimony	
	The Reference to an Old Testament Person	
3:13	The Divine Attribute	4:18, 39

The Horns of Hattin, i.e.

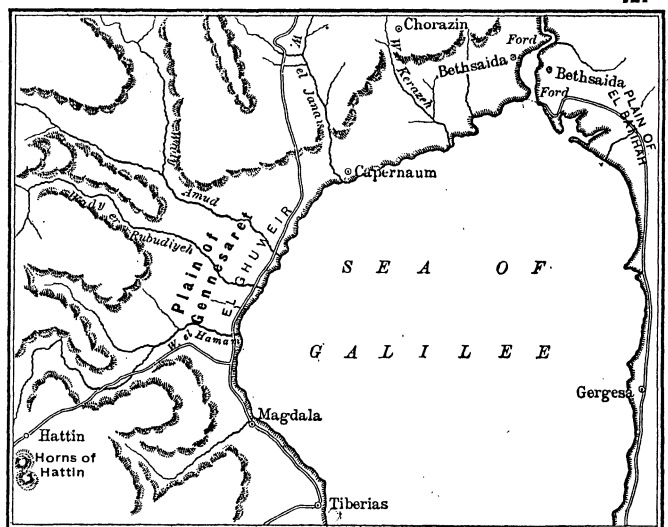
**The Mount of the Beatitudes – The Most Misunderstood Message
from the Lips of the Lord**



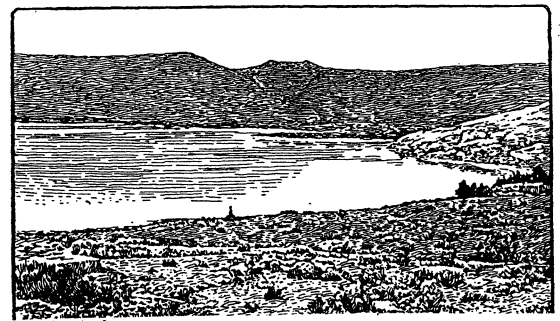
Abb. 115. Die Hörner von Hattin.



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.



The Horns of Hattin



1A. The Importance of Galilee:

Galilee is the home of the Savior. He spent two years of His three years of public ministry in Galilee. His first major sermon was preached here, the topic for our discussion on the Horns of Hattin or the Mount of Beatitudes.

1b. The design of Galilee:

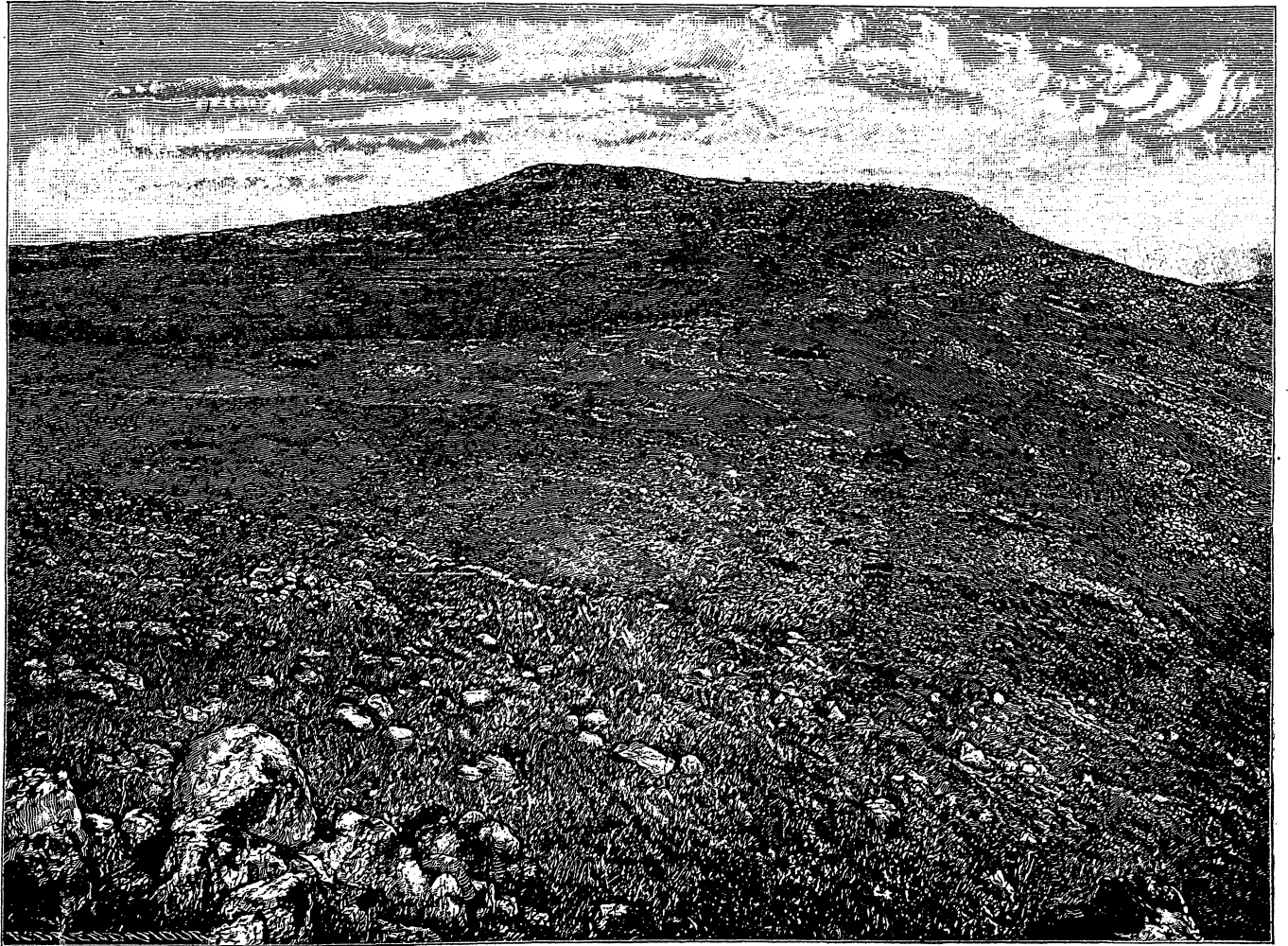
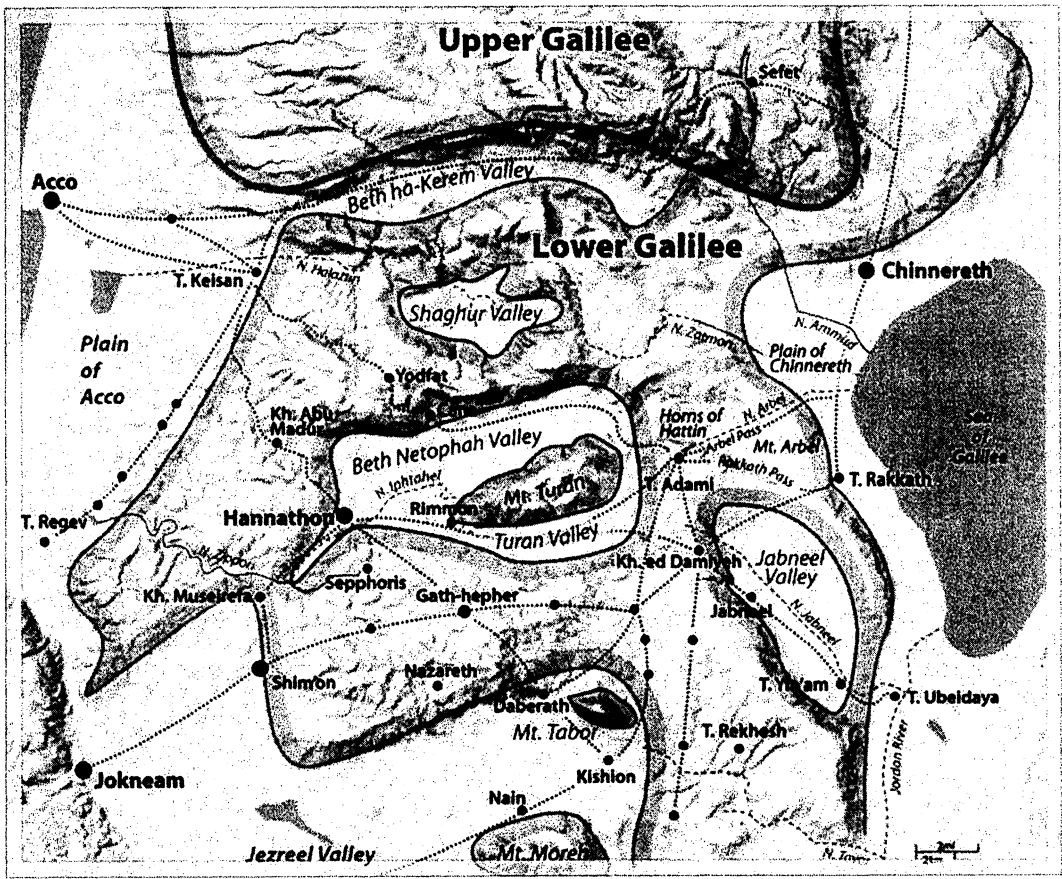
Galilee was a region in northern Palestine that was controlled at different times by the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, and Roman Empires. Under the Romans it became a fixed administrative area (ca. 57 B.C.). Herod Antipas, for example, was tetrarch of Galilee after the death of his father, Herod the Great (4 B.C.; see Luke 3:1). Because the Israelites never succeeded in driving out the Canaanites who “dwelt among them” (Judg. 1:30-33), and since Galilee was surrounded by foreign nations whose populations mixed freely with the Jews, this region was called by Isaiah, “Galilee of the nations” (Isa. 9:1). The name “Galilee” comes from the Hebrew galil which means a circle. The word “nations” is from the Hebrew goim, which can also be translated “gentiles.” Thus the phrase “Galilee of the nations” might also be translated “in the district (region) of the gentiles,” reflecting the fact that Galilee often comprised a mixed population of Jews and gentiles.

2b. The division of Galilee:

Galilee is composed of several subregions, including Upper Galilee (most of which is in Lebanon today), Lower Galilee, and the Sea of Galilee... Upper and Lower Galilee are distinguished by differences in altitude, climate, and vegetation. The mountains of Lower Galilee are less than 2,000 feet high; whereas those of Upper Galilee attain almost twice that height. Upper Galilee is fragmented into isolated hills and deep valleys. Lower Galilee is more open: the valleys run between and parallel to the mountains, connecting the coast with the Jordan Valley and the Sea of Galilee. These valley roads carried the commerce and military might of the ancient world, making Lower Galilee a focus of international concern.

3b. The description of the population of Galilee:

According to Josephus (1st century A.D.), “the cities [of Galilee] lie here very thick; and the very many villages ... are everywhere so full of people, by the richness of their soil, that the very least of them contain above fifteen thousand inhabitants” (III Wars iii.2). The figures provided by Josephus see high (elsewhere he mentions some 200 towns and villages, making a total of more than 3,000,000 inhabitants in Galilee!), but his description of a highly populated region accords with what is known about Galilee in that period. What was true of Galilee, in general, applied more specifically to Lower Galilee because of its rich soils and abundant rainfall and because there was more level ground. Lower Galilee was one of the favored regions for settlement. Here, also, “Jesus went about all the



Der Berg der Seligpreisungen.

Nach einer Photographie.

cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity" (Matt. 9:35).

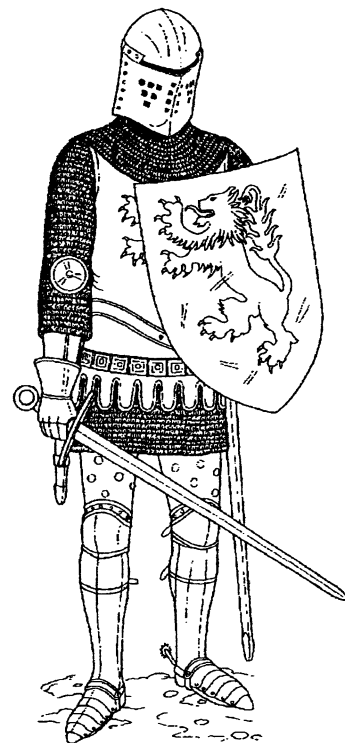
2A. The Identification of the Location:

1b. The geographical features:

According to tradition, the Sermon on the Mount was preached on a mountain west of the Sea of Galilee, known as the Horns of Hattin, (in Arabic: *Kurin Hattin*, in Hebrew *Karnei Hittin*), an extinct volcano with twin peaks overlooking the plains of Hattin in the Lower Galilee.

2b. The historical significance:

Karnei Hittin is believed to be the site of the Battle of Hattin, Saladin's victory over the Crusaders on July 4, 1187. The Battle of Hattin was fought in summer when the grass was tinder-dry. Saladin's troops set fire to the grass, cutting off the Crusaders' access to water in the Sea of Galilee. Saladin built a "victory dome," *Qubbat al-Nasr*, on the hill. Thietmar, a German pilgrim who visited the site in 1217, wrote that the "temple Saladin had erected to his gods after the victory is now desolate." In the early 17th century, ruins were found on the summit that appeared to be those of a church. Prior to 1948, and Arab village, Hittin, lay at the foot of the hill. Excavations were carried out on the hill in 1976 and 1981.

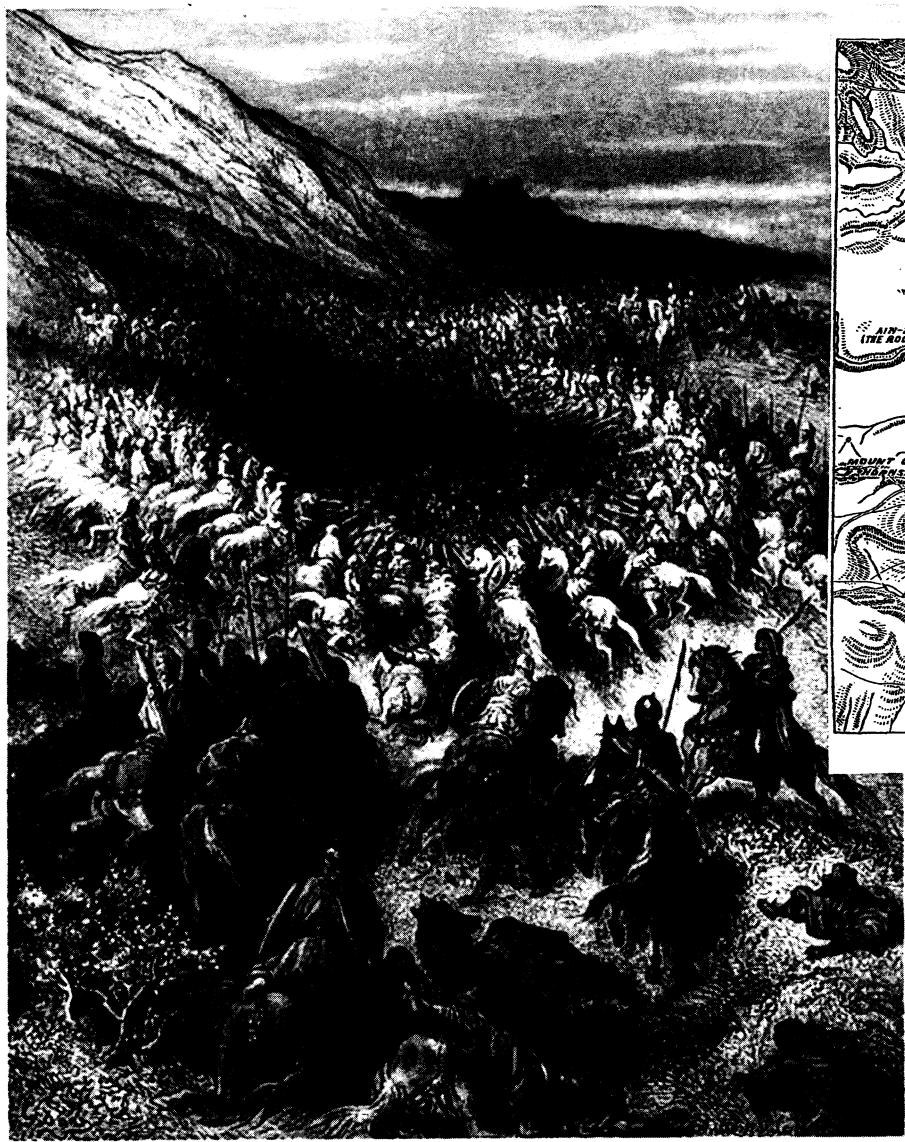


Many have identified the hill with the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus delivered his Sermon on the Mount. Writing in 1864, Ferguson describes it as the "supposed" site, because although "its position corresponds with the particulars of the narrative," no one can declare with any certainty that He gave a sermon at that exact spot.

3b. The strategic location:

The narrow valley leading to the Plain of Gennesaret (northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee), was also called the "Valley of Robbers." Bandits used to plunder caravans as they traveled up and down this strategic pass. Herod the Great (38 B.C.), for example, gathered a force at the village of Arbela to purge Galilee of the "robbers that were in the caves" above the pass (I Wars xvi.2-5). This was also the way of the international highway called the Via Maris, and the road used by Jesus when he traveled from Nazareth to Capernaum.





Karte des Galilaischen Meeres.

Battle of Hattin



The above material was adapted from (<http://www.messengers-of-messiah.org/Tour/LowerGal1.html>, accessed 10/17/2012.) and (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horns_of_Hattin.html)

3A. The Mount of Beatitudes

1b. The name:

This name is given to the place where our Savior delivered the "Sermon on the Mount," beginning with the Beatitudes. The scene of this discourse is traditionally located on Karn Hattin (or Kurun Hattin), the *Horns* of Hattin, a mountain which receives its name from the little village at its northern base and from the two cones of horns which crown its summit. Karn Hattin is in Galilee, within easy distance of Nazareth, Cana, and Mt. Tabor to the southwest, of Tiberias and Lake Gennesaret (the Sea of Galilee) to the east, and of Capharnaum to the northeast, in the center, therefore, of much of the ministry of Jesus. It lies 1,816 feet above the lake and 1,135 feet above the sea level.

2b. The geography:

This mountain, rising above the hills that skirt the lake, is the only height to the west that can be seen from its shores. It consists of a low ridge about one-quarter of a mile long, extending east and west, and rising at each extremity into a cone or horn. The eastern horn, which is the taller, is only sixty feet above the ridge. Between the horns lies an uneven platform which could easily accommodate the crowd that followed Jesus; but it is believed that the spot on which the discourse was given is lower down, on a level place on the southern side of the mountain, corresponding with St. Luke's description (*topou pedinou*) vi, 17, which may mean a level place, as well as a "plain."

3b. The view:

From the eastern slope of the hill there is a beautiful view, to the east, of the lake with the Jolan (Gaulanitis) mountains beyond, to the south the plateau of Ard el-Hamm, and Mt. Tabor, and to the north the snowy height of Mt. Hermon. The tradition that there was a village on the mountain top, if true (the only proof being the remains of a wall which served as defense to a camp), might lend point to the reference in the sermon to the city which was seated on a hill and could not be hid (Matt., v, 14); and the beautiful flowers that abound there might include the unidentified "lilies of the field" (vi, 28). Bishop Le Camus (*Notre Voyage aux Pays Bibliques*, II, pp. 220-222) thought he never saw elsewhere and never imagined so lovely a variety and harmony in the beauty of flowers; other travellers are scarcely so enthusiastic, but all agree the spot has a charm of its own.

4b. The tradition:

It is interesting to note that, like the Old Testament law, this law of Christ for His people was given on a mountain.

The tradition regarding the scene of the Sermon on the Mount, though usually received with a certain degree of favor by Scriptural scholars, apparently does

not go back beyond the crusaders. St. Jerome, the best informed man of his day on points of this nature, knew of no such tradition and merely conjectured that the scene was on Mt. Tabor or some other high mountain of Galilee (Comm. In Ev. S. Matt. In Cap. V). The Gospels, in fact, afford but little help in determining the site. Matt., v, 1 locates the sermon on The mountain (*to oros*), and Luke, vi, 12, uses the same expression for the spot from which our Lord descended before He preached on the "level place", vi, 17. The expression most naturally "suggests that the sermon had long been traditionally connected with a mountain and seems to mean The mountain on which the sermon was delivered." Some scholars even see in the definite article the indication of a particular mountain which the Evangelists suppose known to the reader; but popular curiosity concerning the scene of particular Gospel events is a growth of later date.

5b. The mountain:

If we seek to determine the particular mountain to which the Evangelists allude, we cannot advance with anything like certainty beyond the ancient opinion of St. Jerome (Comm. in Ev. Matt.) that the events before and after the discourse show that it was given on some mountain of Galilee. It is not unlikely that the locality was not far distant from Capharnaum, into which our Lord entered after finishing His discourse (Matt., viii, 5; Luke, vii, 1); but the Evangelists do not say how soon after the discourse He entered Capharnaum. We know from their literary methods that it may have been a day, a week, or even more, for they had little interest in the chronological sequence of events, and the attempt to press details of this sort only results in interminable contradictions.

6b. The probability:

In favor of Karn Hattin, it is said, is the fact that it is accessible from all sides, which is thought to be demanded by the narratives of Matthew (iv, 25, v, 1) and Luke (vi, 17). But this argument, although it is accepted by Dean Stanley (Sinai and Palestine, London, 1883, p. 369) who is usually quite rigorous in requiring proof, has little force, since the multitude did not flock to the mountain from all sides, but, according to Matthew, at least, first gathered together and followed Jesus up the mountainside. (Cf. iv, 25, v, 1, with vii, 28, where the multitude, not merely the disciples, are found on the spot where the sermon was delivered). . . . It is near the scenes of our Lord's greatest activity and fulfils all the requirements of the narrative.

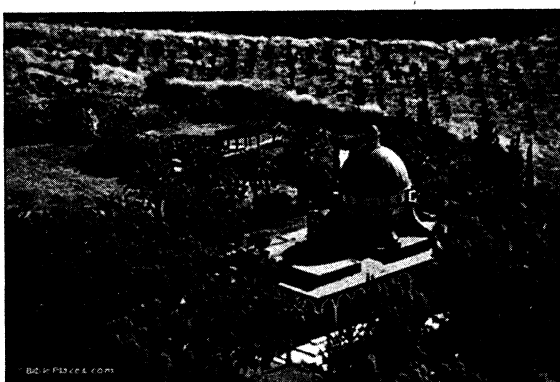
(The information was gleaned from the Original Catholic Encyclopedia online, http://oce.catholic.com/index.php?title=Mt._of_Beatitudes.html . It is interesting to note that this Catholic source places the Mt. of Beatitudes some distance away from the place now frequented by most visitors. A beautiful little chapel crowns a hill above Capernaum from which one has a magnificent view of the entire Sea of Galilee which, like a beautiful jewel, lies to one's feet. The edifice was built by the Italians in 1937. This is an alternative location. However, from what Josephus said, the Sea of Galilee was surrounded by nine cities at the time of Christ, and one would suppose that the popular Mt. of Beatitudes in the vicinity of Capernaum was part of a city lining the shores of Galilee [Note the next page for pictures of the Mt. of Beatitudes above Capernaum]).

Mount of Beatitudes



The Beatitudes

"Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matt 5:3-11 KJV).



Sermon on Mount

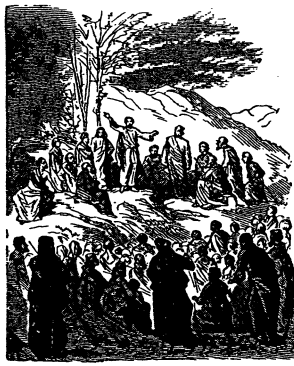
The so-called "Sermon on the Mount" is recorded in Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6. The alleged discrepancy between Matthew's version being on a hill and Luke's being on a level place is easily reconciled with observation of many level places on the Galilean hillsides. Scripture gives no indication of the exact location of this event, but the Byzantines built a church to commemorate it at the bottom of the hill. Some of Napoleon's men placed it on the nearby Arbel mountain.

Chapel

The mountain is topped by a Catholic chapel built in 1939 by the Franciscan Sisters with the support of the Italian ruler Mussolini. The building which was constructed by the noted architect Antonio Barluzzi is full of numerical symbolism. In front of the church, the symbols on the pavement represent Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, Charity, Faith and Temperance. Inside the church hangs the cloak from Pope Paul VI's visit in 1964.



4A. The Holy Mountain



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Pastor Ulrich-Kerwer, in his classic volume, *Heilige Berge (Holy Mountains)*, written in 1913, gives place to his enthusiasm of that beautiful mountain in Galilee.

9. Der Predigtberg.

Segen 130 Meter steigt der Berg, Karun Hattin genannt, schroff über die Ebene auf; am östlichen und westlichen Ende hat er Spitzen von etwa 20 Meter Höhe, die aus der Ferne den Anblick von Hörnern gewähren. Wie der Berg etwa in der Mitte steht zwischen dem Tabor und der Höhe von Safed, so eröffnet sich auf ihm eine herrliche Aussicht auf den Berg der Verkündung, auf den steilen Bergabfall bei Magdalla und die Ebene Genezareth mit Kapernaum, auf den nördlichen Teil des Sees mit seinem leuchtenden Wasserpiegel, und über Galiläas Fluren bis zum Hermon hinauf. An diese Stätte verlegt die Überlieferung die Bergpredigt des Herrn, bei der das Volk, auf der amphitheatralisch sich senkenden Ebene gelagert, der holdseligen Rede lauschte; so steht der Berg da wie der Thron eines Mächtigen, dessen Fußschemel die Erde ist. Nahe dieser Stätte wurde die Schlacht verloren, in der die Herrschaft der Kreuzfahrer im Heiligen Lande gebrochen ward. Das herrlichste Heer, das je von ihnen im Lande aufgestellt war, 2000 Ritter, 8000 Fußsoldaten, eine große Schar Leichtbewaffneter, kämpfte unter dem schwachen König Beit von Jerusalem in dem schattenlosen Tale am Fuße des Berges 1187 gegen den tapfern Sultan Saladin. Nicht die Glut der Sommersonne, nicht die Qual des Durstes und Hungers, nicht die Übermacht des Feindes brach die Macht des christlichen Königreichs; es war die Sucht nach Beute, es war die Uneinigkeit der christlichen Fürsten, welche die Niederlage herbeiführte. Der König zog sich endlich auf den

The mountain, called Karun Hattin, rises some 130 meters steeply above the plain. At its eastern and western end it has a point of about 20 meters high which from a distance give the appearance of horns. Since the mountain is positioned at midpoint between Mt. Tabor and the elevation of Safed, it affords from its height a glorious view of the Mt. of Transfiguration, the steep decline by Magdala and the plain of Gennesareth, with Capernaum, to the northern part of the Lake with its shining waters, across the fields of Galilee up to Mt. Hermon. Tradition assigns to this location the Sermon on the Mount by the Lord, with the people seated in the amphitheatre-like declining plain, listening to His gracious words. Thus the mountain stands here like the throne of a mighty king whose footstool is the earth. . .

Our interest in the mountain is occasioned by the fact that it is assumed that here the Sermon on the Mount was preached. **The place seems to have been created for just this occasion.** The mountain was a pulpit, the sanctuary the beautiful nature surrounding the mountain, with its gorgeous scenery of which the Savior was always keenly aware.

(G. W. Ulrich-Kerwer, *Heilige Berge*, Konstantz: Buch-und Kunstverlag von Carl Hirsch A.G., 1913, 157-158. Translation by this writer.)



(By permission of Palestine Exploration Fund.)

Plain and Horns of Hattin, from ruins of Irbid.

5A. The Sermon on the Mount: Law, Grace or Kingdom?

1b. Introduction:

1c. The intent of the study:

To determine whether the Sermon on the Mount is to be considered as truth for the Church today or for some other dispensation.

2b. The importance of the problem:

1c. The Sermon on the Mount is a major discourse of our Lord and we must determine the addressees, the purpose of the instruction, and the primary interpretation, as well as the secondary application.

2c. False doctrines and a false standard of Christian conduct result from an erroneous interpretation. A wrong interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount invariably leads to wrong conduct.

2b. Views:

1c. The Soteriological View:

The soteriological view espouses the idea that men may attain salvation through governing their own lives by the principles set forth in the Sermon.

2c. The Sociological View:

This view sees the Sermon as a guide to the salvation of society, "What would happen in the world if the element of fair play as enunciated in the Golden Rule. . . were put into practice in the various relationships of life? . . . What difference all this would make, and how far we would be on the road to a new and better day in private, in public, in business, and in international relationships!" (Stamm, *Seeing the Multitudes*, 68-69).

3c. The Ecclesiastical View:

This approach is by far the most common among evangelicals, although it is suspect from a dispensational perspective.

1d. The Representatives: Its proponents are of every theological position—liberals, fundamentalists, amillenarians, premillenarians: F. B. Meyer, C. F. H. Henry, H. A. Ironside.

2d. The Rationale: The Sermon is for the present age, as a rule of life for the believer, a code of personal ethics.

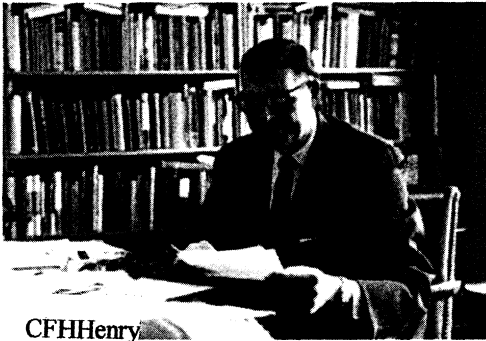
"This discourse, laying the foundation of the Kingdom of Heaven, may also be called the Directory of the Devout Life, and we can



wish for nothing better than to drink into its spirit and realize its exquisite ideals" (F. B. Meyer, *The Directory of the Devout Life*, 12).

"We need to remember that, though a heavenly people, we have earthly responsibilities, and these are defined for us in this greatest of all sermons having to do with human conduct" (Ironsides, *Expository Notes on Matthew*, 44).

The Sermon is a "statement of the practical way in which *agape* is to work itself out in daily conduct here and now. The sermon expresses therefore the only righteousness acceptable to God in this age or in any" (C. F. H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 308).



CFHHenry

"The Sermon on the Mount is nothing but a great and grand and perfect elaboration of what our Lord called His 'new commandment'" (M. Lloyd-Jones, *Sermon on the Mount*, I, 15). According to Lloyd-Jones, there are five main reasons why the Sermon on the Mount has to be for the church:

1. The Sermon anticipates New Testament truth.
2. The Sermon truths are found in the epistles, although in another form.
3. The disciples formed the nucleus of the Church.
4. The promises are most certainly for us (e.g. salt of the earth, light of the world).
5. If the Sermon is not for us, it is completely irrelevant. (Lloyd-Jones, 15).

3d. The refutation:

1e. The principle of literal interpretation would have to be discarded if the Sermon applies to the Church.

2e. The context:

- 1f. Such a view is contrary to the theological pattern of Matthew, who gives the Sermon a place which definitely relates it to the Messianic Kingdom. The order of Matthew is divinely inspired, and the Sermon on the Mount follows the announcement of the kingdom by John in Matthew 2-3 and by Christ in Matthew 4:17.
- 2f. The church is not mentioned till Matthew 16:18.
- 3f. John the Baptist and Christ announced the kingdom of heaven as "at hand" (3:2-3; 4:17), making the Sermon on the Mount part of the King's

message as He instructed the subjects of the kingdom.

3e. The content:

- 1f. The complete absence of church truth. L. S. Chafer, in his *Systematic Theology*, V, 112, shows that unique church age truths are significantly absent from the Sermon. It would be impossible to lead a person to Christ with the Sermon on the Mount. **The five major church age truths, conspicuous by their absence, are the following:**

Ministry of the Spirit.

Death of Christ.

Regeneration.

Salvation by faith.

Justification.

Prayer in the name of Christ.

The latter is a rather important omission from that which Carl F. H. Henry (305) calls "the rule of **daily** life for the **Christian** believer."

Christ mentions the church, prayer, and the Spirit on other occasions during His ministry (Jn. 14:16; 16:13, 24; Mt. 16:18), and if the Sermon were for the church, undoubtedly these truths would be mentioned in the Sermon at least in passing.

- 2f. The Sermon concerns those who inherit the earth (5:5).

- 3f. The Sermon is legal in character:

1g. It is delivered within the context of the law (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 15:8).

2g. It re-enacts the Decalogue (Mt. 5:17-19) with stringent additions (5: 21,22,27,28).

3g. No statement of the gospel can be found, notwithstanding Henry's statement: "Grace dominates the whole biblical revelation" (290).

4g. The bringing of gifts to the altar (5:24) is clearly within the context of the Mosaic Law.

- 1f. Christ: In the Sermon He exhorts to turn the other cheek (5:39), yet Christ protested against being smitten on the cheek (Jn. 18:32).
 - 2f. Early church: Christ stresses that no thought was to be taken for life, things necessary for eating, for drinking, or the clothes necessary for covering (6:26-34). And yet, in the New Testament, church age believers do take care for food and garments, and are exhorted to do so:
 - 1g. The activity of Dorcas (Acts 9:39).
 - 2g. The request of Paul for his cloak (2 Tim. 4:13).
 - 3g. The words of Paul that one should plow with hope (1 Cor. 9:10).
 - 4g. The work of Paul in taking an offering for the poor of Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8, 9).
 - 5e. The view that the Sermon on the Mount is a guide of spiritual life for the church, allows only two alternatives: either blatant contradiction of Scripture or the destructive principle of spiritualization.
- 4c. **The Millennial View:**
- 1d. The Representatives: Gaebelin, Kelly, Pettingill, Barnhouse, Campbell, Ryrie.
 - 2d. The Rationale: The common view held by premillenarians is that which applies the Sermon to the future earthly kingdom, which the Lord announced as being at hand. The Sermon is the constitution of the kingdom.
 - 1e. Its legal character: The law is re-enacted and appended with stringent additions. Romans and Galatians, however, teach that the child of God is free from the law.
 - 2e. The character of Matthew: He portrays Christ as King.
 - 3e. The context of the Sermon: The King was announced and expected (3:2-3; 4:17).
 - 4e. The hearers were faithful Israelites (5:1-2), looking for the Messiah (Jn. 1:45).

- 5e. The age: The age of law continued. Christ was made under the law (Gal. 4:4), lived in absolute obedience to the law (Jn. 8:46; Mt. 17:5; 1 Pet. 2:21-23).
- 6e. The identity of the speaker: Matt. 1:1—the son of David, i.e. King.
- 7e. The rejection of the King and postponement of the kingdom. This involved a delay in the application of the kingdom's constitution and rule of life.
- 8e. The principles of the Sermon demand a personal presence of the King (Pentecost, *Bib. Sac.*, Oct. 1958, 313-315).
 - 1f. To comfort the mourners (Micah 7:1-7; Is. 61:2).
 - 2f. To give the meek their inheritance (Ps. 37).
 - 3f. To let the merciful obtain mercy.
 - 4f. To grant possession of the land (5:3; 5:5; 5:10).
- 9e. The description of Millennial conditions:
 - 1f. The salt of the earth, the light of the world, i.e. the responsibility of believers in the kingdom (5:13-16).
 - 2f. The turning of the other cheek, etc. This could only be true in the kingdom because Christ didn't turn the other cheek, nor do the two witnesses of Revelation 11, who destroy their opponents with fire. The turning of the other cheek is encouraged because Christ will personally be present in the kingdom to avenge His own (5:39-44).
 - 3f. The prohibition of judgment. In the kingdom, the righteous judge will be judging for His people (7:1-6).
 - 4f. The possession of the land (5:3, 5, 10).
- 3d. The Refutation:
 - 1e. The conditions for the Millennium are incongruous:
 - 1f. The disciples are seen as reviled and persecuted for Christ's sake (5:11-12).
 - 2f. The disciples are to pray for the coming of the kingdom (6:10), which clearly indicates that the kingdom is as yet anticipated.

3f. The disciples are warned concerning false prophets (7:15), which are unlikely to exist in the kingdom (Rand, *Bib. Sac.*, Jan. 1955, 28-38).

2e. The entrance into the Millennium is impossible:

The proponents of the kingdom application of the discourse assert that the Sermon contains the constitution of the kingdom. Those who desire to inherit the kingdom must live up to the standards presented in the discourse. Chafer comments:

"The conclusion growing out of this analysis of this discourse is that it is the direct and official pronouncement of the King Himself of that manner of life which will be the ground for admission into the kingdom of heaven and the manner of life to be lived in the kingdom" (V, 111).

If the Ten Commandments present an unattainable standard of life, how much more the Sermon on the Mount? The requirements for entrance into the kingdom are extremely stringent:

- Poor in spirit, meek, persecuted for Christ's sake (5:1-12)
- Righteousness (5:20)
- Perfection (5:48)
- Entering the straight gate (7:13-14)
- Doing the perfect will of the Father (7:21-22)
- The concluding parable: obeying Christ's sayings (7:24-27)



5c. **The Interim View:**

1d. The Representatives: S. L. Johnson, Pentecost, Toussaint.

2d. The Rationale: The discourse presents a description of the good fruit, the fruit of righteousness and repentance. It is concerned with the life the disciples were to live in the light of the coming kingdom.



1e. The grammatico-historical method of interpretation is employed.

2e. The message of the Sermon is anticipatory:

1f. The entrance to the kingdom is anticipated:

1g. It look forward to a time when people shall enter the kingdom (5:20; 7:21).

- 2g. It speaks of future rewards (5:12, 19, 46; 6:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 18).
- 3g. Its sample prayer includes a request for the coming of the kingdom (6:10).
- 4g. It sees the king as judging before the establishment of the kingdom (7:19-23).
- 2f. Persecution and false prophets are predicted (5:11-12; 7:15-18). There will thus be a time lapse before the establishment of the kingdom.
- 3f. The future tense is used abundantly (5:4-9, 19-20; 6:4, 6, 14, 15, 18, 33; 7:2, 7, 11, 16, 20, 21, 22).
- 3e. The addressees are primarily the disciples:
 - 1f. The setting: 5:1-2
 - 2f. Their description: salt, light (5:13-16)
 - 3f. Their prayer: "Our Father" (6:9)
 - 4f. Their lives:
 - 1g. Characterized by righteousness (5:19-7:12)
 - 2g. Hunger and thirst after righteousness (5:6)
 - 3g. Peace makers (5:9)
 - 5f. Their work: concerned with service and doing (5:10-12, 13-16, 19-20, 21-48; 6:1-18, 19-34; 7:1-12, 12-23, 24-27).
 - 6f. Their instructions: teaching rather than preaching (5:2, 19; 7:29).
 - 7f. Their anticipation:
 - 1g. Rewards (5:12, 19, 46; 6:1, 2, 5, 16).
 - 2g. Seeking first the kingdom (6:30).
- 4e. The subject matter is service and doing (7:19).
- 3d. The relevance:
 - 1e. Stanley Toussaint:

The sermon is **primarily** addressed to disciples exhorting them to a righteous life in view of the coming kingdom. Those who were not genuine disciples were warned concerning the danger of their hypocrisy and unbelief. They are enjoined to enter the narrow gate and to walk the narrow way. This is included in the discourse, but it is only the **secondary** application of the sermon (*The Argument of Matthew*, unpublished doctor's dissertation, 114).

2e. Lewis S. Chafer:

The Sermon "as a rule of life is addressed to the Jews before the cross and to the Jew in the coming kingdom" (V, 97). "It was addressed to the people before Him and concerned the requisite preparation on their part for admission into the kingdom of heaven then being published as 'at hand.' It likewise declared the manner of life that would be demanded within the kingdom when once it is entered" (V, 100). "A secondary application to the Church means that lessons and principles may be drawn from it" (V, 97).



3e. Dwight J. Pentecost:

"We feel that this Sermon on the Mount is to be connected with the offer of the kingdom, rather than with the description of the kingdom or the kingdom age itself" (*Bib. Sac.*, April 1958, 134). "In its primary interpretation the Sermon on the Mount is directly applicable to those of our Lord's own day who by their profession in John's baptism were anticipating the coming of the King and the kingdom" (*Bib. Sac.*, October 1958, 316).



4e. Charles C. Ryrie:

1) Basically and primarily it is a detailed explanation of what the Lord meant by repentance. . . .2) it has therefore relevance to any time that the kingdom is offered. . . .But 3) it does picture certain aspects of life in the millennial kingdom and thus in a certain restricted sense is a sort of constitution of the kingdom. However 4) as all Scripture, it is profitable for any people (*Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, 81-82).

3b. **Conclusion:**

The Sermon on the Mount is a problem passage of the first magnitude. It is one of Christ's three major discourses. The **Upper Room Discourse** deals with church age truth, the **Olivet Discourse** with the tribulation, and the **Sermon on the Mount** with the kingdom. We have rejected the ecclesiastical interpretation of the Sermon because of its place in the arrangement of Matthew (see diagram on

final page). It comes long before the announcement of the church and, indeed, forms part of the kingdom offer. Furthermore, the Sermon lacks Church truth, such as salvation by faith, prayer in the name of Christ, and the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. While certain truths of the Sermon seem to be repeated in the Epistles, similarity does not mean identity. The addressees of the Sermon are subjects of the kingdom rather than members of the Body of Christ. The church was to them as yet a mystery. The bona fide offer of the kingdom forms the interpretive key for the Sermon. Actually, both the interim view and the millennial view are correct in certain respects. The Sermon on the Mount, rightly understood, involves three aspects. It is taught to the disciples who lived during the time of the **proclamation of the kingdom**. Further, it involves their **preparation of the kingdom**, and also deals with the **participation in the kingdom** (see diagram).

1c. The Sermon relates to the **proclamation of the kingdom**.

Various passages of the Sermon definitely relate to the period just prior to the establishment of the kingdom, such as the persecution of the disciples, the prayer for the kingdom, and the future prospects of rewards. Since the kingdom was officially rejected in Matthew 12, the promise of the kingdom was taken from the Jew of Christ's time, and given to another generation (Mt. 21:43), living during the tribulation, when the disciples would once again expect the coming of the King and His kingdom. The so-called Lord's Prayer will be especially relevant then, as the disciples pray that God's will be done on earth, where the Willful King of Daniel 11 has free reign. The request for deliverance from the Evil One will then be made by those who suffer under Antichrist's reign of terror.

2c. The Sermon describes the proper **preparation for the kingdom**.

Lewis S. Chafer is correct in seeing the Sermon as spelling out the entrance requirements for the kingdom. It is the "pure in heart" (5:8) who alone shall see God. The citizens of the kingdom need a righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees (5:20). In fact, Christ requires of them the absolute perfection of God (5:48). The disciples must have responded in utter amazement. How could they be pure in heart, more righteous than the Pharisees and as perfect as God? The answer lies in Christ's concluding illustration of the house built on the rock (7:24-27). Those disciples who heard Christ's sayings and did them would endure and enter the kingdom. The message of the Messiah would produce faith and works in the attentive disciples, qualifying them to enter the straight gate of the kingdom (7:13).

3c. The Sermon outlines the disciples' **participation in the kingdom**.

Ryrie stresses that the Sermon pictures "certain aspects of life in the kingdom and thus in a certain restricted sense is a sort of constitution of the kingdom" (*Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, 82). The inheritance of the land will then be a blessed reality. The turning of the other cheek and the giving of one's possessions to anyone who asks, will then be tolerable because of the personal presence of the Prince of

Peace. Especially in the Kingdom will His citizens function as the salt of the earth and the light of the world (5:13-14).

- 4c. The Sermon provides high ethical **principles for any dispensation**, and any people.

As a guide for daily conduct, the Sermon is no more applicable to the church age believers than are the Ten Commandments. By interpretation, the Sermon is for the subjects of the kingdom, giving them guidelines for life in **anticipation** of the kingdom, detailing the **qualifications** for entrance into the kingdom and outlining their **participation** in the kingdom. Once one realizes these three major purposes for the Sermon on the Mount, it becomes possible to rightly divide the teachings of the Sermon and assign each paragraph to its proper purpose. But, like the entire Old Testament, which, while not written **to us**, is certainly **for us**, so the principles of the Sermon may be used with great profit by the church age believers.

Consistent dispensationalists have been unjustly accused of writing off this portion of the Word of God as irrelevant for today. Yet dispensationalists insist that all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. And they recognize the necessary distinction which others refuse to see, that between **interpretation** and **application**. He who would rightly divide (2 Tim. 2:15)—rather than recklessly distort (2 Cor. 4:2)—the Word of God, must know that while each passage of Scripture has many applications, it has only one correct interpretation. To determine the correct interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount has been the purpose of this study.

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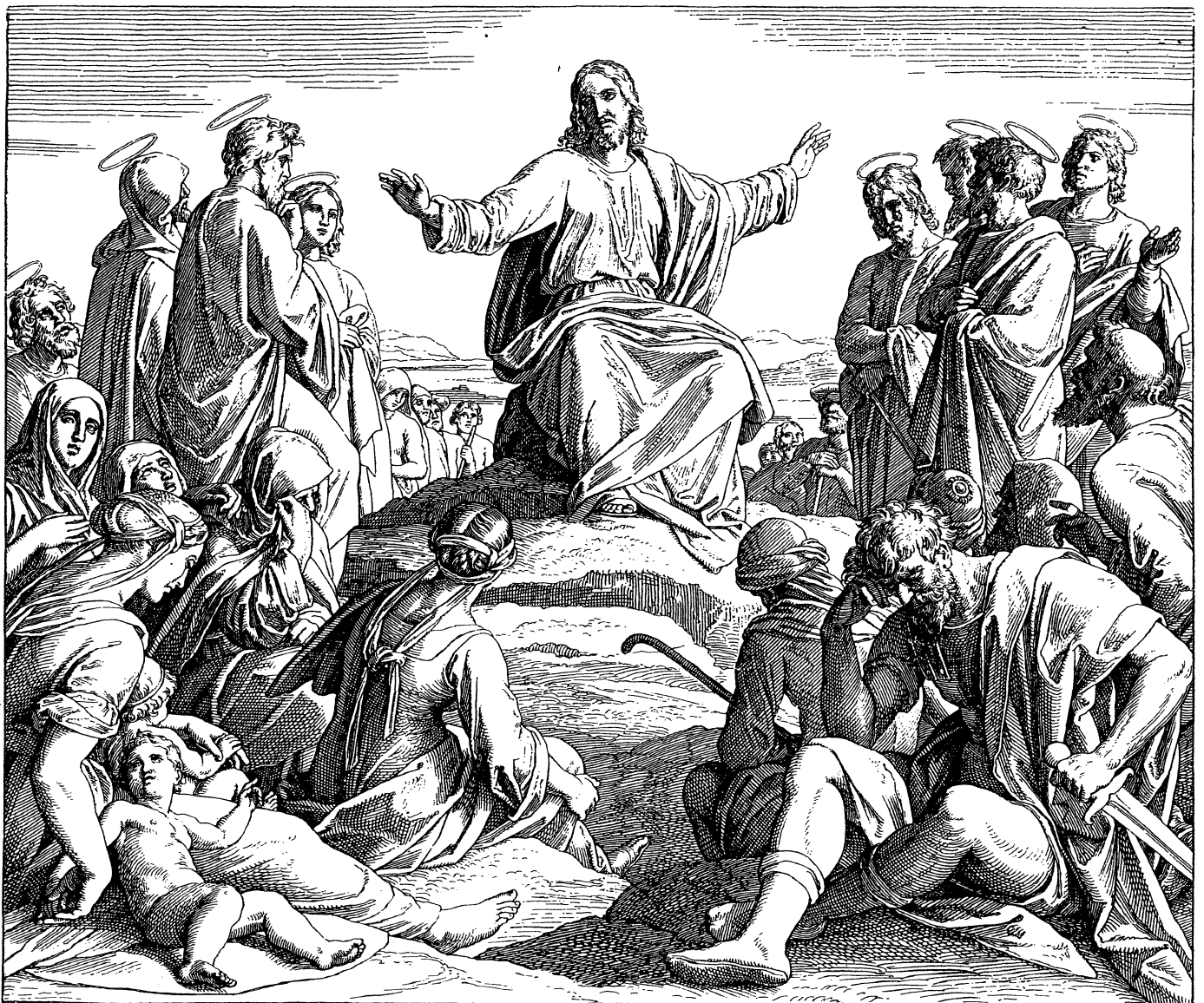
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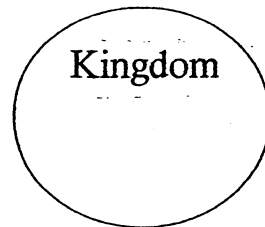
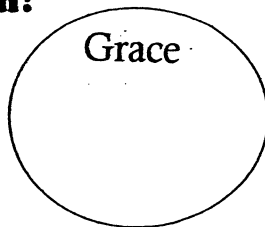
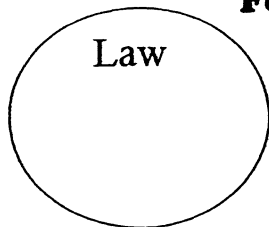


1

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

For Whom?

CONCEPT OF THE KINGDOM



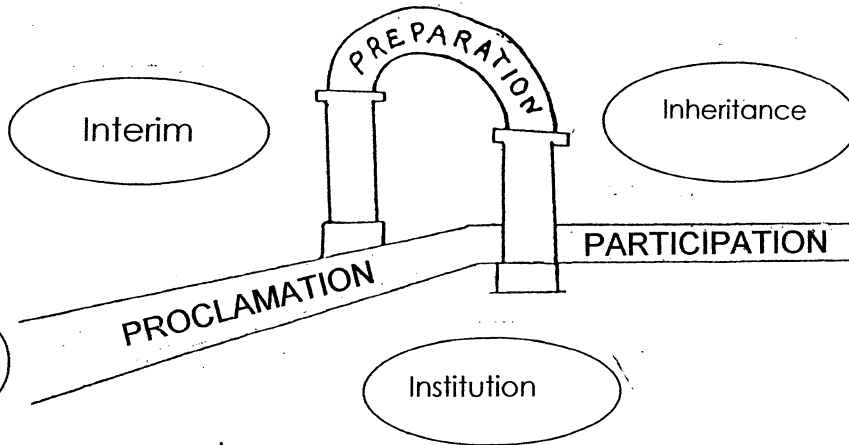
MT. 3:2-3; 4:17	MT. 3-12	MT. 12—13	MT. 16	Acts 1-Revelation	Revelation	MT. 25:32
Kingdom Announced	Kingdom Offered	Kingdom Rejected	Church Announced	Rapture Anticipated	Kingdom Reoffered	Kingdom Instituted

2

CONTRAST OF THE VIEWS

3

CONTRADICTION WITH THE AGE OF GRACE



ARRANGEMENT OF MATTHEW
ABSENCE OF CHURCH TRUTH
ADDRESS OF INHERITORS

4

CONTENT OF THE SERMON

REPRESENTATIVES	S. L. Johnson	Chafer	Ryrie
REASONS FOR THE VIEWS:	Persecution of disciples	Preparation for disciples	Possession of the land
	Prayer for the Kingdom	Perfection of the citizens	Peace on earth
	Prospect of rewards	Prompting to repentance	Presence of the Messiah



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

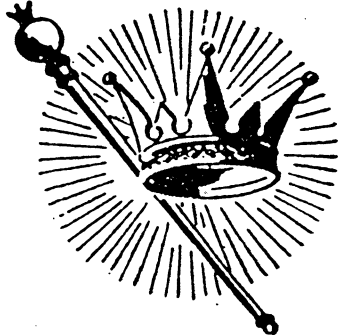
LAW



GRACE



KINGDOM



MT. 3:2-3; 4:17	MT. 3-12	MT. 12—13	MT. 16	Acts 1- Revelation	Revelation	MT. 25:32
KINGDOM ANNOUNCED	KINGDOM OFFERED	KINGDOM REJECTED	CHURCH ANNOUNCED	RAPTURE ANTICIPATED	KINGDOM REOFFERED	KINGDOM INSTITUTED

Helpful
Highlights
Concerning
The
**Horns of
Hattin**



Abb. 115. Die Hörner von Hattin.

1. **A** _____ from the Distance: the horns of a bull
2. **B** _____ of the Crusaders against Moslems: July 4, 1187
3. **C** _____ at the Sermon: Disciples and multitudes
4. **D** _____ from the Sea of Galilee: 6 miles (10 km)
5. **E** _____ above sea level: 1135 ft. (1816 ft. above Lake Kinneret)
6. **F** _____ on the pinnacle: Canaanite and Israelite fortresses
7. **G** _____ of the mount: basalt rock in a collapsed volcano

Helpful
Highlights
Concerning
The
**Horns of
Hattin**

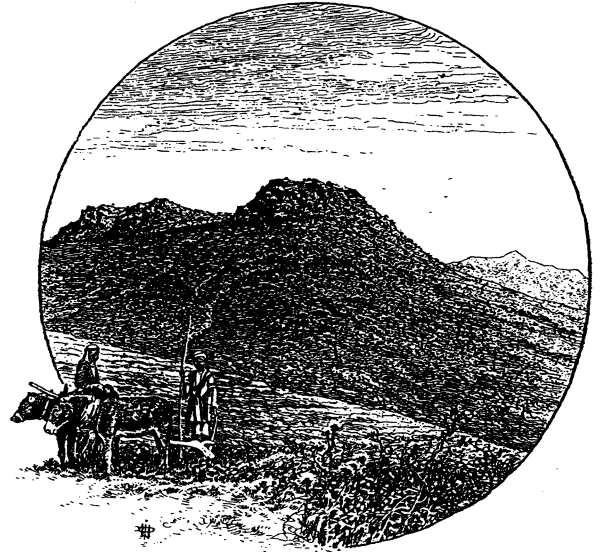
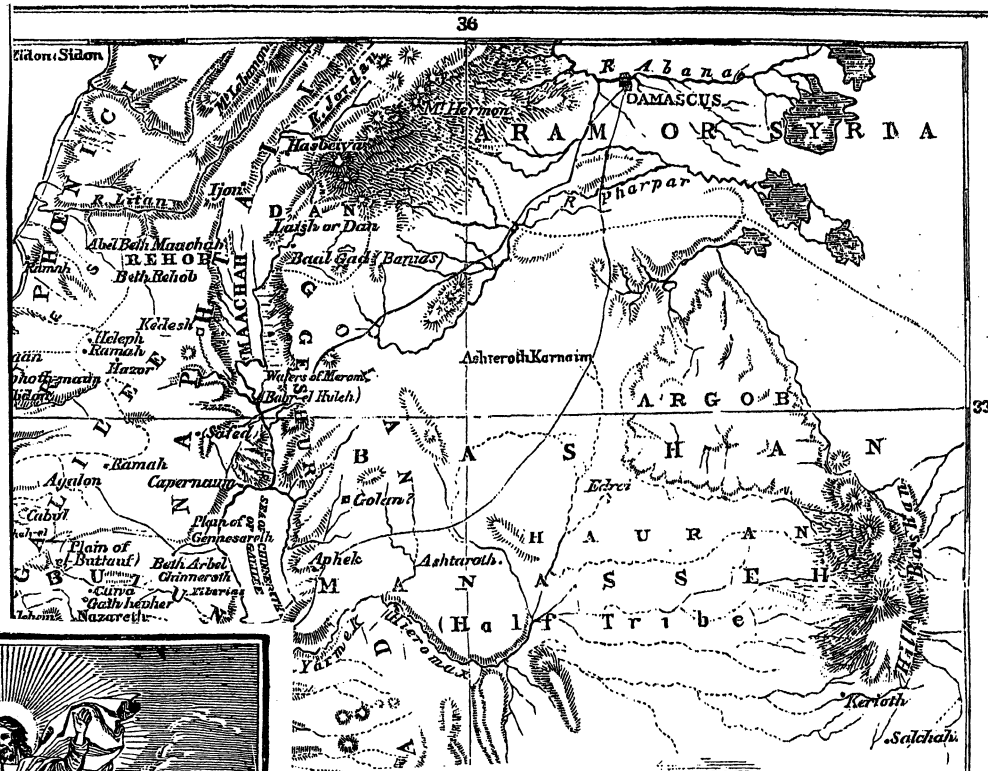


Abb. 115. Die Hörner von Hattin.

1. **A**pppearance from the Distance: the horns of a bull
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3. **C**ongregation at the Sermon: Disciples and multitudes
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6. **F**ortresses on the pinnacle: Canaanite and Israelite fortresses
7. **G**eology of the mount: basalt rock in a collapsed volcano

Mt. Hermon – Startling Witness to the Suffering Messiah and His Kingdom



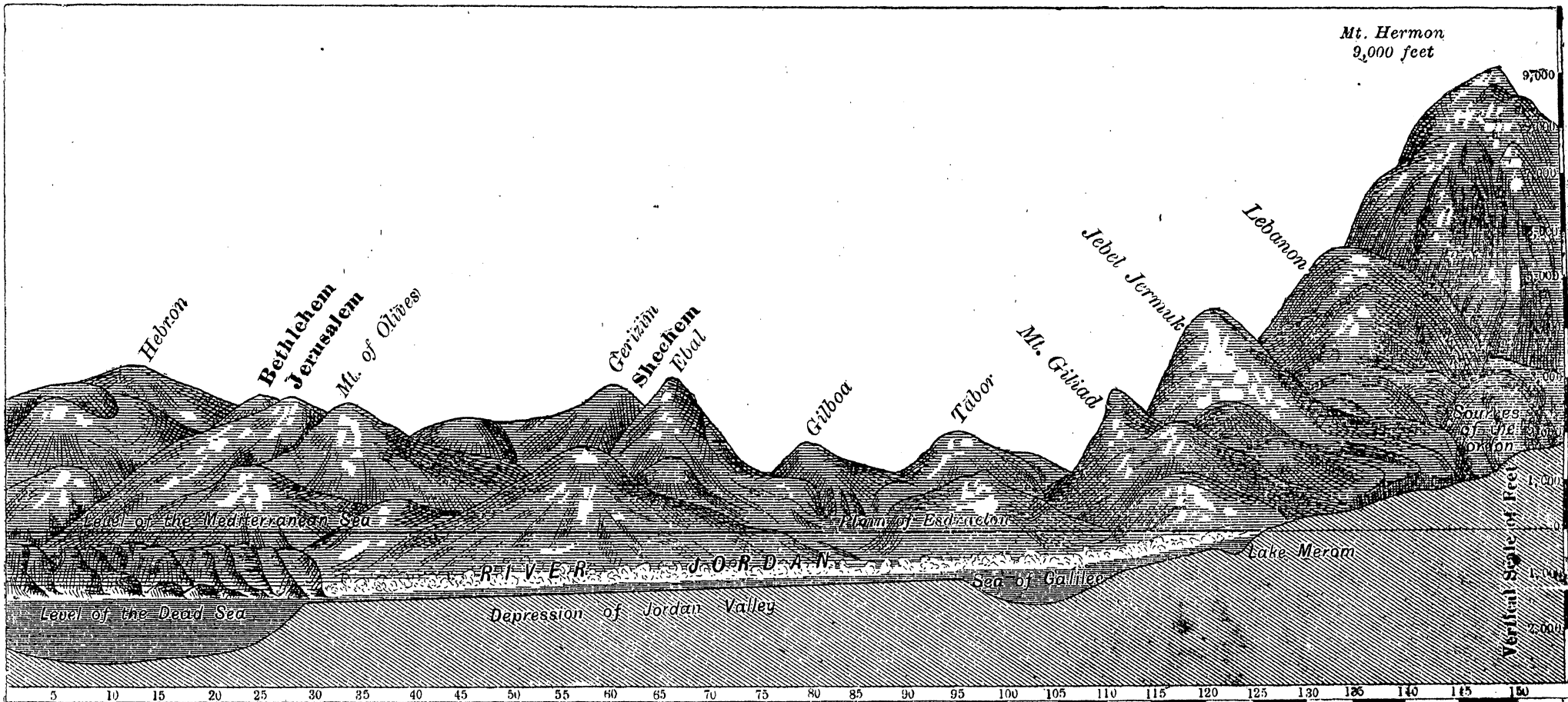
THE TRANSFIGURATION.



MOUNT HERMON.



MOUNT HERMON.



Horizontal Scale of Miles.

SECTION OF PALESTINE FROM NORTH TO SOUTH.

A. Zeese & Co., Eng., Chi.

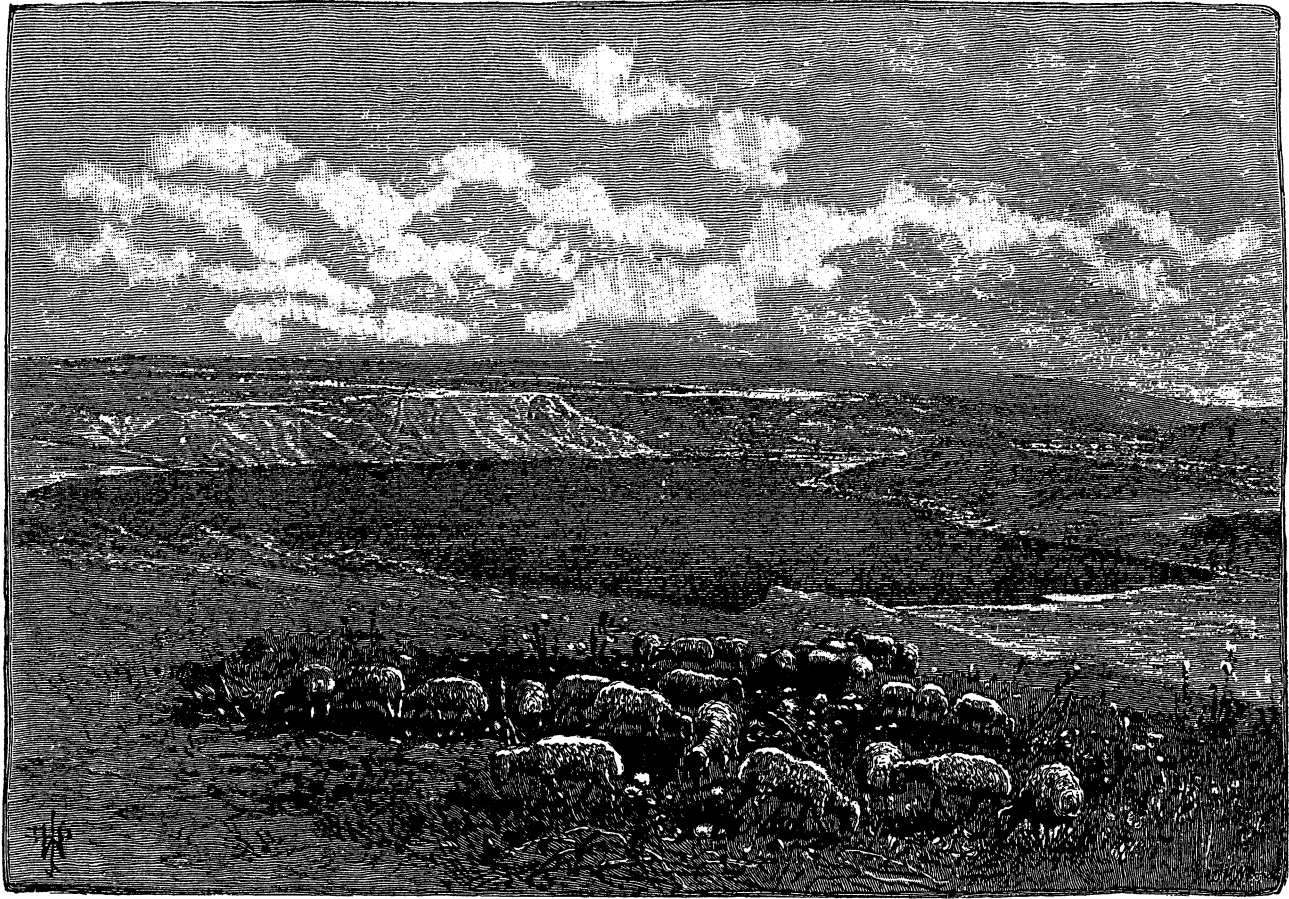
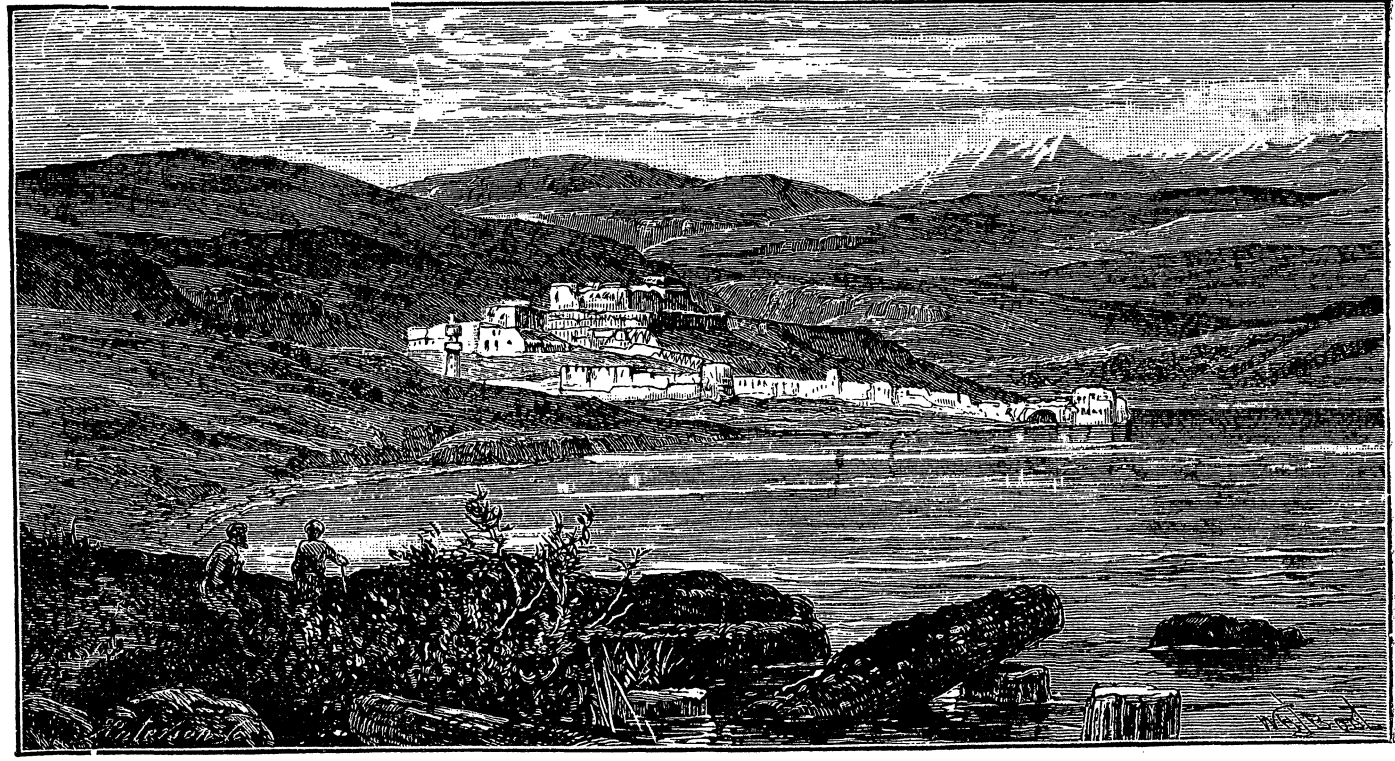
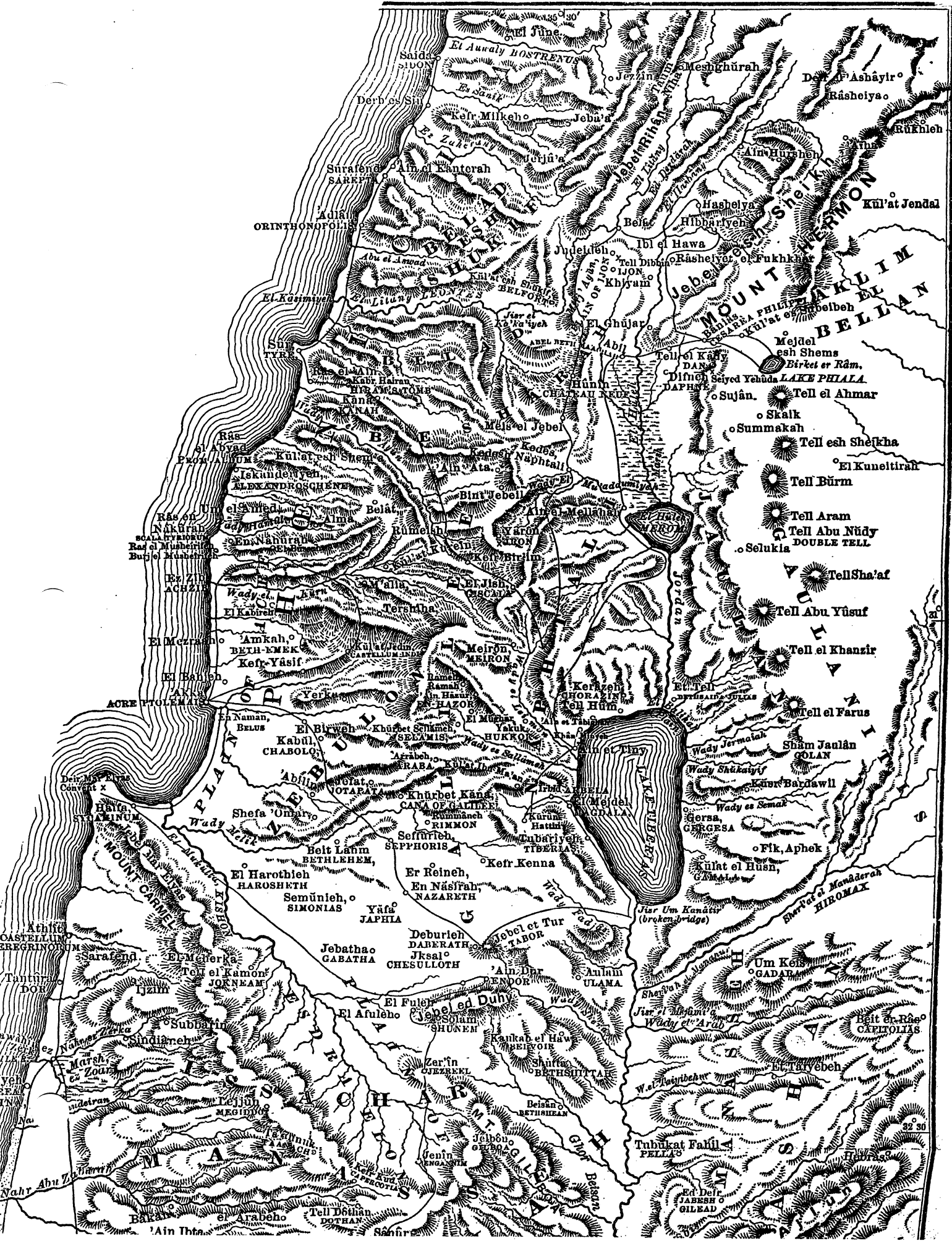


Abb. 121. Der See Genezareth (im Norden). VIEW SOUTH



ON THE SEA OF GALILEE, LOOKING TOWARDS TIBERIAS.



Mt. Hermon – Startling Witness to the Suffering Messiah and His Kingdom



Mt. Hermon. From a photograph.

1A. The Extraordinary Prominence of Mt. Hermon:

1b. The commanding presence of Mt. Hermon:

George H. Whitney has given a fine summary of the elevated position of the mountain in biblical history:

Hermon, MOUNT, lofty or prominent peak, so called doubtless because it was visible from a very great distance. The Sidonians called it *Sirion*, from the root signifying "to glitter," and the Amorites *Shenir*, ("to clatter,") both words meaning "breastplate," and suggested by its rounded, glittering top when the sun's rays were reflected by the snow that covered it, Deut. iii,9; Sol. Song iv 8; Ezek. Xxvii, 5. It was also named *Sion*, "the elevated," towering over all its compeers, Deut. iv., 48.

Mount Hermon was on the north-eastern border of Palestine, Deut. iii, 8; Josh. xii, 1; over against Lebanon, Josh. xi, 17, adjoining the plateau of Bashan, 1 Chron. v, 23.

It was the great landmark of the Israelites. It was associated with their northern border almost as intimately as the sea was with their western. Hermon rises boldly at the southern end of Anti-Libanus to the height of about ten thousand feet above the more continuous chain. Dr. Thomson describes it as seen from Sarepta, from Tyre, and from the Dead Sea.

The modern name of Hermon is *Jebel eth-Thelj*, "the snowy mountain." Through the spring till the earlier part of summer the top is covered with snow; but as the weather becomes hotter large masses melt, and the snow remains only in the streaks in the ravines. On one of the summits are the remains of a circular wall inclosing a small, ruined temple. Probably this marks the site of one of the "high places," where worship was paid to idols. "The dew of Hermon" (Psa. cxxiii, 3) was very likely the distillation of the vapors condensed by the snowy crown of the mountain; and "Zion," in the same passage, is no doubt used as being one of the various names of Hermon. It may be added that the ridge *Jebel Ed-Duhy*, on the north of the valley of Jezreel, has been called the "Little Hermon." (Whitney, *Handbook of Bible Geography*, New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1877, 176.)

The *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* has some more up-to-date information on the impressive mountain visible from great distances in Israel, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon:

The word refers to a consecrated place, a sanctuary. Mt. Hermon comprises the southern spur of the Anti-lebanon chain of mountains, which runs parallel to the Lebanon range and is separated from it by the valley of Beqaa. It is about 9,200 ft. above sea level, and is the highest mountain in Syria. It can be seen from many places in Palestine, even from as far away as the Dead Sea. Because snow covers it for much of the year, the Arabs call it the "gray-haired mountain," or the "mountain of the snow." The water from its melting snows flow into the rivers of N Hauran and provide the principal source for the Jordan River. No trees grow above the snow line, but below it the sides are covered with trees (pine, oak, and poplar) and with vineyards. Its forests contain wolves and leopards, and sometimes Syrian bears. It is not a high summit with a distinctly marked base, but a whole cluster of mountains. Its three summits are nearly equal in height and are the same distance from each other. It extends from sixteen to twenty m. from N to S. In Deuteronomy 3:9 it says that the Sidonians call it *Sirion*, while the Amorites call it *Senir*. *Sirion* occurs outside of Deuteronomy 3:9 only in Psalm 29:6. *Senir*

occurs outside of Deuteronomy 3:9 in 1 Chronicles 5:23, the Song of Solomon 4:8, and Ezekiel 27:5. Deuteronomy 4:48 has "Sion" in the KJV and "Mount Sirion" in the RSV. First Chronicles differentiates between Senir, Hermon and Baal-hermon. The Song of Solomon 4:8 speaks of the "peak of Senir and Hermon. . .

Mt. Hermon was the northern boundary of the Amorite kingdom (Deut. 3:8; 4:48), and thus is said to lie in the territory of Og (Josh. 12:5; 13:11). It was the northern limit of the conquest of Joshua (Josh 11:17; 12:1; 13:5), and the northern limit of the territory of Manasseh. The Hittites dwelt at the foot of Hermon in the land of Mizpeh (Josh 11:3). It is mentioned in the Bible as the northern boundary of the Promised Land (Deut 3:8). In ancient times it was regarded as a sacred mountain, as its Heb. name suggests. In Judges 3:3 it is called "Mount Baal-hermon," showing that Baal was worshipped there. Remains of shrines are found on the highest summit. (Merrill C. Tenney, General Editor, III, 1975, 125-126).



HERMON FROM THE NORTHERN SHORE OF LAKE HULEH.

2b. The geographical particulars of Mt. Hermon:

The free encyclopedia, *Wikipedia*, has a very condensed and interesting summary of the geographical uniqueness of this mountain:

Mount Hermon is actually a cluster of mountains with three distinct summits, each about the same height. The Anti-Lebanon range extends for approximately 150 km (93 mi) in a northeast-southwest direction, running parallel to the Lebanon range on the west. The Hermon range covers an area of about 1000 square km, of which about 70km² are under Israeli control. Most of the portion of Mount Hermon within the Golan Heights constitutes the Hermon nature reserve.

The mountain forms one of the greatest geographic resources of the area. Because of its height it captures a great deal of precipitation in a very dry area of the world. The Jurassic limestone is broken by faults and solution channels to form a karst topography. Mount Hermon has seasonal winter and spring snow falls which cover all three of its peaks for most of the year. Melt water from the snow-covered mountain's western and southern bases seeps into the rock channels and pores, feeding springs at the base of the mountain, which form streams and rivers. These merge to become the Jordan River. Additionally, the runoff facilitates fertile plant life below the snow line, where vineyards and pine, oak, and poplar trees are abundant.

The springs, and the mountain itself, are much contested by the nations of the area for the use of the water. Mount Hermon is also called the "snowy mountain," the "gray-haired mountain," and the "mountain of snow." It is also called "the eyes of the nation" in Israel because its elevation makes it Israel's primary strategic early warning system.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Hermon, p. 2 of 6)

The wikipedia article also mentions that on top of the mountain is "the Hermon Hotel," in the buffer zone between Syria and Israeli-occupied territory, the highest permanent manned UN position in the world. Wikipedia, (p. 1 of 6)

3b. An atmospheric peculiarity:

There's an interesting reference to the dew of Hermon in Psalm 133:3:

The "dew of Hermon" is once referred to in a passage which has long been considered a geographical puzzle—"As the dew of Hermon, the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion" (Psa. cxxxiii, 3). Some have thought that *Zion* (צִיּוֹן) is used here for *Sion* (שִׁיּוֹן), one of the old names of Hermon (Deut. iv, 48), but this identification is unnecessary. The snow on the summit of this mountain condenses the vapors that float during the summer in the higher regions of the atmosphere, causing light clouds to hover around it, and abundant dew to descend on it, while the whole country elsewhere is parched, and the whole heaven elsewhere cloudless. One of its tops is actually called *Abu-Nedy*, i.e. "father of dew."

(John M'Clintock, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1894, 209).

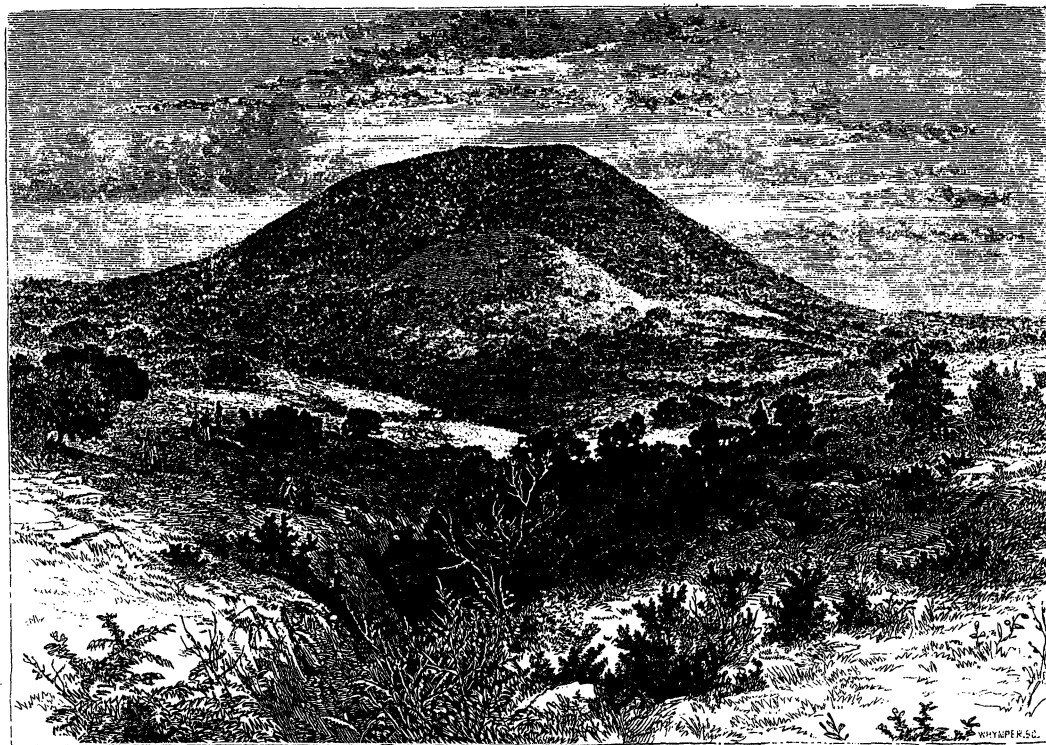
2A. The Continuous Contest Over the Identity of The Mount of Transfiguration:

The famous church historian and Christian scholar, Philip Schaff, makes an interesting comparison between two mountains which have historically been identified as the Mt. of Transfiguration:

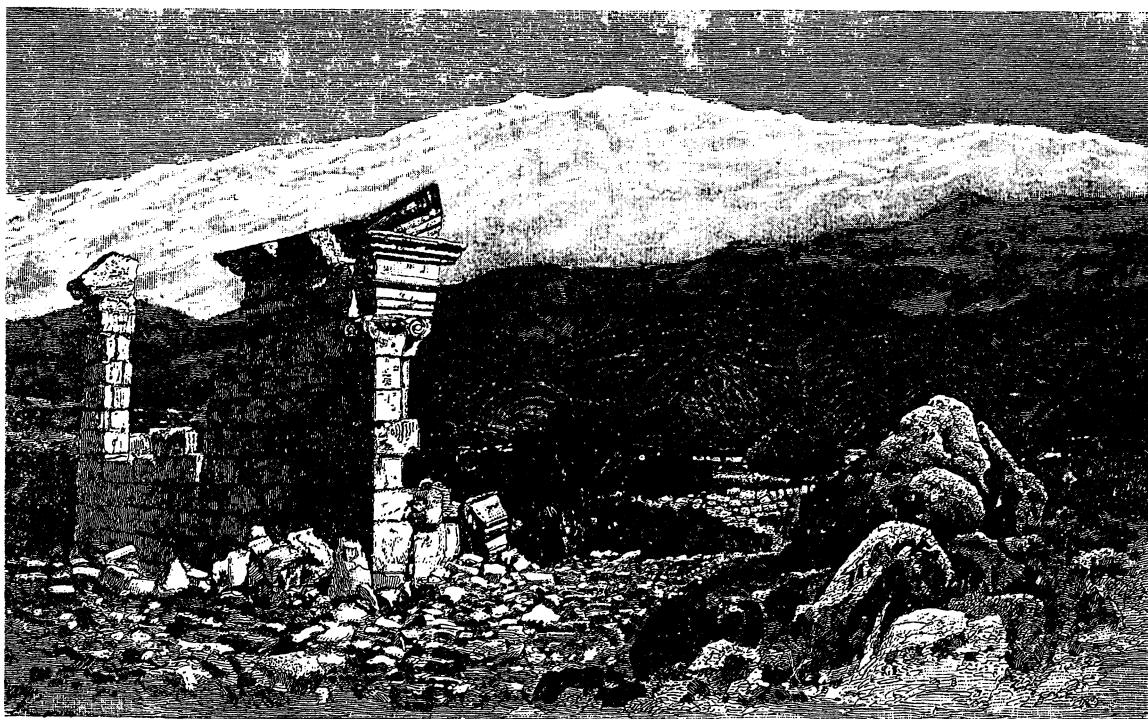
Mount Tabor is the Rigi, Mount Hermon the Mont Blanc, of Palestine. They are the two representative mountains of that country, the one for its gracefulness, the other for its loftiness. They are not mentioned in the New Testament, but repeatedly in the Old. They are associated together by the Psalmist when he says, "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name." Some of the greatest events in the history of Revelation, from the legislation of Moses to the Ascension of Christ, took place on mountains. Tabor or Hermon, probably the latter, is the Mount of Transfiguration. . . Mount Hermon is less graceful [than Mt. Tabor,] but more imposing and sublime. It is called "Jebel esh-Sheikh" by the Arabs, i.e., the chief mountain. It rises on the northern extremity of Galilee to a height of 10,000 feet above the Mediterranean, and presents three lofty peaks. It is covered with eternal snow, which gives it a glistening appearance. It can be seen from every direction far and wide, from Gerizim and Tabor in the south, from Damascus in the east, from the northern heights of the Antilebanon and Lebanon, and from the plains of Coelesyria. Moses saw it from the top of Pisgah in Moab, when "the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan." At its southern base lies Baniyas or Caesarea Philippi, one of the most romantic spots in Palestine. Here the river Jordan gushes out from the rocks. Here, on the boundary line between the Jews and the Gentiles, our Saviour spent several days before he entered on his last journey to Jerusalem. Here he elicited from Peter that famous confession, from which, as from a spiritual rock, have sprung the Christian confessions and creeds of subsequent ages. Here he prophesied the founding of his indestructible Church, his passion and resurrection.

Tabor and Hermon are the two claimants for the honor of being the MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION, or "the holy mount," as Peter calls it. It was certainly "a *high* mountain," according to the Evangelists, and the choice lies between these two. Both are in themselves equally well fitted for the event, Tabor rather than Hermon, on account of its central location in Palestine, only a few miles from Nazareth and the Lake of Gennesaret, where our Saviour spent the greater part of his life on earth.

Mt. Tabor and Mt. Hermon



Der Tabor.



RUINED TEMPLE AT THELTHATHA. JEBEL ESH SHEIKH—MOUNT HERMON.

Tabor has in its favor the monastic tradition, which goes back to St. Jerome in the fourth century, and which gave rise to a number of buildings on the summit. . . . But two arguments are against Tabor and in favor of Hermon.

(1.) The fact that the summit of Tabor was occupied by a city of the tribe of Zebulun, and was employed without intermission between the times of Antiochus the Great, 218 B.C., to the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, as a fortification, and hence unfit for quiet seclusion and meditation.

(2.) More conclusive than this local objection is the succession of events and the short interval between them. The transfiguration took place "six days" after Peter's confession in Caesarea Philippi, at the foot of Mount Hermon, and was followed by a journey to Capernaum, and thence to Jerusalem. This is all plain if we locate the transfiguration on Hermon; but it would have been a waste of time if Jesus should have traveled from Caesarea Philippi to Mount Tabor, passing Capernaum on the way, and gone back from Mount Tabor to Capernaum, then to proceed again southward to Jerusalem. Moreover, "it is exceedingly improbable that Christ should so suddenly have left his retreat in the highlands of Gaulanitis, and transferred the scene of one of his most secret revelations to Galilee, where he was everywhere persecuted". . . .

(adapted from *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*, New York: The American Tract Society, 1878, 330-335).

3A. The Context of the Transfiguration in the Ministry of Christ:

Henry Van Dyke, in his superb volume, *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land*, has one of the finest summaries found anywhere of the last six months of our Savior's earthly ministry. With just a few strokes he paints a synoptic picture of the events beginning at the foot of Mt. Hermon and culminating at the top of Mt. Calvary. It is worthwhile quoting his excellent observations, beginning with His arrival at Caesarea Philippi, just north of the ancient city of Dan:

The aqueduct carried by the bridge is still full of flowing water, and the drops which fall from it in a fine mist make a little rainbow as the afternoon sun shines through the archway draped with maidenhair fern. On the stone pavement of the bridge we trace the ruts worn two thousand years ago by the chariots of the men who conquered the world. The chariots have all rolled by. On the broken edge of the tower above the gateway sits a ragged Bedouin boy, making shrill, plaintive music with his pipe of reeds.

We repose in front of our tents among the olive trees at the close of the day. The cool sound of running streams and rustling poplars is on the moving air, and the orange-golden sunset enchants the orchard with mystical light. All the swift visions of striving Saracens and Crusaders of conquering Greeks and Romans, fade away from us, and we see the figure of the Man of Nazareth with His little company of friends and disciples coming up from Galilee.

It was here that Jesus retreated with His few faithful followers from the opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees. This was the northernmost spot of earth ever trodden by His feet, the longest distance from Jerusalem that He ever travelled. Here in this exquisite garden of Nature, in a region of the Gentiles, within sight of the shrines devoted to those Greek and Roman rites which were so luxurious and so tolerant, four of the most beautiful and significant events of His life and ministry took place.

He asked His disciples plainly to tell their secret thought of Him—whom they believed their Master to be. And when Peter answered simply: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus blessed him for the answer, and declared that He would build His church upon that rock.

Then He took Peter and James and John with Him and climbed one of the high lonely slopes of Hermon. There He was transfigured before them, His face shining like the sun and His garments glistening like the snow on the mountain peaks. But when they begged to stay there with Him, He led them down to the valley again, among the sinning and suffering children of men.

At the foot of the mount of transfiguration, He healed the demoniac boy whom his father had brought to the other disciples, but for whom they had been unable to do anything; and He taught them that the power to help men comes from faith and prayer.

And then, at last, He turned His steps from this safe and lovely refuge, (where He might surely have lived in peace, or from which He might have gone out unmolested into the wide Gentile world), backward to His own country, His own people, the great, turbulent, hard-hearted Jewish city, and the fate which was not to be evaded by One who loved sinners and came to save them. He went down into Galilee, down through Samaria and Perea, down to Jerusalem, down to Gethsemane and to Golgotha, —fearless, calm,—sustained and nourished by that secret food which satisfied His heart in doing the will of God.

It was in the quest of this Jesus, in the hope of somehow drawing nearer to Him, that we made our pilgrimage to the Holy Land. And now, in the cool of the evening at Caesarea Philippi, we ask ourselves whether our desire has been granted, our hope fulfilled?

Yes more richly, more wonderfully than we dared to dream. For we have found a new vision of Christ, simpler, clearer, more satisfying, in the freedom and reality of God's out-of-doors . . . The Jesus whom we have found is the Child of Nazareth playing among the flowers; the Man of Galilee walking beside the lake, healing the sick, comforting the sorrowful, cheering the lonely and despondent; the well-beloved Son of God transfigured in the sunset glow of snowy Hermon, weeping by the sepulchre in Bethany, agonizing in the moonlit garden of Gethsemane, giving His life for those who did not understand Him, though they loved Him, and for those who did not love Him because they did not understand Him, and rising at last triumphant over death,—such a Saviour as all men need and as no man could ever have imagined if He had not been real.

(*Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948, 283-287).

4A. The Confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi:

J. L. Porter has captured in a few strokes of the pen the scenic splendor of the sacred site where Peter, the spokesmen for the twelve disciples, first professed openly his faith in Him as Messiah:

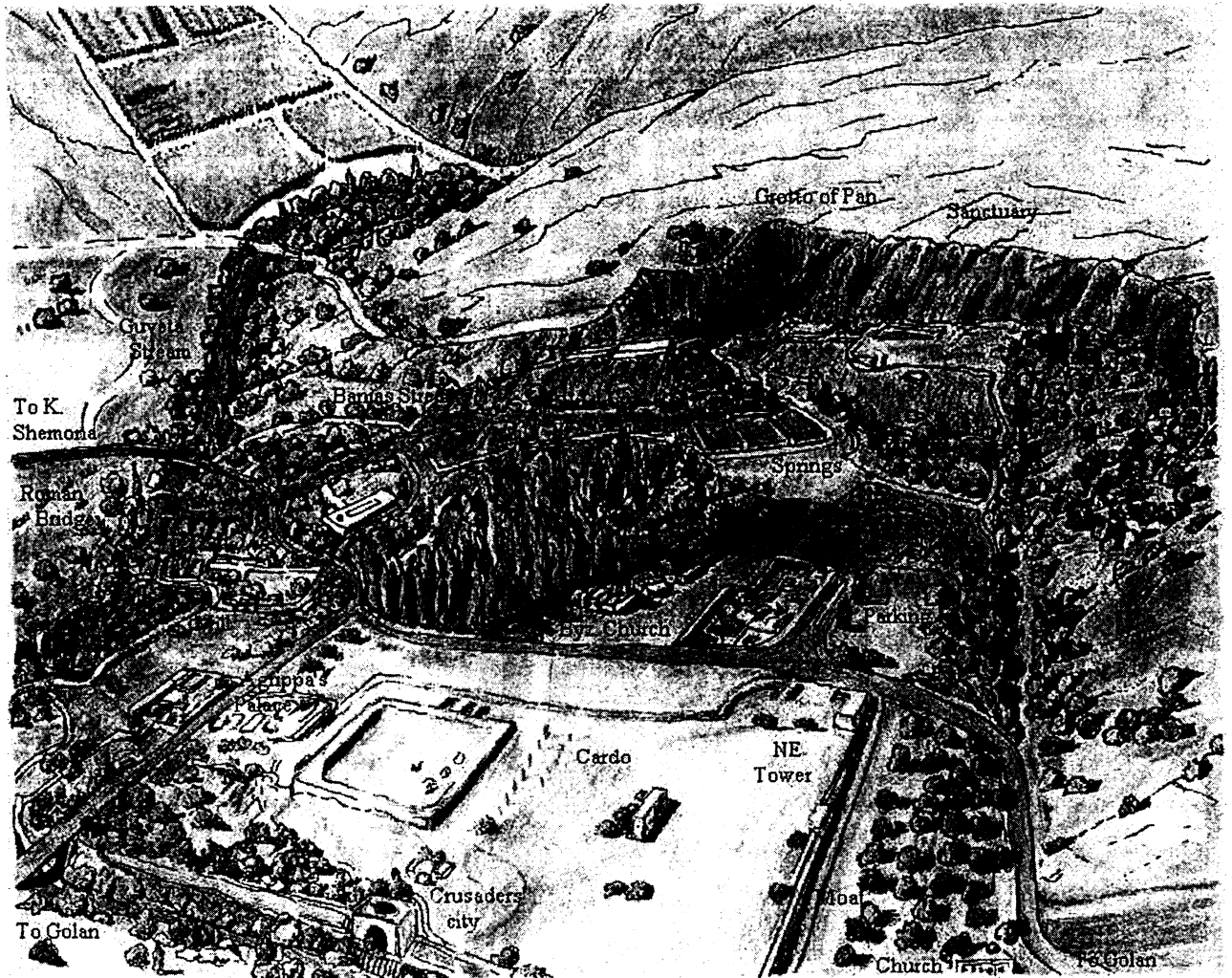
Half an hour across the plain, through pleasant forest glades, bordered with myrtle, acacia, and oleander, and another half hour up a rugged mountain side, beneath the shade of Bashan's stately oaks, brought me to the site of the old Greek city of Panium, which Herod the Great rebuilt, and re-named Caesarea-Philippi. This is one of the very few really beautiful spots in Palestine. Behind rises Hermon, steep, rugged, and grand, one of its lower peaks crowned by the frowning battlements of a Phoenician castle. In front stretches out the broad plain of Merom, like a vast meadow, and away beyond it is the mountain range of Lebanon. The city stood upon a natural terrace, which is interspersed with groves of oaks and olives and shrubberies of hawthorn, myrtle, and acacia, and is all alive with streams of water and miniature cascades, fretting here and there against prostrate column and ruined wall. It is, in fact, as Dean Stanley has happily named it, a Syrian Tivoli.

Behind the ruins rises a cliff of ruddy limestone. At its base is a dark cave, now nearly filled with the ruins of a temple. From the cave, from the ruins, from every chink and cranny in the soil and rocks around, waters gush forth, which soon collect into a torrent, dash in sheets of foam down a rocky bed, and at length plunge over a precipice into a deep dark ravine. *This is the other great fountain of the Jordan.*

It is "holy ground," for Jesus was here. Beside the fountain he uttered those memorable words, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. xvi. 13-20; xvii. 1-13). May not the sight of the great cliff overhead have suggested the peculiar form of the expression? And we read that six days afterwards Christ took three of his disciples, and led them "*up into an high mountain*, and was transfigured before them." Standing there amid the ruins of Caesarea, one does not need to ask where the Mount of Transfiguration is. Hermon, the grandest and the most beautiful of all the mountains of Palestine, has established its claim to the title of "holy mount."

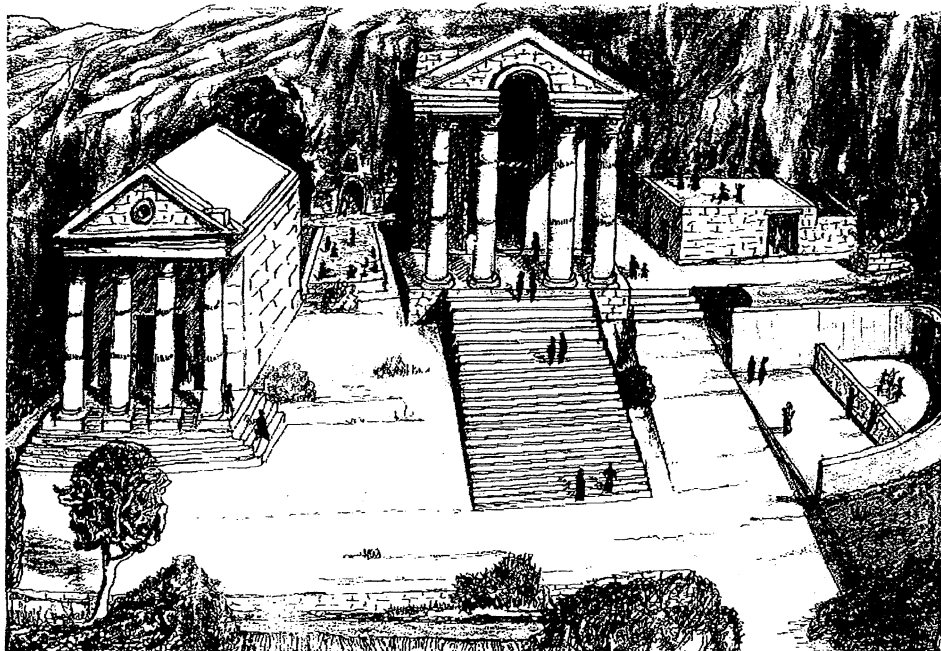
(*The Giant Cities of Bashan and Syria's Holy Places*, London: T. Nelson and Sons, Paternoster Row, 1891, 103-104.)

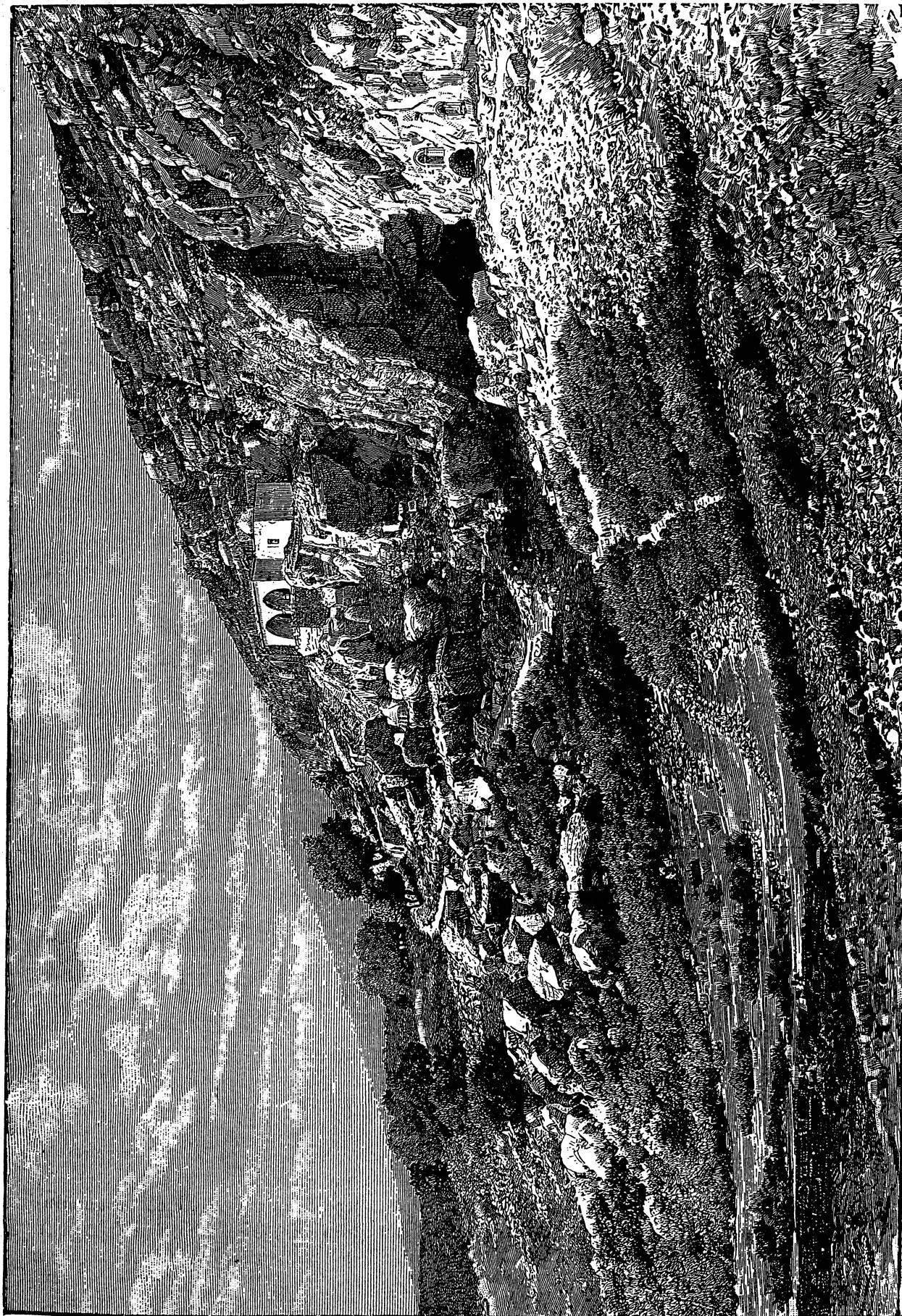
The spectacularly beautiful source of the Banias branch of the Jordan surrounded by Greek and pagan sanctuaries. The second picture below shows the reconstruction of Greek temples near the site of Peter's confession.



Banias_TemplesS.jpg (JPEG Image, 720x501 pixels)

http://www.biblewalks.com/Photos/banias_temple_s.jpg





SOURCES OF THE JORDAN BENEATH THE CAVE OF PAN.

5A. The Centrality of the Transfiguration in the Incarnation of Christ:

It would be unthinkable to write a book on the life of Christ or the gospel story without commenting one of the highlights in our Savior's earthly ministry and undoubtedly the high point in the experience of the disciples Peter, James and John.

One of the great works on the ministry of Christ is by Cunningham Geikie, who has written widely and with real spiritual insight on a variety of biblical topics. Thus far this writer has not quoted him, but it is worthwhile to reproduce here some of his excellent comments on the transfiguration of Christ. The points of the outline are added by this writer for the sake of clarity.

1b. The companions of the Savior:

Taking the three of His little band most closely in sympathy with Him, and most able to receive the disclosures that might be made to them, He ascended into the hills towards evening, for silent prayer. The favoured friends were Peter, the rock-like, His host at Capernaum from the first; and the two Sons of Thunder, John and James; loved disciples both, but John, the younger, nearest his Master's heart of all the Twelve, as most like Himself in spirit. They had been singled out, already, for similar especial honour, for they alone had entered the death-chamber in the house of Jairus, and they were, hereafter, to be the only witnesses of the awful sorrow of Gethsemane.

2b. The communion and prayer:

Evening fell while Jesus poured out His soul in high communion with His Father, and the three, having finished their nightly devotions, had wrapped themselves in their abbas and lain down on the hill-side, to sleep. Meanwhile their Master continued in prayer. His whole soul filled with the crisis so fast approaching.

3b. The condition of the Savior:

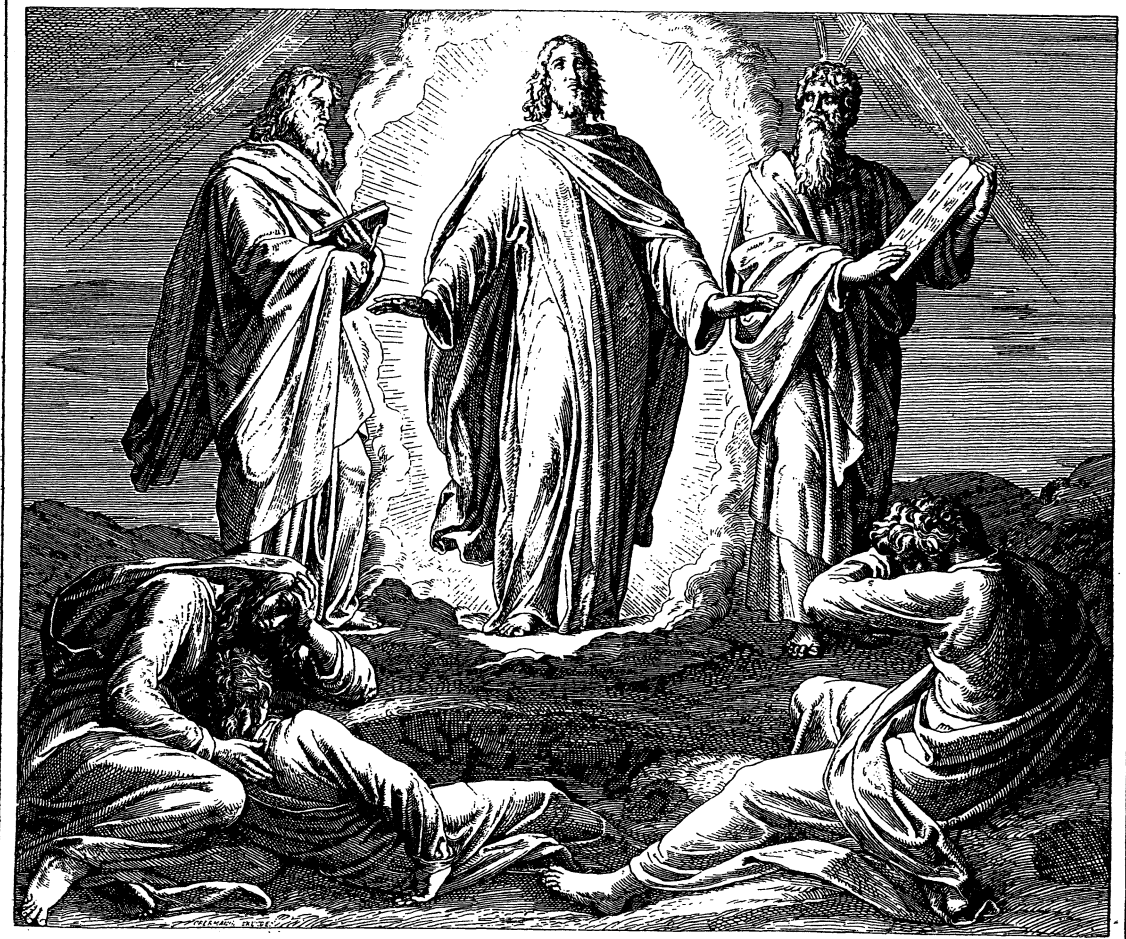
He had taken the three with Him, to overcome their dread of His death and repugnance to the thought of it, as unbefitting the Messiah; to strengthen them to bear the sight of His humiliation hereafter; and to give them an earnest of the glory into which He would enter after His decease, and thus teach them that, though unseen, He was, more than ever, mighty to help. He was about to receive a solemn consecration for the cross, but, with it, a strong support to His soul in the prospect of such a death. He was a man like ourselves, and His nature, now in its high prime, and delighting in life, must have shrunk from the thought of dying. The prolonged agony and shame of so painful and ignominious an end, must have clouded His spirit at times; but, above all, who can conceive the moral suffering that must have been in the thought that, though the Holy One, He was to be made an offering for sin; that, though filled with unutterable love to His people, He was to die at their hands as their enemy; that, though innocent and stainless, He was to suffer as a criminal; that, though the beloved Son of God, He was to be condemned as a blasphemer?

4b. The change in His appearance:

As He continued praying, His soul rose above all earthly sorrows. Drawn forth by the nearness of His Heavenly Father, the Divinity within shone through the veiling flesh till



His raiment kindled to the dazzling brightness of light, or of the glittering snow on the peaks above Him and His face glowed with a sunlike majesty.



5b. The comfort of Moses and Elijah:

Amidst such an effulgence it was impossible the three could sleep. Roused by the splendour, they gazed, awe-struck, at the wonder, when, lo! Two human forms, in glory like that of the angels, stood by His side—Moses and Elijah, the founder, and the great defender, of the Old Economy, which He had come at once to supersede and to fulfill. Their presence from the upper world was a symbol that the Law and the Prophets henceforth gave place to a higher Dispensation; but they had also another mission. They had passed through death, or, at least, from life, and knew the triumph that lay beyond mortality to the faithful servants of God. Who could speak to Him as they, of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, and temper the gloom of its anticipation? Their presence spoke of the grave conquered, and of the eternal glory beyond. The empty tomb under Mount Abarim, and the horses and chariots of Elijah, dispelled all fears of the future, and instantly banished all human weakness. That His Eternal Father should have honoured and cheered Him by such an embassy at such a time, girt His soul to the joyful acceptance of the awful task of redemption. Human agitation and spiritual conflict passed away, to return no more in their bitterness till the night before Calvary. His whole nature rose to the height of His great enterprise. Henceforth His one thought was to finish the work His Father had given Him to do.

6b. The concern of Peter:

Meanwhile, the three Apostles, dazzled, confused, and lost in wonder, gazed silently on the amazing sight, and listened. But it is not given to earth to have more than brief glimpses of Heaven. Moses and Elijah had ere long finished their mission, and were about to return to the presence of God. Could they not be induced to stay awhile? Peter, ever first to speak, and hardly knowing, in his confusion, what he said, would at least try to prolong such an interview. "Master," said he, to amplify his words, "it is good for us to be here; let us gather some branches from the slopes around, and put up three booths, like those of the Feast of Tabernacles; one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." The cares and troubles of his wandering life, and all his gloomy forebodings for his Master and himself, had faded away before such brightness and joy, and, in his fond childlike simplicity, he dreamed of lengthening out the delight.

7b. The contrast between Mt. Sinai and the Mt. of Transfiguration:

The Almighty had come down of old, to Mount Sinai, in blackness, and darkness, and tempest; but now, a bright cloud descended from the clear sky, like that from which He had of old spoken to Moses at the door of the Tabernacle, and overshadowed Jesus and the two heavenly visitors, filling the three Apostles with fear, as they saw it spread round and over their Master, and those with Him. It was the symbol of the presence of God, for He, also, had drawn nigh to bear witness to His Eternal Son.

8b. The confirmation of the Father:

It was not enough that Moses and Elijah had honoured Him—a voice from the midst of the cloud added a still higher testimony; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."

9b. The commentary of Peter:

Such a confirmation of the great confession of Peter was never to be forgotten. Almost a generation later, when he wrote his second Epistle, the remembrance of this night was as vivid as ever. "We were eye-witnesses," says he, "of His Majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.' And this voice which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount." The brightness of a vision so amazing lingered in the memory of those who beheld it to the latest day of their lives.

(The Life and Words of Christ, New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1913, 236-239).

Talented and pious individuals have tried to picture the scene on the Mt. of Transfiguration. Perhaps none is more famous than that by the Italian artist Raphael. Philip Schaff shows a real appreciation of this icon when he writes:

Every one knows the picture of the Transfiguration in the Vatican, which represents the Saviour soaring above the earth and floating in glory, Moses and Elijah bowing in adoration before him, the disciples overpowered by the dazzling light, and below, in startling contrast to this scene of celestial peace, the misery of the lunatic whose healing follows in the gospel narrative. It is one of the sublimest conceptions of human genius, and yet but an imperfect reflection of the reality. It was the last work of Raphael, and accompanied his coffin to the grave in the Pantheon. He died of the transfiguration, in the prime of manhood; but his picture, multiplied in ten thousand copies all over the earth, will continue to preach to admiring beholders the best sermon on this supernatural event.

(*Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*, New York: The American Tract Society, 1878, 335-336).

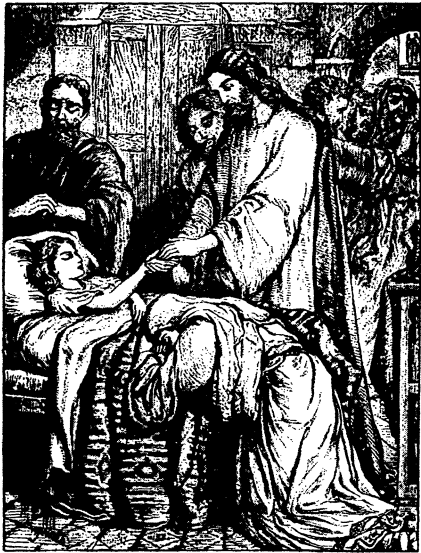
Raphael's Timeless Painting of the Transfiguration



THE TRANSFIGURATION — FROM THE GREAT RAPHAEL PAINTING.

Christ's Companionship With Peter, James and John

The Raising of Jairus' Daughter
Luke 8:51



The Mt. of Transfiguration
Mt. 17:12; Mk. 9:2; Lk. 9:28



The Agony in Gethsemane
Mt. 26:37



of a Sweet Person

Transfiguration of His Person

of His Passion

Prayer for restoration to life

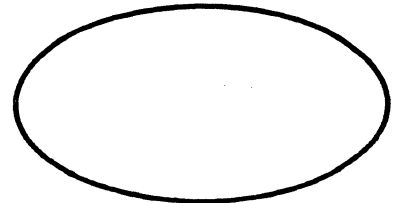
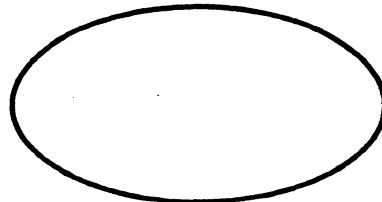
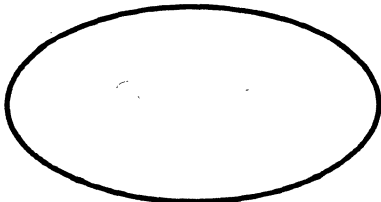
Prayer out of devotion

Prayer for deliverance from
the cup

Divine

Divine

Human



Christ's Companionship With Peter, James and John

The Raising of Jairus' Daughter
Luke 8:51



The Mt. of Transfiguration
Mt. 17:12; Mk. 9:2; Lk. 9:28



The Agony in Gethsemane
Mt. 26:37



Vivification of a Sweet Person

Transfiguration of His Person

Anticipation of His Passion

Prayer for restoration to life

Prayer out of devotion

Prayer for deliverance from
the cup

Divine
Power

Divine
Performance

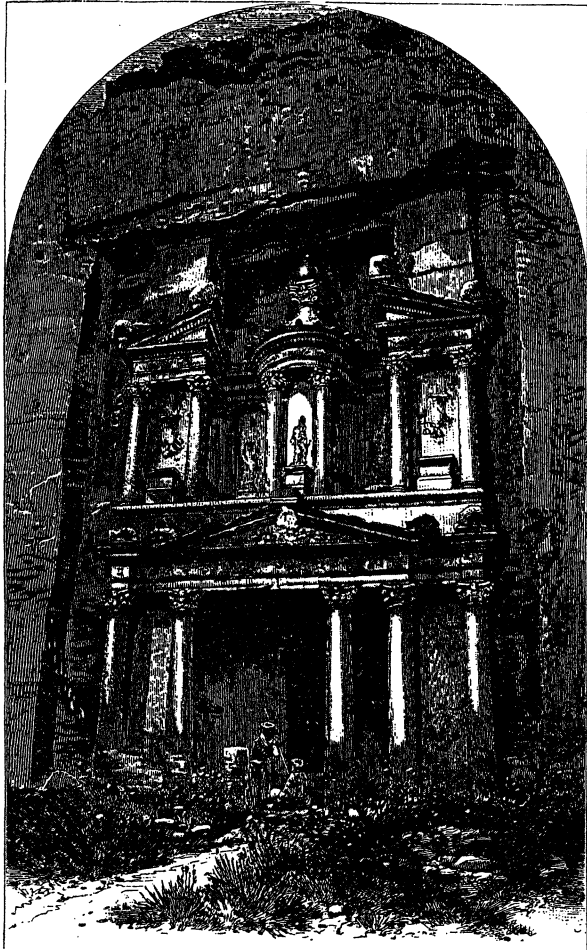
Human
Passion

Concern

Companionship

Comfort

Mt. Seir – Security Despite the Schemes of Satan and the Son of Perdition



PETRA: REFUGE IN THE ROCKS

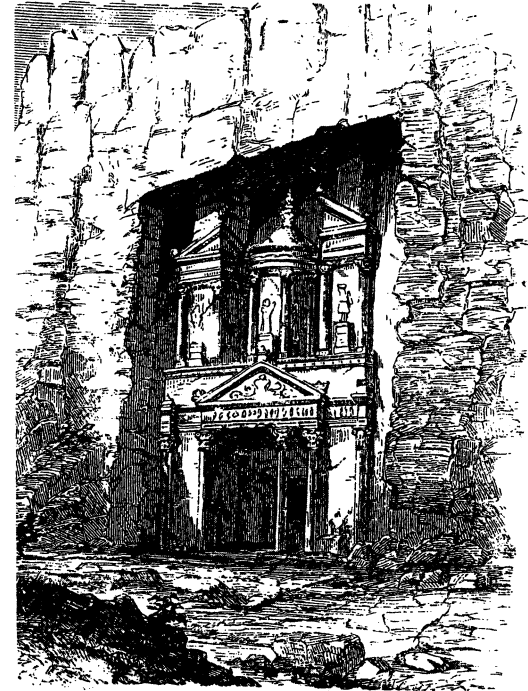


Mt. Seir – Security Despite the Schemes of Satan and the Son of Perdition

1A. Seir:

Mt. Seir is concisely described in *Smith's Bible Dictionary*:

Seir, (*hairy, shaggy*). We have both "land of Seir," Gen. 32:3; 36:30, and "Mount Seir." Gen. 14:6. It is the original name of the mountain range extending along the east side of the valley of Arabah, from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf. The Horites appear to have been the chief of the aboriginal inhabitants, Gen. 36:20; but it was ever afterward the possession of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. The Mount Seir of the Bible extended much farther south than the modern province, as is shown by the words of Deut. 2:1-8. It had the Arabah on the west, vs. 1 and 8; it extended as far south as the head of the Gulf of Akabah, ver. 8; its eastern border ran along the base of the mountain range where the plateau of Arabia begins its northern border is not so accurately determined. (William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1884, 302.)

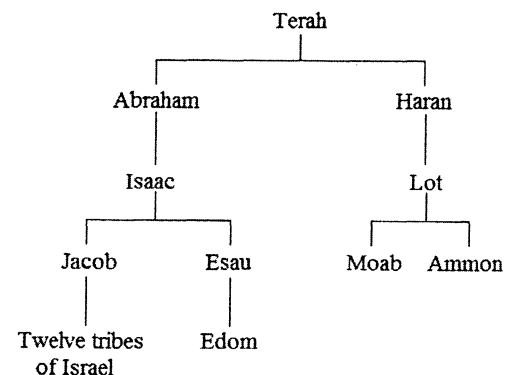
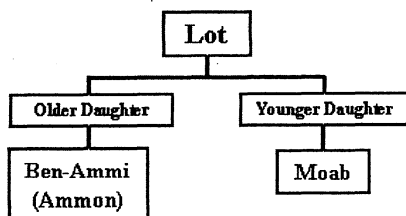


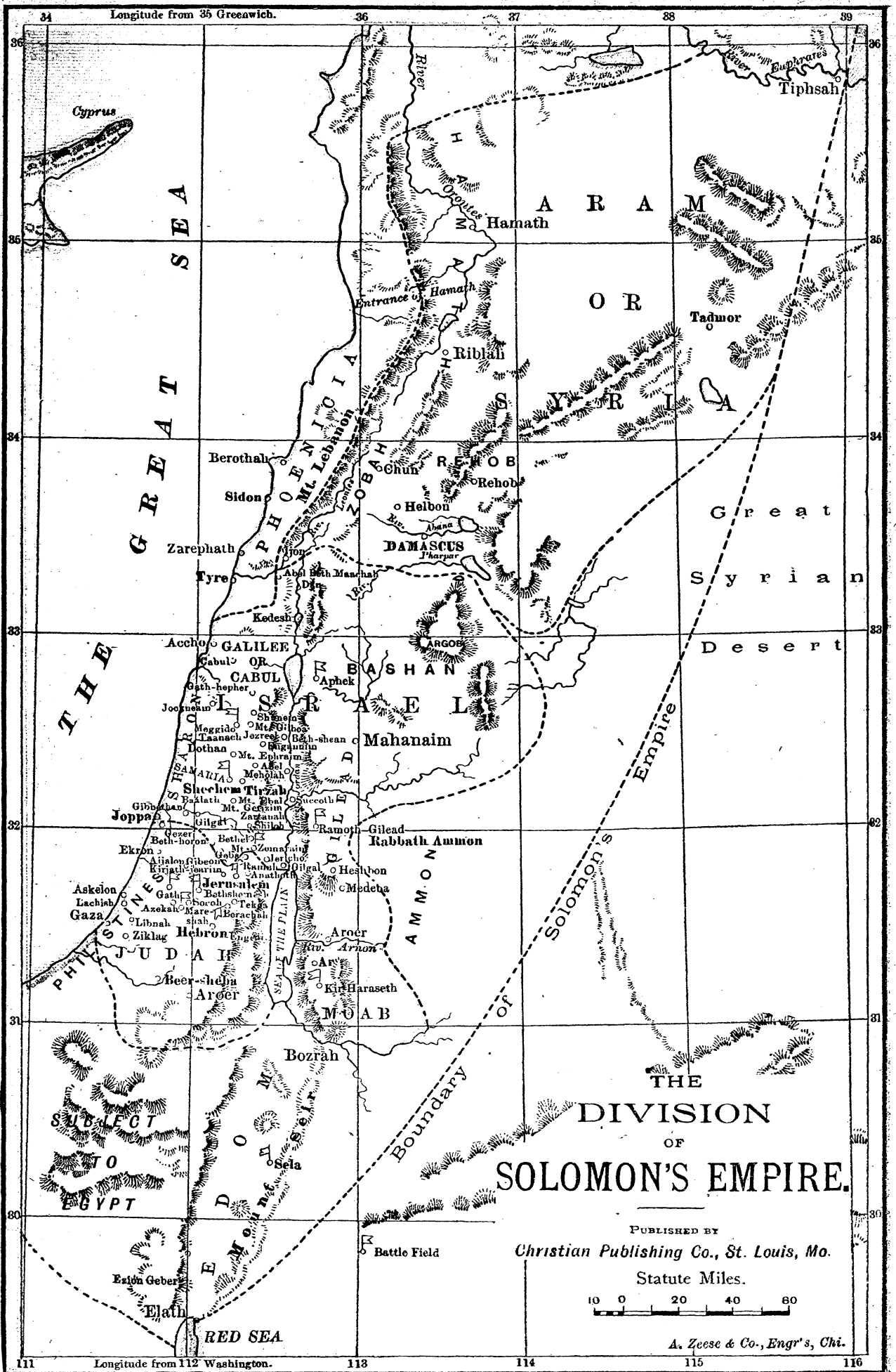
2A. Sela or Selah:

Before a more detailed description of Petra is given, it may be helpful to cite a brief overview of that amazing city from the *Westminster Bible Dictionary*:

Sela or Selah, [The rock]. The first form of this word occurs in Isa. 16:1; the second form in 2 Kings 14:7. In three passages (Judg. 1:36; 2 Chron. 25:12; Obad. ver. 3) the proper name is rendered in our Authorized Version "the rock." It designates a question, that ancient rock-city, the capital of Idumaea, which in later times was known as Petra. It was in the midst of the mountain-region denominated Seir, in the neighborhood of Mount Hor, about two days' journey north of the head of the Elanitic Gulf. It lay in a deep valley a mile in length and a half mile in width. The valley is defined by precipitous rocks, which rise to heights varying from two hundred to one thousand feet. In the face of these rocks dwellings for the living and tombs for the dead were excavated with vast labor. As the city lay in the great route of the Western caravan-traffic of Arabia, and of the merchandise brought up to the Elanitic Gulf, it was at one time not only the strong capital of Idumaea, but also the busy metropolis of a commercial people. In the end of the fourth century B.C. Petra appears as the head-quarters of the Nabathaeans. About 70 B.C. it was the residence of the Arab princes named Aretas. It was brought into subjection to the Roman empire by Trajan. It is now and has been for ages unpeopled, the country around it being occupied by bands of roving Bedouin.

(Thomas J. Shepherd, *The Westminster Bible Dictionary*, Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1850, 462.)





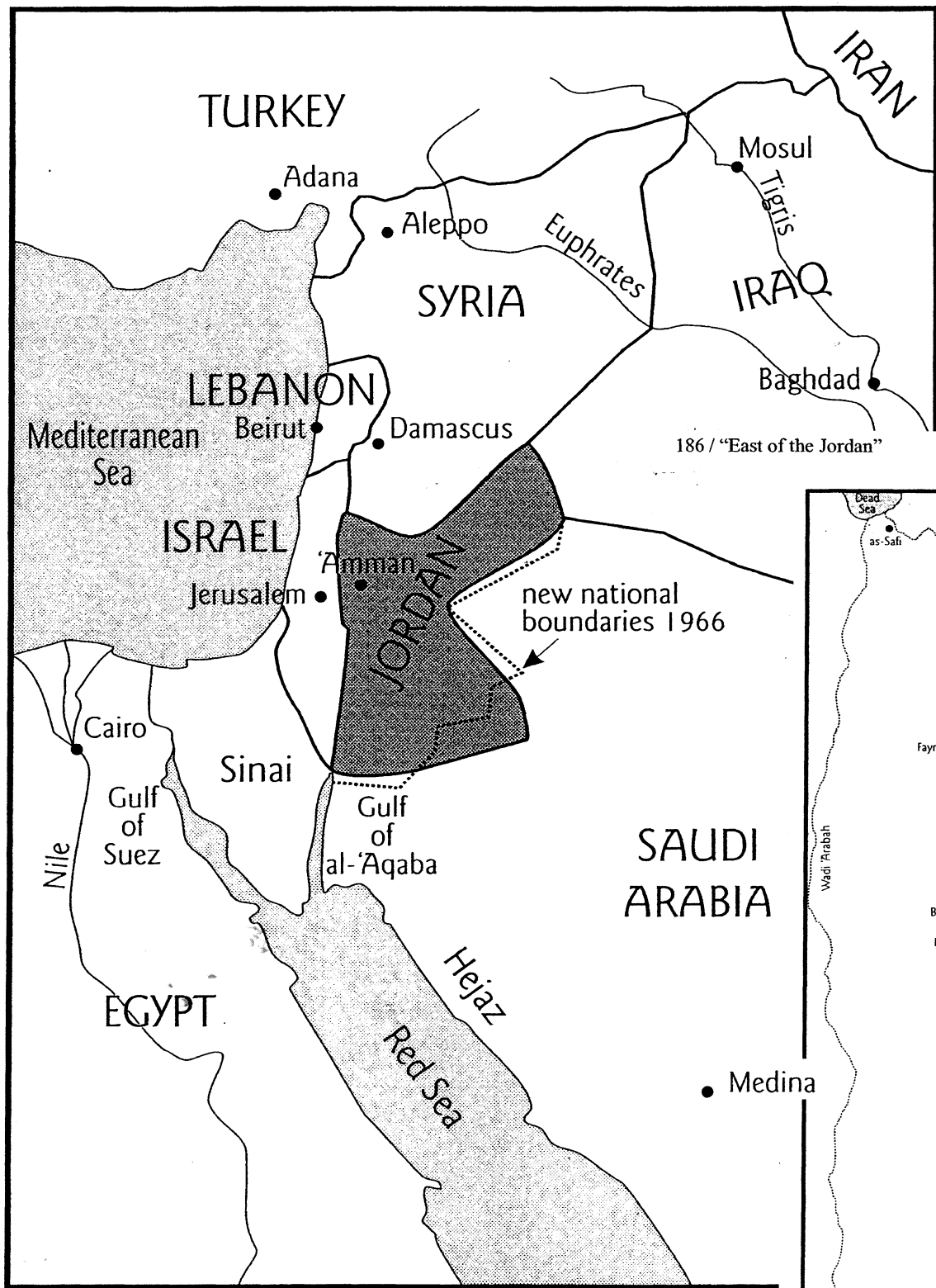


Fig. 1. Situation Map of Jordan.

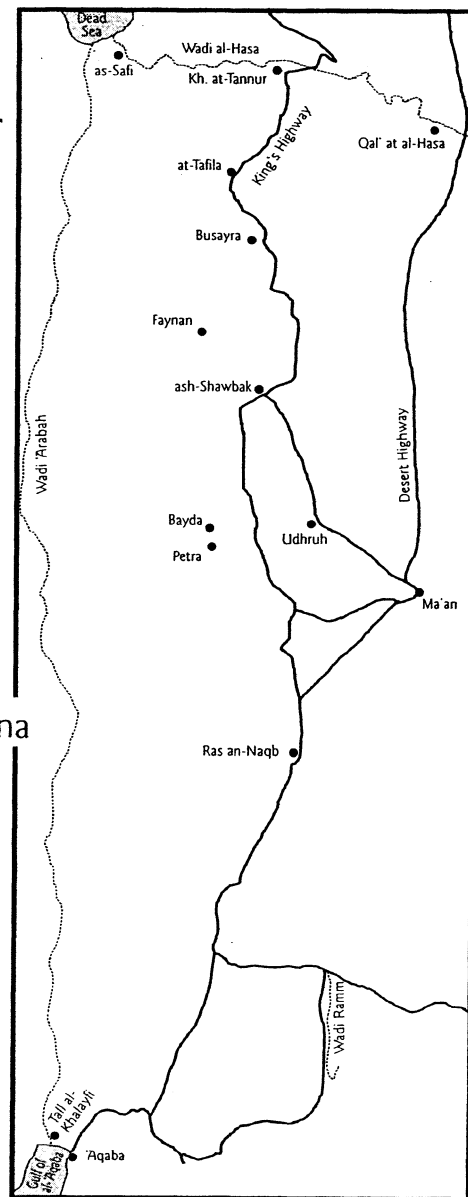


Fig. 12. Edomite Territory and Sites.

3A. Petra:

1b. The description of Petra in Encyclopedia Britannica:

Petra: ancient city, centre of an Arab kingdom in Hellenistic and Roman times, its ruins are in southwest Jordan. The city was built on a terrace, pierced from east to west by the Wadi Musa (the Valley of Moses)—one of the places where according to tradition, the Israelite leader Moses struck a rock and water gushed forth. The valley is enclosed by sandstone cliffs veined with shades of red and purple varying to pale yellow, and for this reason Petra was called by the 19th-century English biblical scholar John William Burgon a “rose-red city half as old as Time.”

The Greek name Petra (“Rock”) probably replaced the biblical name Sela. Remains from the Paleolithic and the Neolithic periods have been discovered at Petra, and Edomites are known to have occupied the area about 1200 B.C. Centuries the Nabataeans, an Arab tribe, occupied it and made it the capital of their kingdom. In 312 B.C. the region was attacked by Seleucid forces, who failed to seize the city. Under Nabataean rule, Petra prospered as a centre of the spices trade that involved such disparate realms as China, Egypt, Greece, and India, and the city’s population swelled to between 10,000 and 30,000.

When the Nabataeans were defeated by the Romans in A.D. 106, Petra became the Roman province of Arabia but continued to flourish until changing trade routes caused its gradual commercial decline. After an earthquake (not the first) damaged the city in 551, significant habitation seems to have ceased. The Islamic invasion occurred in the 7th century, and a Crusader outpost is evidence of activity there in the 12th century. After the Crusades, the city was unknown to the Western world until it was rediscovered by the Swiss traveler Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1812.

(cited by <http://wonderingminstrels.blogspot.com/2000/07/petra-john-williamburgon>)

2b. The discoverer of Petra, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt:

The Swiss explorer who rediscovered Petra in 1812, Burckhardt was a classic nineteenth-century adventurer, the kind of man who would spend years polishing his disguise as an Arab so he could pass unnoticed through the Middle East, a land not always hospitable to curious Europeans. Under contract to the African Association, a private group of wealthy men in Britain who sponsored exploration, Burckhardt planned to cross the Sahara and seek the source of the River Niger. He first perfected his traveling persona as an Arab trader named Sheikh Ibrahim Ibn Abd Allah, the set off from Damascus toward Cairo. On the way he decided to take a look inside the Wadi Mousa (the Valley of Moses) in hilly region north of the Red Sea, rumored to contain the ancient ruins of a lost city. Burckhardt told his reluctant guide that he had promised to sacrifice a goat at the tomb of the prophet Aaron, which lay on a mountaintop inside the valley. Although his guide grew increasingly suspicious of his charge’s interest in the archeological wonders, Burckhardt’s ruse allowed him to become the first European to see Petra in a millennium.

(<http://wonderingminstrels.blogspot.com/2000/07/petra-john-williamburgon>)

Another account, equally interesting, is found at the Atlas Tours website:



Petra the "rose-red city" of the ancient Nabataean civilization is situated in the south of Jordan. It lies to the east of Wadi Araba, a part of the Great Rift Valley, approximately 133 kilometers as the crow flies from the shores of the Gulf of Aqaba.



Hidden away amidst the fold of spectacular hills, this unique site was lost to Europeans until it was rediscovered in 1812 by the Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt. After spending several years learning Arabic and studying the tenets of Islam, Burckhardt, who passed himself off as a Muslim from India, set out on his journey under the auspices of the London-based "Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior parts of Africa."

En route to Cairo, through the area of what is now Jordan, his fluent Arabic enabled him to understand stories of a wondrous ancient city hidden away amongst impenetrable mountains. However, he needed a plausible excuse to gain access to the city without arousing any suspicion as to his real intentions. By claiming he wished to make a sacrifice at the tomb of the Prophet Aaron (pbuh), which was nearby, he gained entry to the forgotten city of Petra.

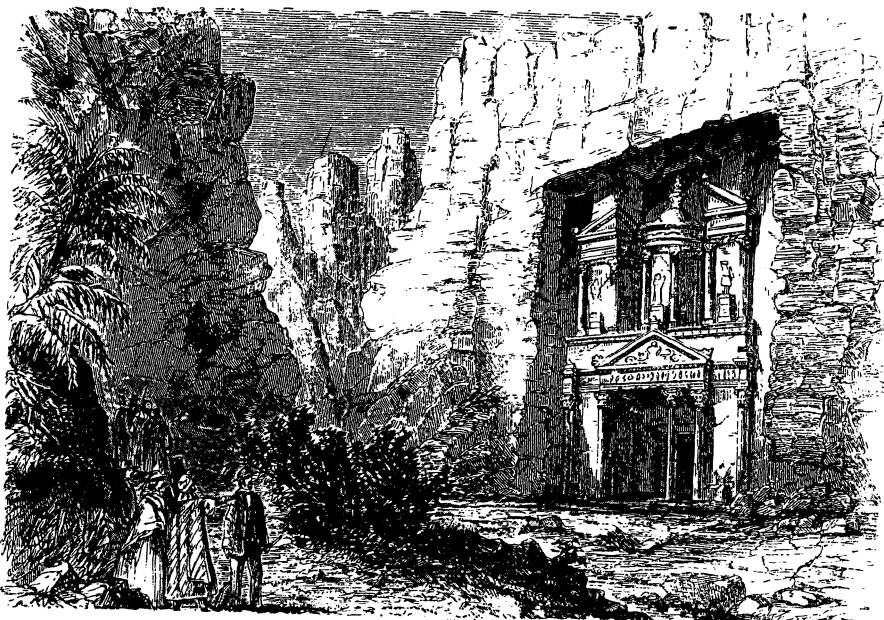
One can imagine the impression the ruins made upon him, for he was fully able to appreciate the importance of his discovery and correctly identify the city as ancient Petra. In spite of the fact that he was obliged to conceal his interest and excitement from his guides, Burckhardt recorded what he had seen, and his account, published in 1822 was to excite great interest in Europe and inspire a long line of travelers to visit the site.

Today, the dangers of such an expedition have disappeared and the visitor is able to explore the city in comfort. One can share the excitement Burckhardt would have felt on his first visit in 1812 as one enters the narrow gorge of Al-Siq—the secret entrance to Petra. After winding down this great natural cleft for over a kilometer, the sudden impact of the view of the Treasury is as strong every time.

This unique site never fails to enchant visitors; the setting of the monumental Nabataean remains against a background of rugged mountains scenery is spectacular and its colors, equally thrilling.

Petra, once described by a poet as a "rose-red city" is in fact dusky pink, broken at times by swirls of yellow, mauve, gray and white. No two colors remain the same, for the colors constantly change according to the time of day and the quality of the light. The rock is further set off by the bright green and pink of oleanders or the orange of cactus flowers. (http://www.atlastours.net/jordan/petra_discovery.html.)

Johann Ludwig Burckhardt



The Khuzneh at Petra.



3b. Sonnet about Petra:

John Burgon

John William Burgon (21 August 1813 – 4 August 1888) was an English Anglican divine who became the Dean of Chichester Cathedral in 1876. He is remembered for his passionate defence of the historicity and Mosaic authorship of Genesis and of Biblical inerrancy in general.



John William
Burgon

**It seems no work of Man's creative hand
by labour wrought as wavering fancy planned;
But from the rock as if by magic grown,
eternal silent, beautiful, alone!
Not virgin-white like that of Doric shrine,
where erst Athena held her rites divine;
Not saintly-grey, like many a minster fane,
that crowns the hill and consecrates the plain;
But rose-red as if the blush of dawn,
that first beheld them were not yet withdrawn;
The hues of youth upon a brow of woe,
which Man deemed old two thousand years ago,
match me such marvel save in Eastern clime,
a rose-red city half as old as time.**

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Burgon)

The entire poem, scarcely remembered anymore, is reproduced at the end of this monograph. The poem deals with the area's fateful biblical and secular history, its place in biblical prophecy, and its unrivalled beauty among cities of antiquity. May the gentle reader find time to appreciate this magnificent poem.

4b. A traveler's account of Petra:

Three days hard traveling from Akabah through Wady Arabah, twice traversed by the Israelites during the exodus, brings us to Petra, the long-lost capital of Arabia Petraea, or ancient Edom, the Idumea of the Greeks—very remarkable ruins, nothing like them anywhere. Petra was at first inhabited the Horites, or "Dwellers in Caves," and it would appear that the inhabitants have always lived in caves; that after the conquest of the place by the Greeks and Romans, the natural rock dwellings of the aborigines were only enlarged and beautified, so that Petra has always been what its name imports, "A city in the clefts of the rocks," almost every house in it being hewn out of the solid rock—a variegated sandstone in which the crimson, orange, blue, and other natural tints blend so

richly as to give to the palaces, temples, theaters, and tombs, the appearance of being beautifully frescoed.

This city is mentioned by Pliny, Strabo, Josephus, and others; but about the sixth century of our era it disappeared from history, and for twelve hundred years its very site was unknown, and only within the present century recovered by Burckhardt. It is situated in a wild, rugged region, almost inaccessible, with many deep ravines, the rocks appearing to have been rent asunder by earthquakes, and standing two or three hundred feet high, almost perpendicular, and in places not more than ten or twenty feet apart, so that the city was surrounded with natural walls, strong gates closing the narrow defiles through which access only could be had.

In entering the city by the chasm of the Sik, which is over a mile long, you first pass many beautiful tombs with niches cut in the face of the cliff for statues and inscribed tablets, then under a picturesque arch spanning the ravine, supported by two Corinthian columns, called the Gate-way; when suddenly El Kuzneh, the Treasury, rises like a vision before you. The entire edifice, which is one hundred feet front by one hundred and fifty high, (except two columns of the portico, one of which has fallen,) is cut out of the rose-tinted rock, looking more like an apparition than any thing real.

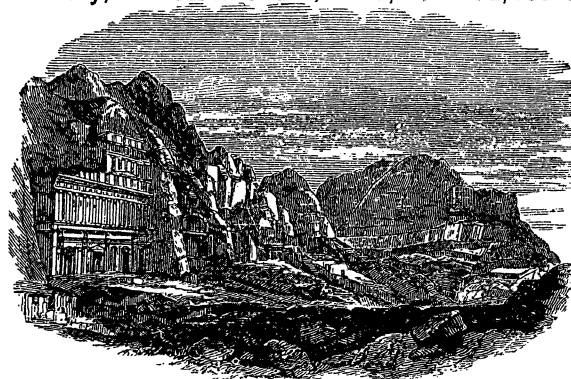
This is the gem of Petra's monuments, and yet nothing is known of its history or object. It is called the Treasury, from a legend that it was built by a certain king as a depository for his valuables, and the Arabs believe that the inaccessible urn high up on its pediment still contains much gold and many rare jewels.

There are other edifices in Petra much larger than the Treasury. The amphitheater has an arena one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, with thirty-three tiers of seats and many private boxes, capable of seating an audience of three thousand or more, all cut out of the living rock. Another monument, known as Ed Deir, the Convent, measuring one hundred and fifty feet front and two hundred and forty feet high, its façade ornamented with two rows of eight Corinthian columns one above the other, the lower tier of columns fifty feet high and seven feet in diameter, is a vast monolith—the entire edifice being hewn out of one massive block of stone. But no description of ours can do justice to these unique remains of a past civilization. They must be seen to be appreciated.

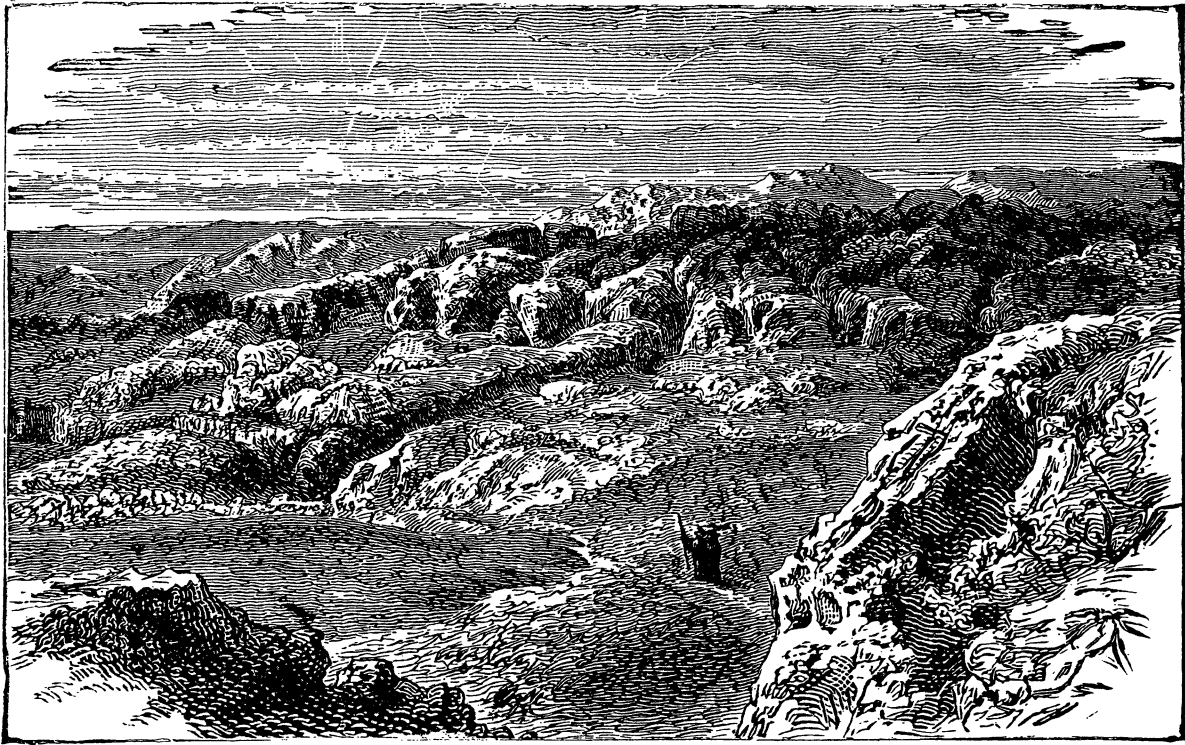
In the present desolate condition of Petra we see how literally the judgments of God denounced against it have been executed. "O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the height of the hill, though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished; . . . no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it." Its ancient inhabitants have all been cut off, and so far as known, not an Edomite to-day is to be found in all the world.

Near this Aaron died, and in a rock-hewn tomb covered with a welly, on the highest summit of Mount Hor, the brother of the great lawgiver sleeps his last long sleep.

(Frank S. DeHass, *Buried Cities Recovered, or Explorations in Bible Lands*, Philadelphia: Bradley, Garretson & Co., 1883, 101-102, 105-106.)



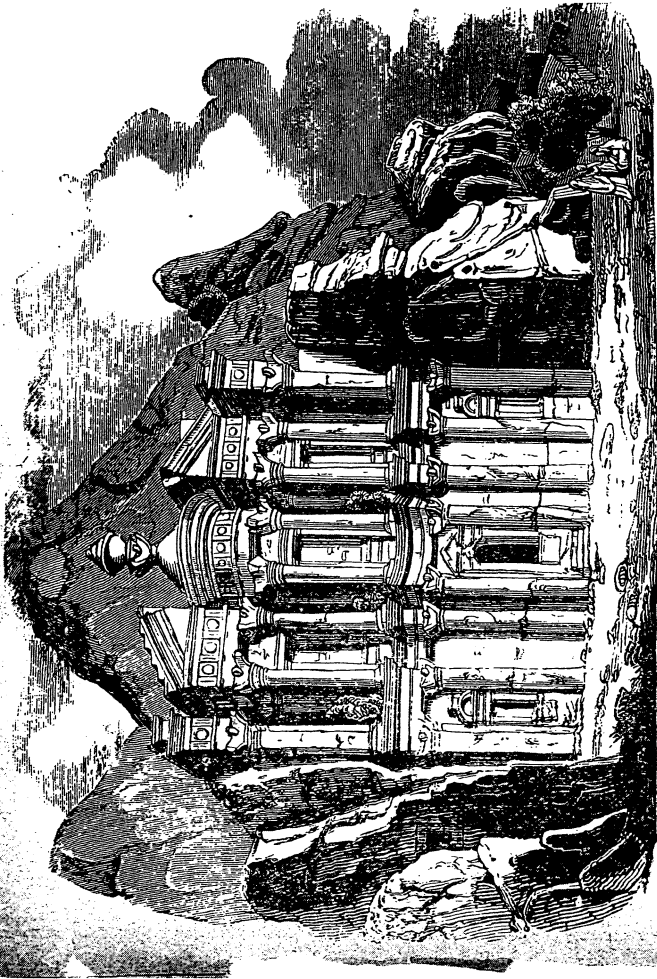
PETRA—LOOKING TOWARD THE THEATER.



Approach to Edom. (*From an original Photograph.*)



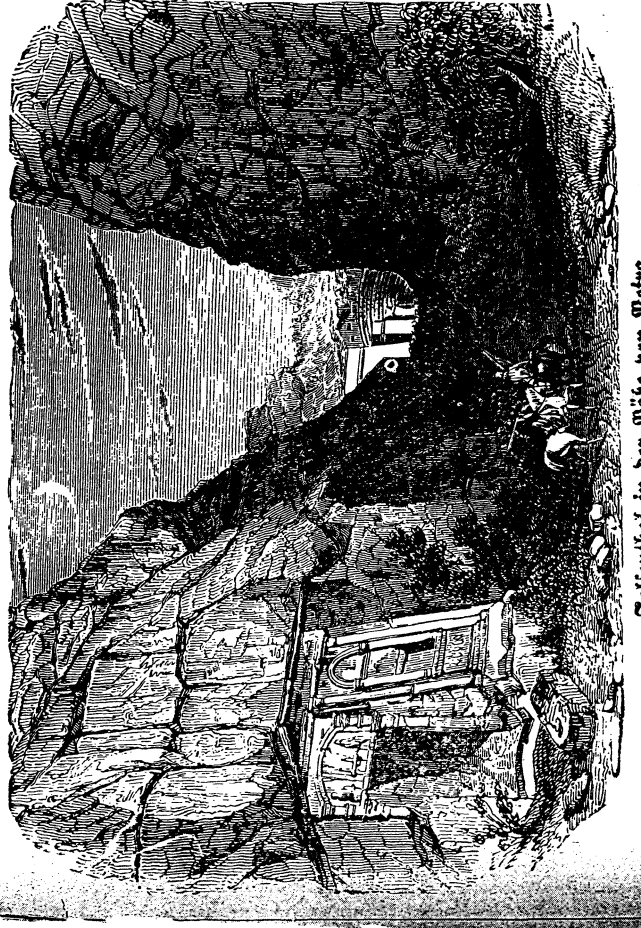
Tombs at Petra in Edom. (*From an original Photograph.*)



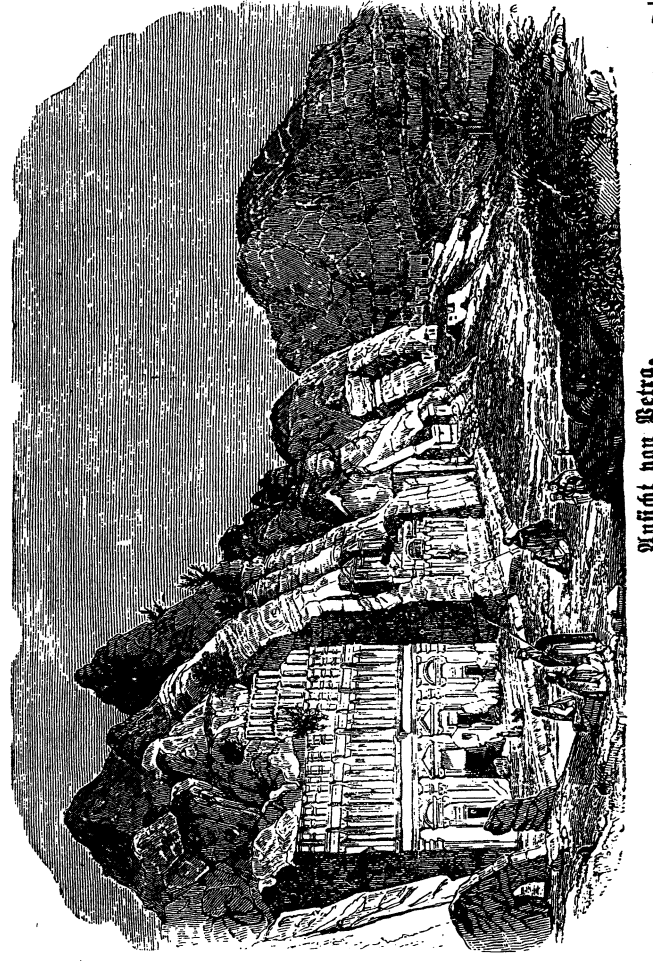
Grufte zu Petra.



Anficht eines Theiles der Ruinen von Petra.



Felsenthal in der Nähe von Petra.



Anficht von Petra.

4A. The Geography of the Area:

Nearly four thousand years ago an old, blind Hebrew bestowed his patriarchal blessing upon his two sons. To one of them he gave the promise of the family headship, implying peculiar privileges; to the other he said (Gen. xxvii. 39): "Behold, thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above." That patriarch was Isaac, and it was to Esau that the promise of the "fatness of the earth" was made. Was that promise, which evidently concerned the heritage of himself and his posterity, ever fulfilled?

Idumea, or ancient Edom, was the region which that posterity occupied for many centuries. It lies to the south of Palestine and the Dead Sea. Yet the traveler, as he approaches it, seems to see before him a wild tract of country, bristling with rugged hills and craggy mountains. The old name of the region—Mount Seir—recurs to his memory, while he sees before him a billowy waste of rocky heights, as if a great volcanic sea had been suddenly arrested with its heaving masses, and congealed in giant waves of sandstone and porphyry. Is this the land, he may well ask, which the words of the Hebrew patriarch described as "the fatness of the earth"? Is this a heritage to be envied or to be regarded as a portion fit to be coupled with the patriarch's blessing?

But a closer survey of the region will reveal more than a merely repulsive aspect. The valleys that wind about among the hills and mountains are singularly fertile, and even now, after centuries of neglect, the scene that meets the eye when the morning light falls on the dew-drops that cluster thickly on leaf and flower is well-nigh enchanting. Along up the bleak mountain sides, once terraced and covered with fruits and vines, the verdure often extends, while the varied colors of the rocks, rich with strange hues, contrasts with the deep green that here and there hides their deep red or dark purple tints. With civilized industry the land might once more resume its ancient fertility and beauty. It needs only that an end be put to the plundering and marauding habits of the Arabs, and with well-directed enterprise the land of Idumea might again become what it was when travelers, from East and West alike, were constrained to confess that it justified the epithet of the old patriarch, "the fatness of the earth."

Esau was not the original settler of Edom. The earliest inhabitants of the country were the Horites, from whom Mount Hor doubtless derives its name. They were so called, it is said, from Hori, the grandson of Seir (Gen. xxxvi. 22), because that word was descriptive of their habits as "dwellers in caves," and by them undoubtedly the earliest excavations in the precipitous cliffs of Petra were made.

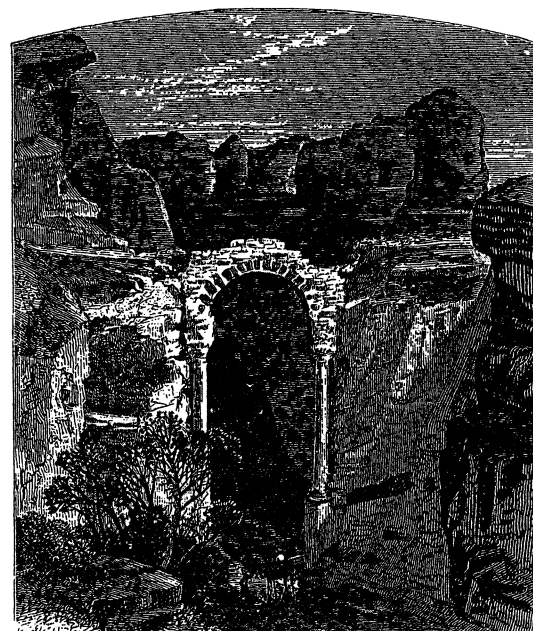
The physical geography of Edom has not a little to do with its history. It lay between the Gulf of Elath, reaching out from the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean, and was thus fitted to become a thoroughfare for the commerce between the two seas and the regions adjoining. On its western side it is bounded by low limestone hills, and on its eastern runs an almost unbroken limestone ridge, a thousand feet or more higher than the western elevations, but sloping away eastward into the plateau of the Arabian Desert. Within the space thus bounded rise lofty masses of igneous rock, chiefly porphyry, over which lies red and variegated sandstone, sometimes rich in its varied tints, and the average elevation of the summits is about 2,000 feet above the level of the sea. Edom is thus rendered in many parts wild, rugged and inaccessible, while the deep glens and flat terraces along the mountain sides are covered with rich soil, from which trees, shrubs and flowers spring up after the rains in great abundance. Indeed, travellers have marked the changed aspect of vegetation as they passed from the desert region on the east into the territory of Edom in the vicinity of Petra. The contrast is striking between the bare, parched plains on either side and the tinted rocks and green and flower-sprinkled valleys and terraced hillsides of Edom. We can readily conceive that industry and irrigation must have made this region answer to the description of it as promised by Isaac to Esau, whose dwelling was to be "of the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above."

(E. H. Gillett, *Ancient Cities and Empires: Their Prophetic Doom*, Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1865, 121-124.)

5A. A Description of Petra:

1b. The approach to Petra:

As the traveler advances the valley contracts and the cliffs which bound it rise to a greater height. On either side is a street of rock-hewn tombs. At length the gorge is reached, the walls of rock approach still nearer together, and a few steps further on a noble arch is thrown across high up from one precipice to another, while niches, doubtless intended for statues, are cut underneath each end. Here the walls are but twelve feet apart, and for a mile and a half further they never expand to more than a space of from thirty to forty feet. It would seem as if they had been torn asunder by some great convulsion, leaving barely room for two horsemen to ride abreast. A swelling stream, at certain seasons of the year, rushes between them, along the whole distance watering a thicket of oleanders, tamarinds and wild figs, while vines of creeping plants hang in festoons on the sides of the cliffs, hundreds of feet above the traveler's head. The eagle is heard screaming above, while the almost overarching rocks nearly shut out the view of the sky, and amid the sculptured tombs, open on each side, the dimness seems truly sepulchral. The remains of aqueducts, by which the water was anciently distributed, are still to be seen, while on the left are traces of a channel cut in the rock near the level of the ground. A conduit of earthen pipes, four or five inches in diameter, let into the rock and cemented, is carried along high up on the right-hand precipice, but only the ruins of it now remain.



GATE-WAY TO PETRA.

The bottom of the passage, anciently paved with squared stones, is still here and there to be seen, and in it the traveler notes the ruts worn by ancient chariot wheels. Far above are shallow niches, the outlines an first cuttings of pediments, where busts and statues perhaps once stood, or where inscriptions were traced. As the gorge widens, now this way and now that, lateral chasms and clefts are seen, showing apparently that the whole region has been rent by the same convulsion.

(*Ibid.*, 127-128.)

2b. The excitement of visitors

One traveler speaks of the "indomitable wildness" of this main avenue, and others become almost enthusiastic in its description. Dr. Robinson says, "The character of this wonderful spot, and the impression which it makes, are utterly indescribable, and I know of nothing which can present even a faint idea of them. I had visited the strange sandstone lanes and streets of Adersbach, and wandered with delight through the romantic dells of the Saxon Switzerland—both of which scenes might be supposed to afford the nearest parallel; yet they exhibit few points of comparison. All here is on a grander scale of savage and yet magnificent sublimity. We lingered along this superb approach, proceeding slowly and stopping often, forgetful of everything else, and taking for the moment no note of time."

At length the gorge, about a mile and a half in length, terminates, or rather strikes almost at right angles into another broader one, running from the south to the north-west. But all at once, as the traveler approaches the angle, the front of the Khuzneh, in the western precipice, bursts upon his view. He beholds a temple hewn out of the rock, and set in a niche of rock, its material a rose-colored stone, which is shown off most delicately by the dark shrubs which grow before it. Its height is between sixty and seventy feet, while of its six columns five are still standing. Its position is "wonderfully fine," while its elaborate carvings of garlands, its bas-reliefs (somewhat defaced), and the suddenness with which this admirably preserved structure strikes the eye of the traveler emerging from the dim avenue by which it is approached, deepen the impression. Buckhardt calls the temple "one of the most elegant remains of antiquity existing in Syria."

Stanley says that to one coming upon it unexpectedly from the east, he "cannot conceive of anything more striking." Stephens speaks of it as "the pride and beauty of Petra." His companion, on beholding it, involuntarily cried out, clapped his hands, and shouted in ecstasy. Long afterward the traveler declared that "neither the Coliseum at Rome, nor the ruins of the Acropolis at Athens, nor the pyramids, nor the mighty temples of the Nile," were so often present to his memory. Dr. Robinson speaks of the delicacy of its fine chiseling and the freshness and beauty of its soft coloring. "I had seen," he adds, "various engravings of it, and read all the descriptions; but this was one of the rare instances where the truth of the reality surpassed the ideal anticipation. It is indeed most exquisitely beautiful; and nothing I have seen of architectural effect in Rome or Thebes, or even Athens, comes up to it in the first impression." In spite of its debased style of architecture, its position, its wonderful state of preservation, the framework of cliffs, several hundred feet high, in which it is set, the glow and tint of the stone, and the wild scenery around, are enough to justify the traveler's confession—"I was perfectly fascinated with this splendid work of ancient art in this wild spot. . . ."

Of Petra itself, Dr. Robinson says: "In looking at the wonders of this ancient city, one is at a loss whether most to admire the wildness of the position and natural scenery, or the taste and skill with which it was fashioned into a secure retreat and adorned with splendid structures, chiefly for the dead. The most striking feature of the place consists, not in the fact that there are occasional excavations and sculptures, like those above described, but in the innumerable multitude of such excavations along the whole extent of perpendicular rocks adjacent to the main area, and in all the lateral valleys and chasms, the entrances of very many of which are variously, richly and often fantastically decorated, with every imaginable order and style of architecture."
(*Ibid.*, 128-130, 132.)

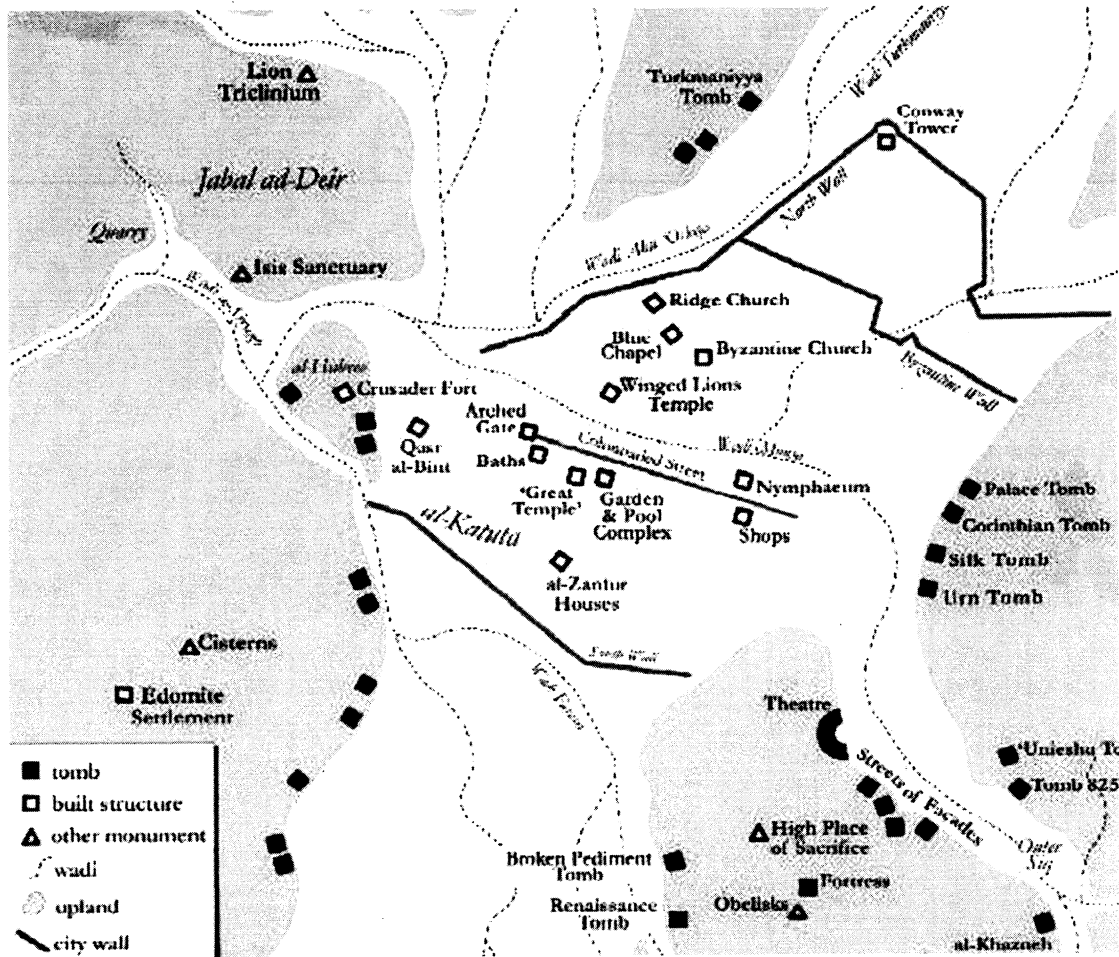
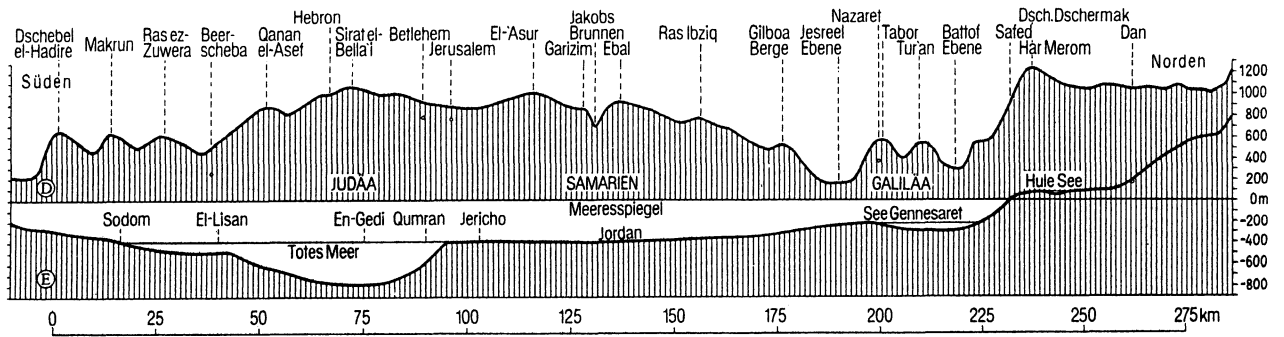
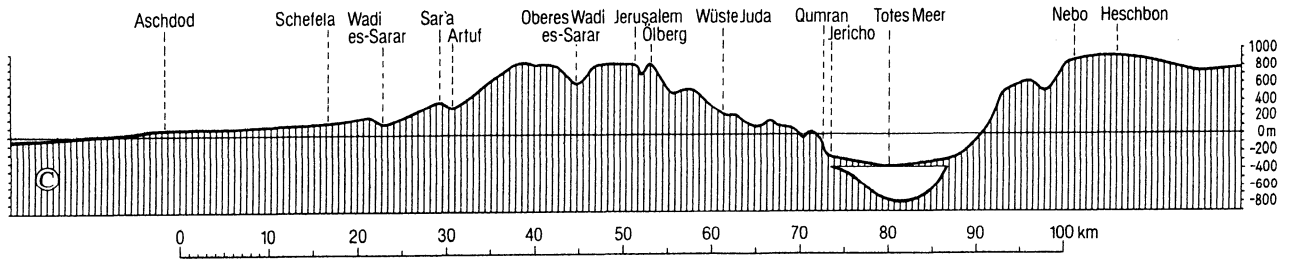
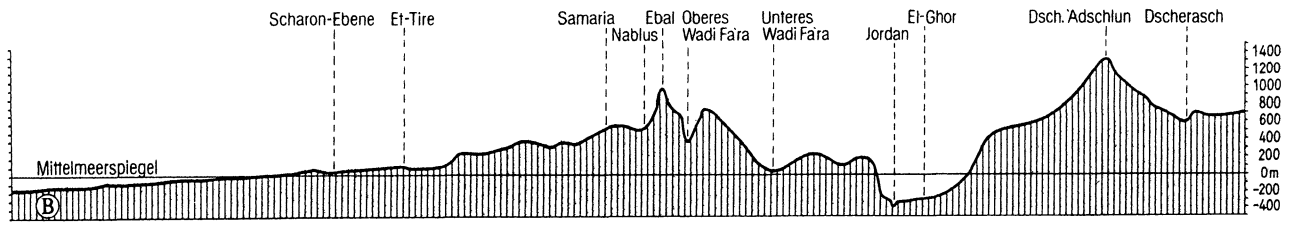
The *Biblical Archaeology Review* has posted an interesting online article entitled, "Solving the Enigma of Petra and the Nabataeans." The author has captured the utter delight and amazement of tourist to that unforgettable site.

The Siq is a tortuous half-mile-long canyon that winds its way from the entrance of Petra to the large open plaza at the foot of the Khazneh. Formed through countless millennia of geological activity and water action, the canyon was used by the Nabataeans as a ceremonial route into their capital. The sides of the Siq were also outfitted with channels and pipes that carried fresh water into the city.

For every tourist who visits the ancient city of Petra in modern day Jordan, there is one breathtaking moment that captures all of the grandeur and mystery of this city carved in stone. After passing the final bend of the tortuous narrow canyon that leads into the site (the Siq), one is confronted by the awe-inspiring spectacle of a towering rock-cut façade, its sun-struck sandstone gleaming through the darkness of the canyon.

The façade, popularly known as the Khazneh, or "Treasury," appears first only as a faint vision, its architectural details and full dimensions crowded out by the darkened walls of the Siq. But as you leave the Siq and enter the large open courtyard that sits before the Khazneh, you begin to realize, with astonishment and wonder, the immensity of the monument that towers above you.

The Khazneh is both unexpectedly familiar, and at the same time, strangely exotic. Its ornamented face is adorned with the columns, capitals and pediments of classical Western architecture, yet it seems entirely out of place in the rugged desert landscape of southern Jordan, an area historically inhabited by flock-tending Bedouin and simple farmers. Perhaps it was this bewildering juxtaposition that made the Khazneh the ideal backdrop for the climactic scene of the 1989 film *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

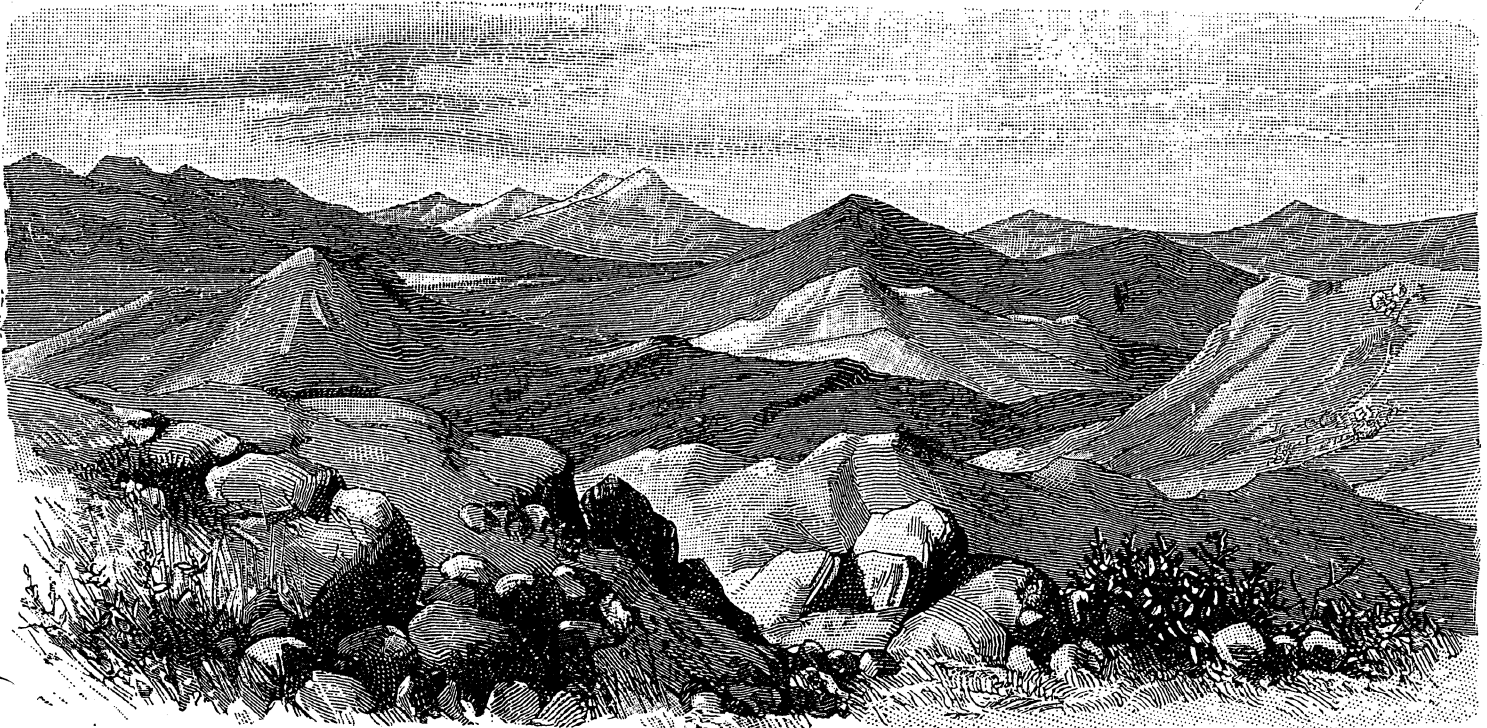


3b. The judgments upon Petra:

One only needs to sit down amid the perfect desolation and awful solitude, and open there the volume of prophecy, to see how remarkable the predictions of Scripture concerning it have been fulfilled.

The language of Isaiah (xxxiv. 5, 6) is: "My sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon Idumea and upon the people of my curse to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood." We have no record of the precise manner in which Petra was finally destroyed, but it would seem as if the sword that was to reach it was literally to descend from heaven, and there must have been a fierce slaughter before this great natural fortress could have been taken. The day of this judgment might well be described as "the day of the Lord's vengeance and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion."

He says again (xxxiv. 11): "He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness." A mere description of the ruins might suggest these very words, applicable not only to Petra, but to Idumea, with all its cities. "The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl and raven shall dwell in it." One traveler after another has found the only possessors of it, with the occasional exception of prowling Arabs, to be the "eagles," or birds of prey. "Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof." One of the most striking features of the descriptions given of the precipitous cliffs with their rocky chambers is, that they are covered over with verdure. Vines, and brambles, and shrubs, answering, doubtless, to the original Hebrew words, clamber and twine about the rocks and the crumbling sculptures.
(Gillett., 135-136.)



Blick auf das Gebirge Seir (Edom).

Petra, as well as the areas of Ammon, Moab and Edom, will serve as a safe refuge from the wrath of Antichrist during the latter half of the Tribulation. According to Daniel 11:41, these areas will not be controlled by Antichrist, who for 3 1/2 years is world ruler. While the area of Transjordan has a gloomy past, it will yet enjoy a glorious future. The believer, as a companion and Bride of the returning Christ (the topic of the last session in this series) will witness the transformation and beautification of this area.

THE PROMISE OF A REFUGE

THE PLACE

Dan 11:41

41 He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

THE PROTECTION

Mt. 24:15-21

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

THE PERIOD

Rev. 12:6, 14-16

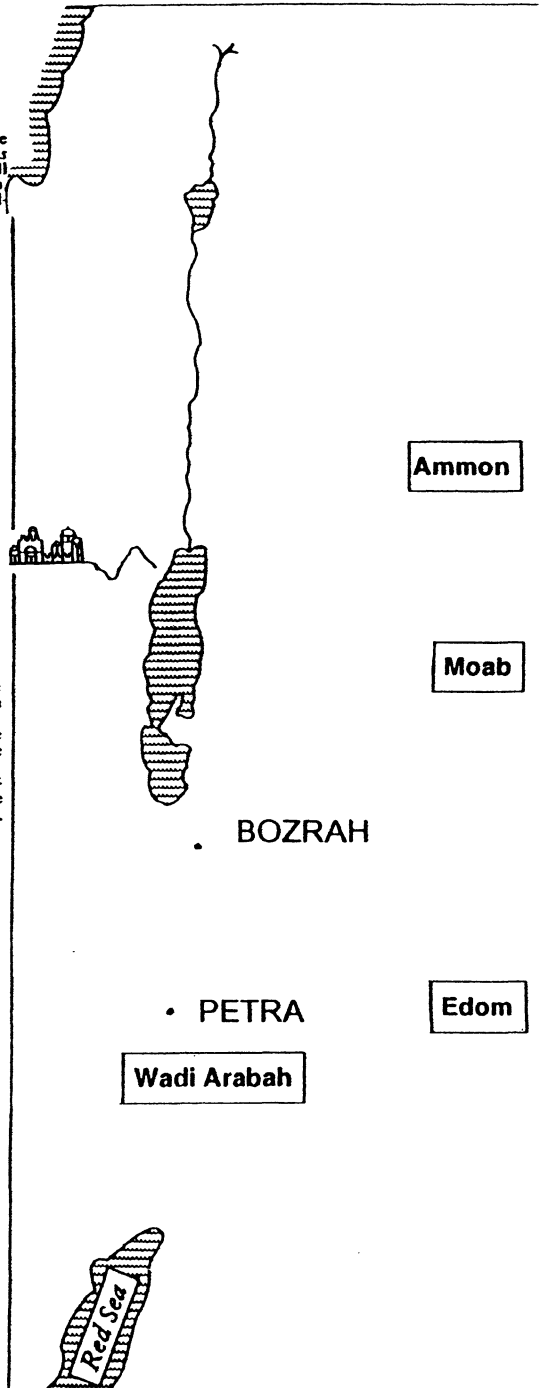
6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

THE REFUGE FOR ISRAEL



THE PROCEDURE OF RECKONING

THE PROSECUTOR

Is. 63:1-2

WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

2 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat?

THE PURGING

Ez. 20:35-38

35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face.

36 Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.

37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:

38 And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

THE PERCENTAGE OF THE REDEEMED

Zech. 13:8

8 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.



6A. Mt. Seir and Transjordan as a Refuge for Israel:

Numerous Scriptures speak of a time after the Rapture when Antichrist will rule the world (Dan. 7:25). "Power was given unto him over all kindreds, and tongues and nations" (Rev. 13:7). Israel, however, (and presumably alert Gentiles) will have a prepared refuge which Antichrist cannot touch. Daniel clearly reveals that the area East of the Jordan rift valley, anciently populated by the Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites, will be off-limits for 42 months to this world ruler

1b. The promise of a refuge:

1c. The place: Dan. 11:41

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even **Edom** and **Moab**, and the chief of the children of **Ammon**.

2c. The protection: Mt. 24:15-21 (Mark 13:14-22)

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judaea **flee into the mountains:**¹⁷ Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:¹⁸ Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.¹⁹ And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!²⁰ But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Christ admonished His people living during the Tribulation to flee in great haste when Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel half way through this time of trouble, turmoil and terror. He suggested the route they are to take: "flee into the mountains". From the zenith of the Mt. of Olives one can see in the distance the formidable mountain range to the East of the Dead Sea, precisely the area that Antichrist will not control. It is only a short distance away and the escape route is generally all downhill. As the crow flies, the Jordan River is just 15 miles to the East of Jerusalem. Once a person has crossed that river, he is safe until the return of Christ.



Jews from Jerusalem
Escape to Ammon, Moab, and Edom
in the middle of the Tribulation
Mt. 24:15-22; Rev. 12:13-16, Is. 63:1-4

Zeph. 2:3

Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be **ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.**

2c. **The period: Rev. 12:6, 14-16**

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there **a thousand two hundred and threescore days.**

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for **a time, and times, and half a time**, from the face of the serpent. **15** And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. **16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

John F. Walvoord writes that in this symbolic passage "reference must be to the preservation of a portion of the nation of Israel to await the second coming of Christ" (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1966, 191).

As God had provided for some 3 million people in the wilderness, so He has prepared a means where "others will see to the immediate administration of her needed nourishment."

Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22. An Exegetical Commentary*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1995, 127).

The flood which the dragon (Satan) sends after the woman (Israel) should most likely be understood as a literal deluge. Interestingly, the Nabataeans at Petra and elsewhere developed a clever system of diversion of torrential rain waters, Thomas quotes Seiss to the end that "Very possibly, through an earthquake whatever water the dragon may send after the woman drains into underground openings" (140).

2b. The procedure of reckoning:

1c. **The prosecutor: Is. 63:1-2**

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. ²Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat?

Bozrah (Buseirah), located 20 miles SE of the Dead Sea, is one of the areas to which the Savior returns at His second coming. Petra is located to the south and serves as an ideal refuge for Israel. It is easily defensible with an abundant water supply. With some 2400 rock-hewn buildings in the area, it is easy to imagine how a million people would find safety and seclusion while Antichrist rages world-wide and the dragon fiercely pursues those Jews who did not avail themselves of this refuge (Rev. 12:17).

2c. **The purging: Ez. 20:35-38**

And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. **36** Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. **37** And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: **38** And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD .

The purging involves a separation of the believers from the unbelievers, much like the judgment of the sheep and goat gentiles in Matthe23. The believing Israelites (like the believing gentiles) will enter alive with their King into the Millennial Kingdom. The rebels are purged and are put to death.

The judgment of Israel is said to take place in the wilderness of the people. Some Bible scholars suggest that the area of judgment is the valley called Wadi Arava, extending from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea, approximately. The valley is 120 miles long and 10 miles wide. The Gentiles, on the other hand, will be judged from Jerusalem (Mt. 25:31) in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2,12), either a reference to the Kidron Valley or a new valley

3c. **The percentage of the redeemed: Zech. 13:8**

And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

Dr. Unger's commentary on the percentage of the redeemed is very helpful:

Then two-thirds of the Jews "in all the land" (v. 8) of Palestine will be cut off in death, and the one-third that is spared will be the survivors (Matt. 24:13) who will constitute the remnant that will look in faith to the pierced One (Zech. 12:10) and in repentance mourn over their past unbelief (12:10-14). The "fountain" of cleansing will be opened to them (13:1), and they will be purged from sin and idolatry (13:2-5); they will inquire of the Messiah, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" (v. 6).

They, the saved and purified, will be the redeemed remnant that will constitute the nucleus of the millennial Kingdom. The "third part" probably will be, in part at least, the 144,000 of the tribes of Israel scaled in Revelation 7:1-8 and 14:1-5. Like the three faithful Hebrews in Babylon, they will not worship the beast's (Antichrist's) image (13:1-18), but will pass through the fiery furnace of the Great Tribulation (cf. Mal. 3:2-3), coming forth from the crucible like refined silver and gold.

(Merrill F Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, AMG Publishers, 2002, 2048.)

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'Petra' (long)

Posted by: [IanB](#) (192.168.128.---)

Date: May 31, 2006 07:15PM

In the recent 'Poetry Anthology' thread in Homework Assistance, some interesting posts followed a mention I made of the famous line 'A rose-red city half as old as Time', in John William Burgon's poem 'Petra', which won Oxford University's Newdigate Prize for poetry in 1845. No one who contributed to that discussion had the whole poem text, and there appeared to be no copy on the Internet.

I have since found a small book of Burgon's poetry. He had it published by Macmillan in 1885 when he was Dean of Chichester. It includes 'Petra'. The poem is presented with its own preface, and an 'Argument' (précis of its subject matter) and numerous footnotes. Some of those quote descriptions of Petra by one Dr Robinson who had visited the place (unlike Burgon when he wrote the poem!). Some explain allusions to classical Greek works. Many give Biblical references justifying references in the poem. I assume all these extras were part of the presentation when it was submitted for the Prize. The body of the poem is 371 lines long, which is strange, since the Newdigate founder prescribed 300 as the limit. The sole judge however is always the Professor of Poetry, who sets the subject.

As I ploughed through Burgon's impressively/tediously sustained effort, with all its antiquated mannerisms, I tried to imagine the state of mind of the Professor reading it. Did his eyes light up when he read the famous line? Was that why he adjudged the poem the winner, as I have heard irreverently alleged? I rather think what impressed him was Biblical learning, and the lofty tone and romantic religiosity throughout, for he was not a poet. He was the venerable James Garbett, Archdeacon of Chichester (small world!), who held the Professorship (which is a part-time, almost honorary position) from 1842 to 1852. Men of clerical bent seem to have had a mortgage on the chair in those days. His predecessor from 1831 to 1841 was John Keble, a founder of the Oxford Movement.

Anyway, to satisfy the curious who have wondered about the full text of the poem known now only for its famous line, and who don't have access to the Newdigate archives, here it is. I have reproduced the preface; but omitted the Argument - and the footnotes, interesting though they are, except to mention now one, quoted from Dr Robinson, which describes how the ancient theatre at Petra hewn out of the rock was located between cliffs full of tombs in direct view of the audience. That may help explain the poet's theatre images in one part and his rebuke of the men of Petra whiling "the listless hours away" where "graves on graves innumerable frown'd". I have reproduced the punctuation in Burgon's book (even the failure to close the inverted commas in L23), except that the long dash comes out as a doubled hyphen in Emule.

PETRA,--the capital of that portion of Arabia which is thence called Petræa,--occupies a mountain-hollow in the rocky region known to the readers of Scripture by the name of SEIR; a territory which extends from the north-eastern extremity of the Arabian gulph to the south of the Dead Sea, and which the Almighty assigned to the Edomites, or the descendants of Esau. It is twice mentioned in the Bible by the equivalent Hebrew name SELAH, or *the rock*; and thenceforward (namely, from the seventh or eighth century before our æra), it obtains no further notice for four hundred years. During this interval, the Nabathæans, or descendants of Nebaioth, the eldest son of Ishmael, had expelled the Edomites from their ancient stronghold, and driven them northward, where their territory was recognised for a few centuries under the Hellenised name of Idumæa. Then it was that one portion of the prophecy concerning the descendants of Esau obtained its fulfilment : they faded from the world's eye, and ceased to be a nation.

Petræa, henceforth part of the Nabathæan territory, became a Roman province; and PETRA, as some ancient historians relate, and as its astonishing ruins abundantly testify, continued to be its wealthy and flourishing capital. It obtains some slight Ecclesiastical notice so late as the sixth century, but from that time it suddenly disappears from the page of history; and the doom pronounced on the land of the Edomites was entirely accomplished. PETRA had continued wholly unknown for twelve hundred years, when the adventurous Burckhardt

discovered its ruins in 1812.

Some valuable and interesting notices of this wonderful city and the surrounding region are found in the second volume of Dr. Robinson's *Biblical Researches*; but the pencil of Roberts has told the story of the present state of Edom better than any pen.

PETRA

Spirit of Song ! that oft at dewy eve,
When Elfin sprites their frolic dances weave,
Meetest the poet as he walks unseen
The twilight valley, or the dusky green;--
Or by some mountain lake's romantic brim
Wakest the drowsy echoes, all for him;--
And many a time art well content to stray
Where garden-alleys quench the blaze of day,
And small birds sing, and bubbling fountains play;
Know'st thou the land--a land of giant mould--
By Heav'n assign'd to Edom's race of old?
Where rocks on rocks--on mountains mountains pil'd--
Have form'd a scene so wondrous and so wild,
That gazing there man seems to gaze upon
The rough rude ocean frozen into stone?
Full well thou know'st ! for sure, when Israel wound
His homeward journey o'er that hallow'd ground,--
Forc'd in the depths of those wild hills to wait,
And kneel, a suppliant, at his brother's gate,--
While burning anthems rose from many a tongue,
Not coldly mute the harp of Judah hung !
And did not one, in yet remoter time,
Wake there the "birth-notes of the holy chime?
Doth not to Edom's rugged land belong
The man of Uz--the morning-star of song !

Yea, and to Fancy's ear, o'er rock and hill
More solemn harpings there are floating still.
Harps that long since have been attun'd above
To hymns of joy, and seraph-lays of love,
In awful strains from many a trembling wire
Have pour'd o'er Edom words of deepest ire !
Words that yet live and burn--in whose keen ray
The light and life of Edom ebb'd away :
Still fading, star-like, in the blaze of day !
And thou too, Petra, tho' the Roman came
And fann'd thy dying glories into flame;
Rear'd the tall column--spread the stately dome--
And seem'd the founder of a second Rome,--
How brief the pageant ! On thy fated brow
Men laid a crown--but who shall crown thee now?
A thousand summers o'er thy ruins crept :
A thousand winters o'er thy ruins wept :
A thousand years--and still the very spot
Where once thou wert so glorious, was forgot !

What joy was his--the wandering man, who first
Dissolv'd the spell!--on whom the Vision burst
Of that enchanted City, as it lay
Bath'd in the splendours of a Syrian day.
O Fancy, thou that must so oft have shed
Dreams of its beauty round his sleeping head;
Woke in his heart the wild-bird's wish to roam,
And told of marvels in that mountain-home;
Still be it thine with angel-hand to guide

These longing footsteps by that Trav'ler's side !
Waft o'er mine ear one echo of the strain
Which dark-ey'd Kedar pours along the plain;
Or let one gaze, how brief soe'er, inspire
These falt'ring lips to glow with Eastern fire !

Sudden,--around me, rocks and cliffs arise;
The earth their footstool, and their crown the skies :
Some, soaring steep,--as if to curtain round
From mortal gaze each nook of holy ground :
Some, prostrate hurl'd,--as if by that fierce storm
Which rent the mountains, when th' Almighty form
"Rose up from Seir;" and trembling Sinai saw
His thousand Saints dispense His fiery law.
And one there is which, beetling o'er the rest,
Pillows a prophet on its rocky crest :
Uplifted high--where none but stars may keep
Their bright-ey'd vigils round his saintly sleep :
Or rushing winds from Pisgah's kindred height
Pour a wild requiem through the noon of night.
Fit scene for marvels ! In such land should none
But giants move, and giant deeds be done.
O'er such huge hills might fitly seem to stray
A ransom'd people on their homeward way.
In such wild valleys, round their ark rever'd,
At set of sun their myriad tents be rear'd.
Myriads ! and yet, above them and around,
Such giant features of the landscape frown'd,
They seem'd no more--that people and their guide--
Than Jethro's flock on Horeb's hallow'd side !

Ah say, ere gather'd in their destin'd fold,
While Israel wander'd o'er this waste of old;
As, eve by eve, upon these mountains brown,
Silent as snow the heavenly bread came down:--
From the cleft rock as gush'd the sparkling wave
To cheer their sinking spirits, and to save;--
And the bright pillar, through the livelong night,
Shed o'er their tents its soft celestial light;--
Did none perchance of Judah's faithful line
Read the high teaching of each heav'n--sent sign?
Say--while around him others pin'd forlorn
For Canaan's valleys "standing thick with corn"--
Did no fond heart, with nobler instinct fraught,
Sigh for the substance which those shadows taught?
On trembling pinions seek to soar above,
Refin'd by sorrow, and sublim'd by love,--
Till Faith discern'd what Reason dimly scann'd,
And Hope gave promise of that better Land?

Still on for Petra,--till the desert wide
Shrinks to a valley; and on either side
The rude rock springeth, and a long array
Of tombs, forgotten, sadden all the way.
Then the earth yawns, terrific : and a path,
By Nature fram'd in waywardness or wrath,
Winds where two rocks precipitously frown,--
The giant warders of that wondrous town !
Day comes not here,--or in such spectral guise,
She seems an outcast from yon happy skies.
In silent awe the Arab steals along,
Nor cheers his camels with their wonted song.
Well may the spirit, left alone to brood

On the dim shapes which haunt that solitude,
O'erflow with joy--that dreary pathway past--
When Petra bursts upon the gaze at last.

O passing beautiful--in this wild spot
Temples, and tombs, and dwellings,--all forgot !
One sea of sunlight far around them spread,
And skies of sapphire mantling overhead.
They seem no work of man's creative hand,
Where Labour wrought as wayward Fancy plann'd;
But from the rock as if by magic grown,
Eternal--silent--beautiful--alone !
Not virgin white--like that old Doric shrine
Where once Athena held her rites divine :
Not saintly grey--like many a minster fane
That crowns the hill, or sanctifies the plain :
But rosy-red,--as if the blush of dawn
Which first beheld them were not yet withdrawn :
The hues of youth upon a brow of woe,
Which men call'd old two thousand years ago !
Match me such marvel, save in Eastern clime,--
A rose-red city--half as old as Time !

And this is Petra--this the lofty boast
Of Edom's once unconquerable coast !
These the gay halls thro' which, in days of old,
The tide of life so rapturously roll'd !
These the proud streets where Wealth, with lavish hand,
Pour'd the rich spoils of ev'ry Orient land;
All that the seaman's timid barque beguiles,
To Cush and Ophir, "Tarnish and the Isles :"
Afric's red gold,--Arabia's spicy store,--
And pearl and plume from India's farthest shore !
How chang'd--how fallen ! All her glory fled,
The widow'd city mourns her many dead.
Like some fond heart which gaunt Disease hath left
Of all it liv'd for--all it lov'd, bereft;
Mute in its anguish ! struck with pangs too deep
For words to utter, or for tears to weep.

Yet hearts and eyes there be, well skill'd to trace
The living features in the lifeless face,
For whom that silent desert air seems rife
With tuneful voices and the pulse of life.
For them sweeps by in glitt'ring pomp again
The warlike pageant and the peaceful train :
For them bright shadows fill these vacant halls,
And Beauty wakes where'er their footstep falls.
"Heard ye it not?"--the fervid dreamer cries,--
"Heard ye no shout from yonder seats arise?"
(And his rapt gaze in ecstasy is bent
On what seems Pleasure's mournful monument.)
"Ye deem the actor and his mimic rage
Gone like a shadow from yon ruin'd stage;
But to mine eye he lives and moves :--'tis we
Are shadows here--the substance only he !
Or do I dream?--they come and fade so fast--
Now here, now there,--now present, and now past.
But no, a stern old King,--whom anguish strong
Had goaded into madness,--stalk'd along,
Sightless and crownless : . . . Now, a Maiden stands
Ev'n where he stood; and in her delicate hands
Enfolds an urn : ineffable the grace,--

The marble sorrow of that classic face !
It fades--'tis fled ! . . . Upon a lofty car
There sits another : like some baleful star
Glares her wild eye;--and from her lips of ire
Streams a full torrent of prophetic fire.
She raves,--she rises,--and with frenzied hand
Dashes to earth her garland and her wand . . .
Sublimely beautiful ! When this is o'er
Let nothing follow.--I will gaze no more !"

And did ye thus, ye men of Petra,--say,
Thus did ye while the listless hours away?
Tho' ev'ry cliff, tho' ev'ry crag around,
With graves on graves innumerable frown'd,--
Thus could ye sit, contented with a toy,
And lapt in dreams of unsubstantial joy?
Light-hearted race ! o'er them it flung no gloom
That Echo answered from a kinsman's tomb.
Bred in these mountain valleys, those dark eyes,
Fierce as their summer,--cloudless as their skies,--
Belov'd and loving,--blest and blessing,--here
Made friends with Death throughout the livelong year :
And hop'd, perchance, when Life's gay round was o'er,
And joy and sorrow sway'd their hearts no more,
Their faithful souls, unfetter'd, yet might dwell
Amid the haunts they lov'd in life so well !

And Petra thus had rear'd another race
In turn to revel in her "pride of place :"
Thus the old eagles of imperial Rome
Seem'd on her hills to find a second home :
And Roman arts with Roman arms arose,
To blot the mem'ry of her former foes.
Tho' Edom's line, by Ishmael's sword opprest,
Had long been exil'd from their rock-built nest,
On Edom's rugged hills, as loath to set,
The sun of bygone summers linger'd yet :
And men forgot,--or deem'd an idle tale,--
The words of doom that hung o'er Petra's vale.
It could not be ! That old portentous chime
So long had slumber'd by the sores of Time.
Why heed it now? why talk of gloom today,
When Heav'n is blue, and Earth so green and gay?

So spake the men of old; and ev'ry heart
To festive revel, or to crowded mart,
Flew for its joy,--not oft'ner sought than found,--
So gaily there the circling hours went round !
And nurs'd were they in luxury--and knew
The spot of earth where ev'ry pleasure grew.
Their fountains flung their waters to the skies :
Their groves lay steep'd in hues of Paradise :
Here rose the gorgeous sepulchre, and there
Some fairy palace hung its roof in air :
While climes remote each costly gift supplied,
(For ships of Petra swam on ev'ry tide;)
And all the East, in conscious splendour, roll'd
At Petra's feet her jewels and her gold.

O that her rocks had language ! and might tell
In what wild shape at last the tempest fell.
Swift--sweeping--sudden--whensoever it came;
Blighting and blasting, like the breath of flame.

One piercing cry,--one agonizing wail,--
 One voice from Edom's cities told the tale :
 One cry of bitterness,--and all was o'er !
 But the far echo smote the Red Sea shore;
 And peal'd along its waters--till the waves
 Made hollow answer from their coral caves !

How chang'd, O Edom, since that hour, the scene
 From what the morning of thy days had been !
 When many a valley rich with corn and wine,
 When streams of Earth, and dews of Heav'n were thine;
 And flocks and herds--a patriarch's ample store--
 Till all thy cup with plenteousness ran o'er.
 Then Faith with thee her sacred mansion made;
 And holy lips, within thy summer shade,
 Of bright Arcturus and Orion told;--
 And the sweet sway the wand'ring Pleiads hold;--
 And of the matin hymn which burst sublime
 From all creation at the birth of Time;
 When "Earth self-balanc'd on its centre hung,"
 And "all the morning stars" like Seraphs sung . . .
 Such were the themes thy children lov'd to hear
 When first they dwelt along the vales of Seir :
 While youths and maids from each romantic town
 Went forth in dances when the sun went down;
 And antique tale, and legendary song,
 And harp and timbrel made the night less long.

But who are these that kneel in suppliant state,
 And plead for love at Petra's haughty gate
 That urge by each endearing claim their prayer?--
 Thy kindred, Edom,--the redeem'd are there !
 Scan well that brow,--and dost thou mark no line,
 No stamp of feature that resembles thine?
 Does nought recall an old ancestral tale :--
 Two brothers bred in Hebron's happy vale;--
 Far Mamre's oak--where blaz'd their altar fires;--
 And Mamre's cave--where sleep your common sires?
 Or if such plea, all cruel as thou art !
 Can wake no softness in thy savage heart,
 Yet feel for these--the youthful and the fair,
 The weary mother, and her fainting care !
 Yea, feel for all,--the mighty orphan host,
 Which GOD, in love, hath guided to thy coast;--
 Borne up on eagles' wings,--and fondly fed
 With angels' food,--and through the desert led
 By cloud and flame;--and now, their wand'rings o'er,
 Speeds on their way to Canaan's quiet shore . . .
 But what spake Edom? Taunting words of ill,--
 And that sharp knife,--a brother's threat to kill !
 Of all the past no image fill'd his eye
 But Jacob's blessing--Esau's bitter cry :--
 He bar'd his sword !--On that unnatural day
 A curse came down when Israel turn'd away.

Years sped their course : the fierce Chaldean came,
 And Salem's walls were wrapt in robes of flame :
 Fair Sion's height with carnage all o'erspread;
 Her temple fallen, and its glory fled :
 And *thou* wert there ! with unrelenting brow
 The first to slay--the first to triumph, thou !
 Foremost to hurl the blazing brand, and fill
 The festive cup on Sion's holy hill !

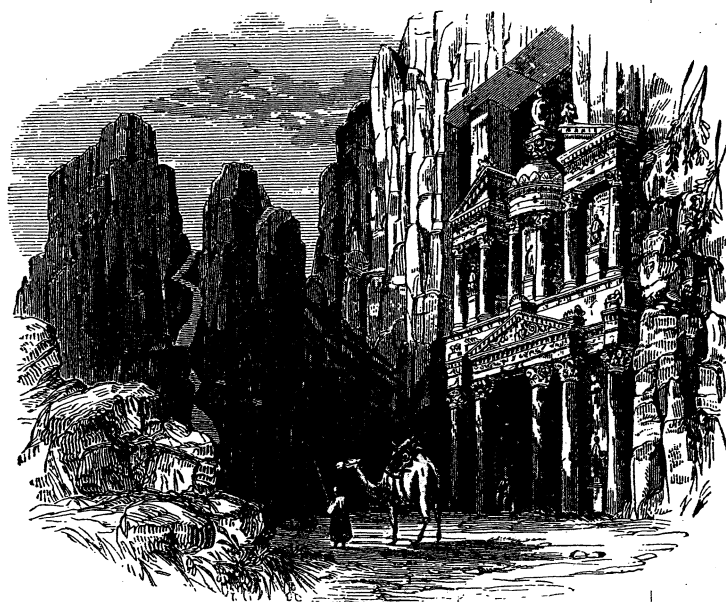
Could none be found but thee? Could wrath divine
 Be dealt on Judah by no hand but thine?
 "Remember, LORD,"--the mournful captives cried,
 As sad they wept by Babel's willowy side,--
 "O LORD, remember in that hour of woe,
 How taunting Edom prov'd our fiercest foe !" . . .
 And that poor plaint, to Heav'n's high throne upborne,
 Tho' all that heard it curl'd the lip with scorn,
 Call'd down the wrath which spake from many a lyre
 In strains that blasted like the breath of fire :
 And the wild winds the accents swept along,
 Till Edom's cliffs re-echoed to the song.

On cold high hearts at first that warning fell,
 For Edom held his wind-rock'd citadel :
 From Petra's cliff look'd forth in impious pride,
 And Sion's wrath and Sion's GOD defied.
 Then spake a voice--"Altho' thou build thy nest
 High as the stars;--and on the mountain's breast
 Sitt'st brooding like the eagle;--yet my frown
 Shall hurl thy glory and thy greatness down :
 Yea, when all earth rejoiceth, there shall be
 A desolation and a curse on thee !"

... Go, mark her well--and lies she not forlorn?
 The stranger's wonder, and the heathen's scorn !
 Her royal roofs with nettles all o'ergrown;--
 Her many towns a wilderness of stone;--
 And save where swims the eagle high in air,
 No sound of life--no pulse of motion there !
 There springs no verdure in her pathless vales :
 The river flows not, and the fountain fails :
 She keeps no feature of her ancient face :
 There breathes not one of Esau's royal race :
 And while yon stars in tuneful circles roll,--
 While Summer cheers, and Winter chills the pole,--
 While Night and Day in soft succession shine,--
 So long shall Edom own her doom divine :
 Attest His Truth, who spake the word of old,
 And stand, a sign for ages to behold :
 A wreck thrown up on Time's deserted shore,--
 A blight--a blank--a curse for evermore !

Daughter of Sion--fallen as thou art,
 Far other strains address thy sorrowing heart !
 Tho' bare thy mountains, and thy vales forlorn,
 Unblest by culture, yield thee briar and thorn,--
 Yet shall thy wilderness break forth and sing;
 The myrtle smile,--the graceful cedar spring;
 Life-giving streams thy barren rock disclose,
 And all thy desert "blossom like the rose" !
 The scatter'd sons, tho' now they wander wide,
 Shall yet be gather'd to thy longing side;
 And all Ezekiel's solemn vision be
 A type of faithful love fulfill'd in thee.
 Yea, tho' rude hands have spoil'd fair Salem's tow'rs;
 Tho' steps profane have press'd her hallow'd bow'rs;
 Tho' "Siloa's brook" no longer softly flows
 Fast by the hill where once her glory rose;
 Yet fear not thou ! the voice of Love divine
 Still cries--"Awaken thee !" "Arise, and shine !" "There is a River" which shall yet make blest
 Thy heav'nly home, the City of thy rest.

That holy City, seen by prophet eyes,
 Waits but the signal that shall rend the skies,
 And thou shalt all the glorious sight behold,--
 The walls of jasper, and the streets of gold :
 The twelve bright Angels, eager to unfurl
 The twelve broad gates,--and ev'ry gate a pearl !
 The Tree of Life beside the crystal wave,
 With "leaves to heal the nations," and to save :
 And HIM reveal'd whom thou so dimly knew,--
 The LAMB,--thy Sacrifice and Temple too;
 Whom Seraphs veil their faces when they sing,--
 Thine own Thrice-holy Prophet, Priest, and King ! . . .
 And there no Sun shall daily need to rise;
 And there no Moon shall nightly sail the skies :
 What need of sun by day, or moon by night?
 The LORD thy glory, and the LAMB thy light !
 Thy portion there, where Time itself shall be
 One long, long rest--one Sabbath-day to thee !



Edited 6 time(s). Last edit at 05/31/2006 11:50PM by IanB.

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Re: 'Petra' (long)

Posted by: marian2 (192.168.128.---)

Date: June 01, 2006 03:33AM

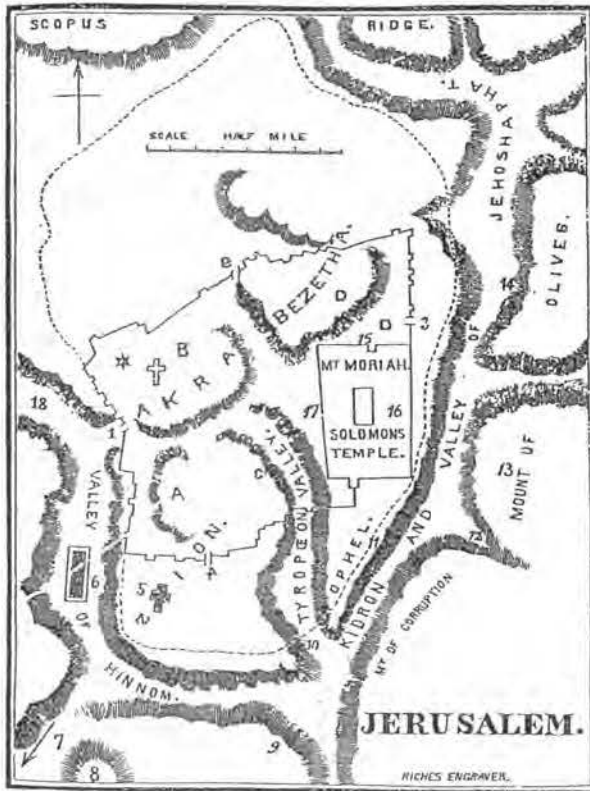
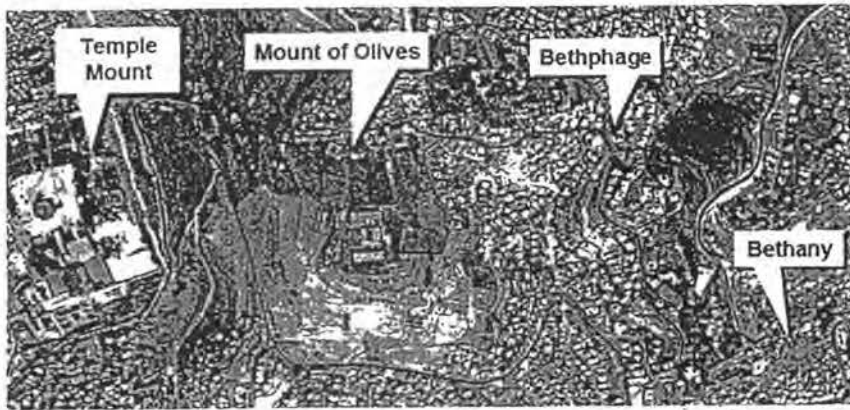
What a labour of love, Ian - well done. I'd no idea the short 'poem' I have under the title Petra was only a tiny extract, and it's very interesting to read the whole thing.

Are the other poems all long, and scholarly, or did he write a mix - I've looked at his bio and he seems to have been extremely serious-minded and very keen on 'defending the work of God against the errors of the church' to the detriment of his career, so I should imagine his other poetry is similar, but it would be nice to know.



Ansicht in Edom. Zu R. 49, 16.

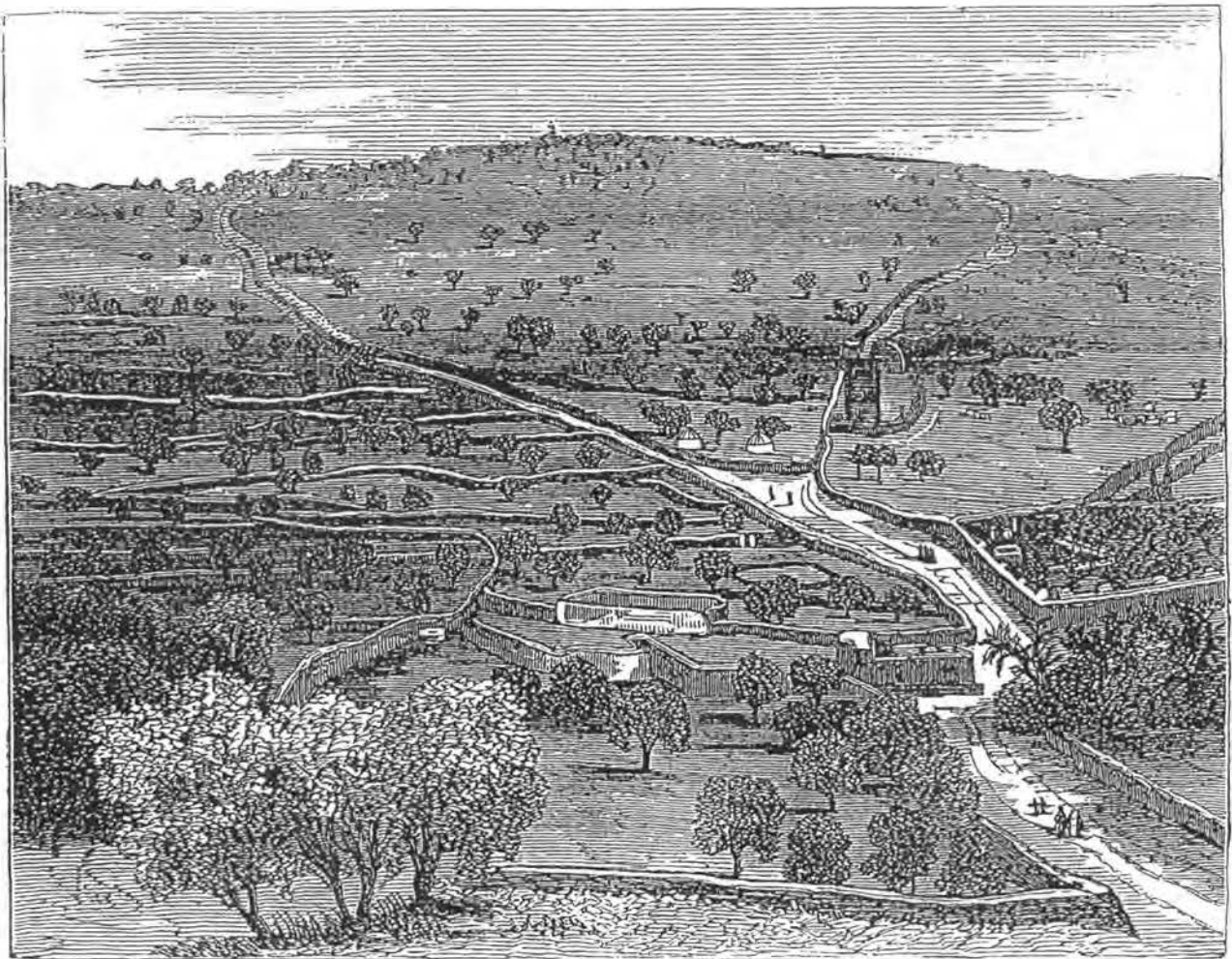
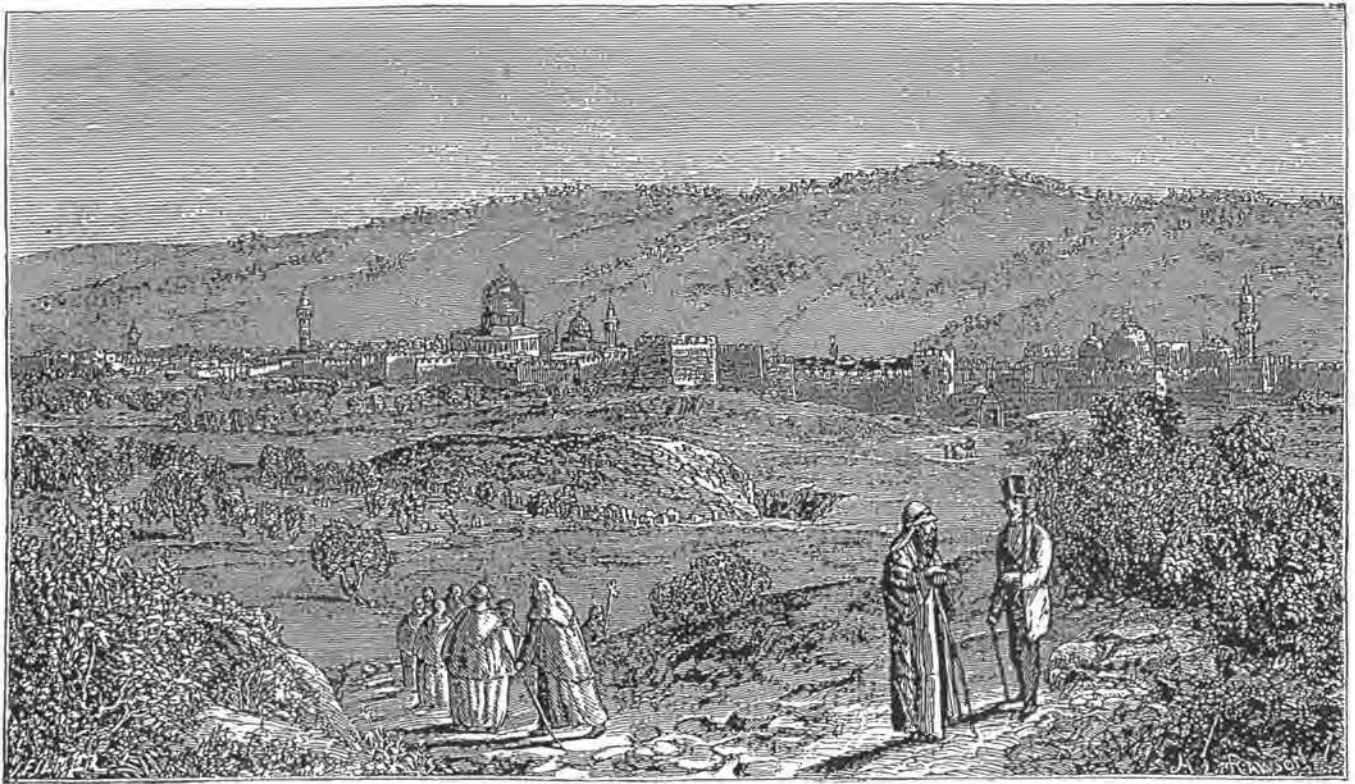
Mt. of Olives - The Scene of the Climax of World History



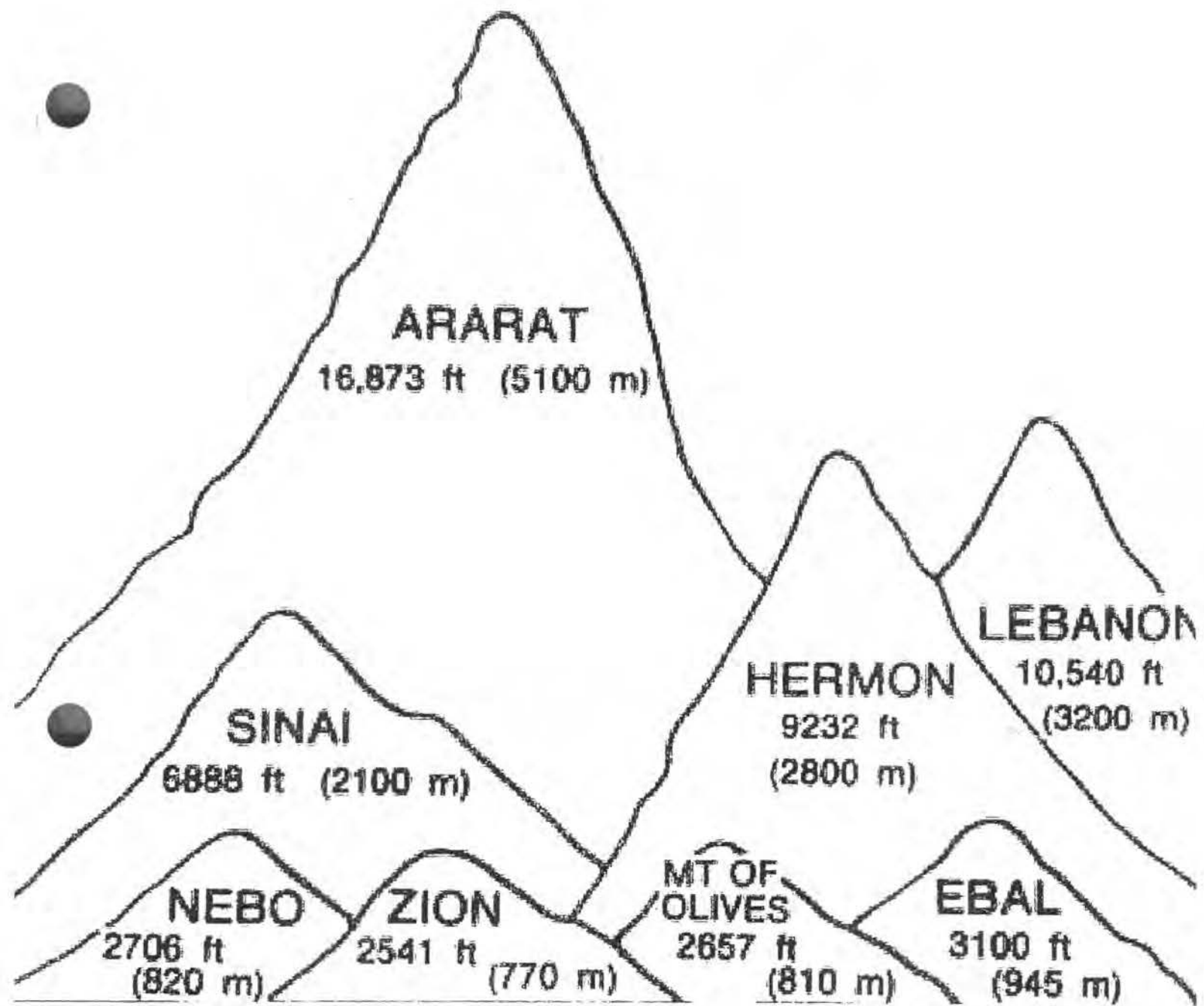
PLAN OF JERUSALEM AND ITS ENVIRONS.



MOUNT OLIVET.



The Mount of Olives. (From a photograph by the editor.)



Mt. of Olives – The Scene of the Climax of World History

1A. The Designations for Olivet:

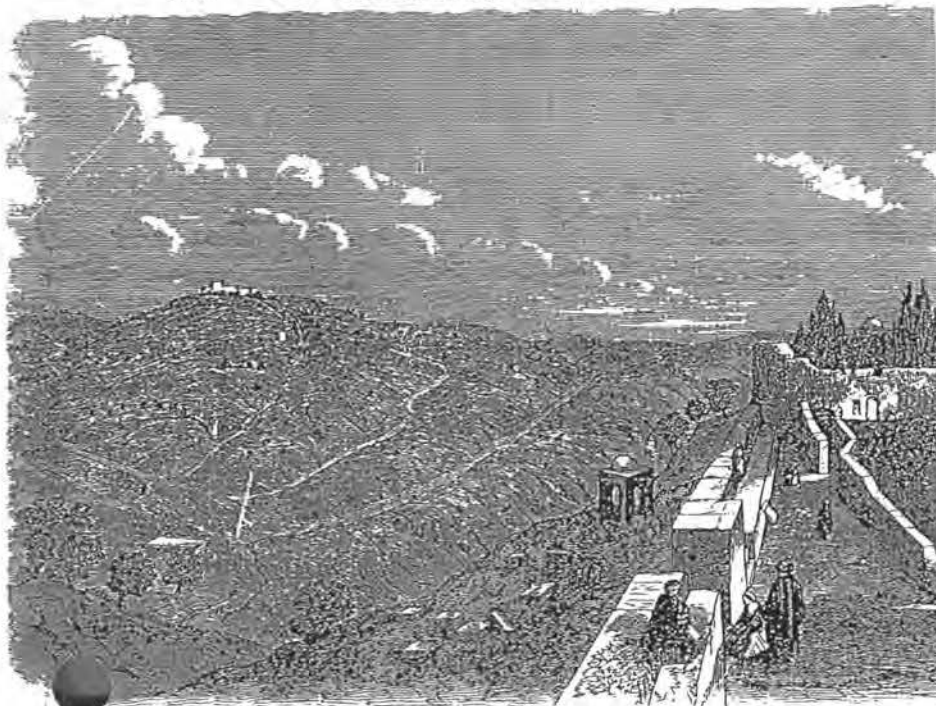
Olivet comes to us through the Vulgate *Olivetum*, "an oliveyard." Josephus frequently uses the expression "Mount of Olives" (e.g. *Ant*, VII, ix, 2; XX, viii, 6; *BJ*, V, ii, 3; xii, 2), but later Jewish writings give the name *har ha-mishhah*, "Mount of Oil"; this occurs in some MSS in 2 K 23:12, and the common reading, *har ha-mashhith*, "Mount of Corruption," m "destruction," may possibly be a deliberate alteration... In later ages the Mount was termed "the mountain of lights," because here there used to be kindled at one time the first beacon light to announce throughout Jewry the appearance of the new moon.

To the natives of Palestine today it is usually known as *Jebel et Tur* ("mountain of the elevation," or "tower"), or, less commonly, as *Jebel Tur ez zait* ("mountain of the elevation of oil"). The name *Jebel ez-zaitun* ("Mount of Olives") is also well known. Early Arab. writers use the term *Tur Zait*, "Mount of Oil." (James Orr, Gen. Ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1960, 2186.)



Dein König kommt in niedern Hüllen
Sanftmütig, auf der Erden Hüllen,
Empfang ihn froh, Jerusalem!
Trag ihm entgegen Friedenszweige,
Bestreu mit Meien seine Steige,
So ist's dem Herren angenehm!

2A. The Topography of Olivet:



Viewing the mountain thus, two principal summits and two subsidiary spurs may be described. The N. summit is that known as *Karem es-Sayyad* (the vineyard of the hunter), and also as the *Viri Galilaei*; it reaches a height of 2723 feet above the Mediterranean, and is separated from the S. mass by a narrow neck of land traversed to-day by the new carriage road. As far back as 530 this hill is spoken of as Galilee, and in the *Acts of Pilate* (about 350) a mountain near Jerusalem called 'Galilee' is mentioned. It is said to have first received its name *Galilaia* because the Galilaeans attending the feasts used to encamp there, or as Saewulf (1102) says, it 'was called Galilee because the Apostles, who were called Galilaeans, frequently visited there.' The S. summit, of practically equal height, is the traditional Mount of the Ascension, and has for some years

been distinguished by a lofty tower erected by the Russians. Here, too, Constantine erected his Church of the Ascension in 316 on the site where now stands its successor (erected 1834-5) of the same name. Here also is the Church of the Creed and the Paternoster Church, the latter a

modern building on the site of one of that name destroyed long ago. Scattered over the summit is a modern Moslem village—*Kefr et-Tur*—which combines with the noisy conduct of its rapacious inhabitants in spoiling the quiet beauty and holy associations of this sacred spot.

A small spur running S. is sometimes known as the Hill of the Prophets, on account of the interesting old 'Tomb of the Prophets'—a sepulchre generally believed, until recently, to have been originally Jewish—which is situated there; and the other somewhat isolated spur to the S.E., on which stands the wretched, half-ruined village of *el-Azariyeh*, on the site of Bethany, should, for reasons given, be included in the Mount.

Along the W. slope facing the city lies the reputed Garden of Gethsemane (part, too, of the Mount, cf. Lk 22)...of the Latins and its Greek rival; and a little higher up the hill to the S. the great Russian Church of St. Magdalene. The greater part of the slopes of the S.W. part of the hill is filled with a vast number of graves, those from the valley bottom till a little above the Bethany road being Jewish, while higher up are some Christian cemeteries. The Jews have a strong sentiment about being buried on this spot, the slopes of the 'Valley of Jehoshaphat' being traditionally, with them and with the Moslems, the scene of the resurrection and final judgment. (James Hastings, Ed., *A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917, 207).

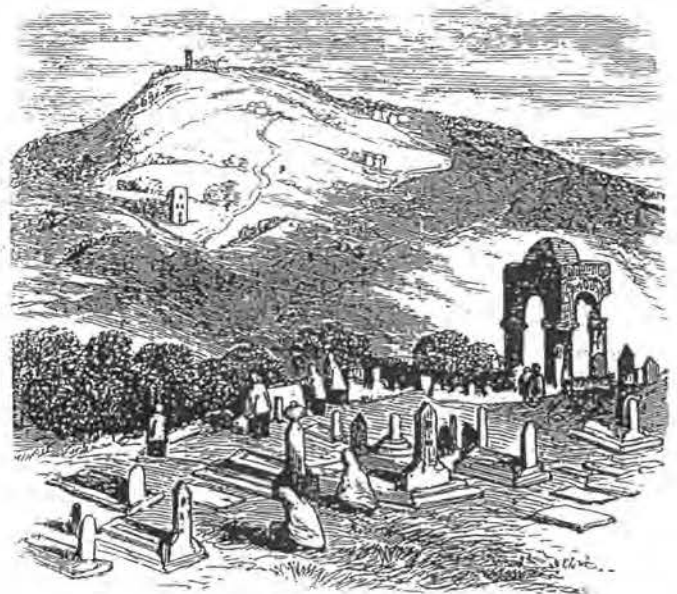
3A. The Savior and Olivet:

A.W.G. Masterman, in the article cited above, has a superb summary of the Savior's relationship to Olivet:

Although, with the single exception of Jn 8:1, all the incidents expressly connected with the Mount of Olives belong to the Passion week, there can be no doubt (Lk 21:37) that this quiet spot was one beloved and frequented by the Master. Here He withdrew from the city for rest and meditation (Jn 8:1) and for prayer (Mt 26:30 etc.). Once we read of His approach to the Mount from the Easter side 'unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives' (Mk 11:1; Mt 21:1; Lk 19:29). Over a part of the Mount He must have made His triumphal progress to the city (Mt. 21, Mk 11, Lk 19), and on this road He wept over Jerusalem (Lk 19:40-44). During the whole of that week 'in the daytime he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out and abode in the Mount that is called of Olives' (Lk 21:37)—the special locality on the Mount being Bethany (Mt 21:17, Mk 11:11). Crossing over from Bethany, Jesus illustrated His teaching by the sign of the withering of the barren fig-tree (Mt 21:18,19; Mk 11:12-14; 20-22), and on the slopes of this hill, with the doomed city spread out before them, Christ delivered to His disciples His wonderful eschatological discourse (Mt 24:3ff; Mk 13:3ff). Then here, in the Garden of Gethsemane, occurred the Agony, the Betrayal, and the Arrest (Mt 26:36-56; Mk 14:26-52; Lk 22:39-53; Jn 18:1-12). Lastly, on the Mount, not on the summit where tradition places it, but near Bethany, occurred the Ascension (Lk 24:50-52; Ac1:12).

To these incidents where the Mount of Olives is expressly mentioned may be added the scene in the house of Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42), the raising of Lazarus (Jn 11), and the feast at the house of Simon (Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9; Jn 12:1-19); for, as has been shown, Bethany was certainly a part of the Mount of Olives.

(*Ibid.*, 208).



THE MOUNT OF OLIVES



4A. The Ascent to Olivet:

1b. The paths to the Mt. of Olives:

It is worthwhile to reproduce here a pilgrim's account:



Leaving the garden, we commenced the ascent of the Mount of Olives. This mountain lies directly east of the city, from which it is separated by the deep valley of Jehoshaphat. Its height [sic] above this valley varies from five hundred to seven hundred feet. It is a little more than one hundred feet higher than Mount Zion, and near two hundred and fifty feet higher than the Temple area on Mount Moriah, so that it overlooks the whole of the city. The Arabs call it *Jebel et Tur*. The summit directly east of the city is the traditional place of the ascension of Christ. It slopes down beautifully toward the valley of Jehoshaphat on the west, and again toward Bethany on the east. Viewed from Zion, it has a most beautiful and graceful outline, and is one of the most commanding objects about Jerusalem. This hill, once

so beautifully covered with gardens and olive orchards, now presents the same desolate aspect that forms so prominent a characteristic of Jerusalem scenery. Of the palm trees of the valley, not a single one is left, and the two gigantic cedars that once stood near its summit have disappeared. Only a few scattering olive trees are seen upon its sides, and an occasional fig tree takes root in its scanty soil. Great boulders of variegated flint are scattered about in every direction, while here and there a little patch of ground, enclosed by a frail and tottering wall of stone, is sown to barley.

There are three paths leading from Jerusalem over Olivet. One is a foot-path, leading directly up the mountain side; another, and easier one, the common road for beasts of burden, leads around the southern brow of the mount; while still another but much less used, winds around the northern slope. As we ascended, I stopped on the way to gather some portions of a low, thorny bush, from which many suppose the mock crown of the Savior was made. The monks of Mar Saba manufacture and sell to pilgrims, crowns from a tree that bears a long, sharp thorn, which they believe to be the kind used on that occasion.

Just below where we are ascending, and near the base of the mount, the place is still pointed out where, in the days of the temple service, the red heifer was sacrificed and burnt, from the ashes of which the waters of purification were prepared (Num. xix.) By one of these paths too, probably the one upon the right, David ascended when he was forced to flee from the city under the rebellion of his son Absalom. This afflictive incident in the life of the renowned monarch is pathetically portrayed by the pen of inspiration. Absalom had managed his plans so adroitly, the court of Israel was completely taken by surprise. The reports of the wide-spread rebellion, like peal after peal of thunder, came rolling in from the surrounding tribes. The power and extent of the rebellion seems to have been greatly magnified, and the king and his servants made a hasty flight from Jerusalem. David and his associates passed over the brook Kidron, along this pathway they climbed the mount. "And David went up the ascent of Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered; and he went barefoot; and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up weeping as they went." (2 Sam. xv. 30.) The result we have seen in another place, and within our very sight now stands the pillar of Absalom, and all who pass by revile his name.

(D. A. Randall, *The Handwriting of God in Egypt, Sinai, and the Holy Land*, Norwich, CT: Whitney & Kingsley, 1867, 134-135.)

2b. The view from the Mt. of Olives:

Having feasted your eyes on these, you turn and look eastward. What a scene opens to your wondering vision! There the hill country of Judea—the wilderness—lies before you in all its gloomy sterility; a mountainous region, broken into bluffs and crags, whose deep and yawning chasms form a fit hiding place for Bedawin robbers and beasts of prey. Here your eye wanders to the bleak looking mountain of Quarantanla, where the Savior, fresh from his baptism, endured his terrible temptation, and achieved his first great moral victory. Beyond this, you look down into the deep vale of the Jordan, fresh in beauty and fertility, with its long, snaky line of blue waters, around which cluster a thousand interesting associations. You follow its course along the dim distance, the width of the plain gradually expanding, until your eye catches a view of a portion of the waters of the Dead Sea, that wonderful monument, that entombs beneath its dark and leaden waves, the buried cities of the plain. Beyond all these rise up in dark and sullen grandeur the mysterious mountains of Moab, the region beyond the Jordan, on one of whose bold eminences the haughty Balak stood when he called Balaam:

"Come curse me Jacob—come defy Israel." Almost instinctively you search out the highest peak, and as your eye rests upon it, you exclaim: "There is Pisgah! On that sublime hight [sic] stood Moses when he took his survey of the Promised Land!" What remarkable sights are before us, and what wonderful visions of the past rise around us as we stand upon this lofty summit and enjoy this extensive prospect. Were there nothing more than this, a half hour on Olivet would well repay a long and weary pilgrimage.

But Olivet has associations and lessons of a deeper interest. The path up which we toiled has often been pressed by the feet of the Son of God; beneath the shade of its olives and vines he sat and taught his listening disciples; the garden beneath us was the scene of his agony. But more

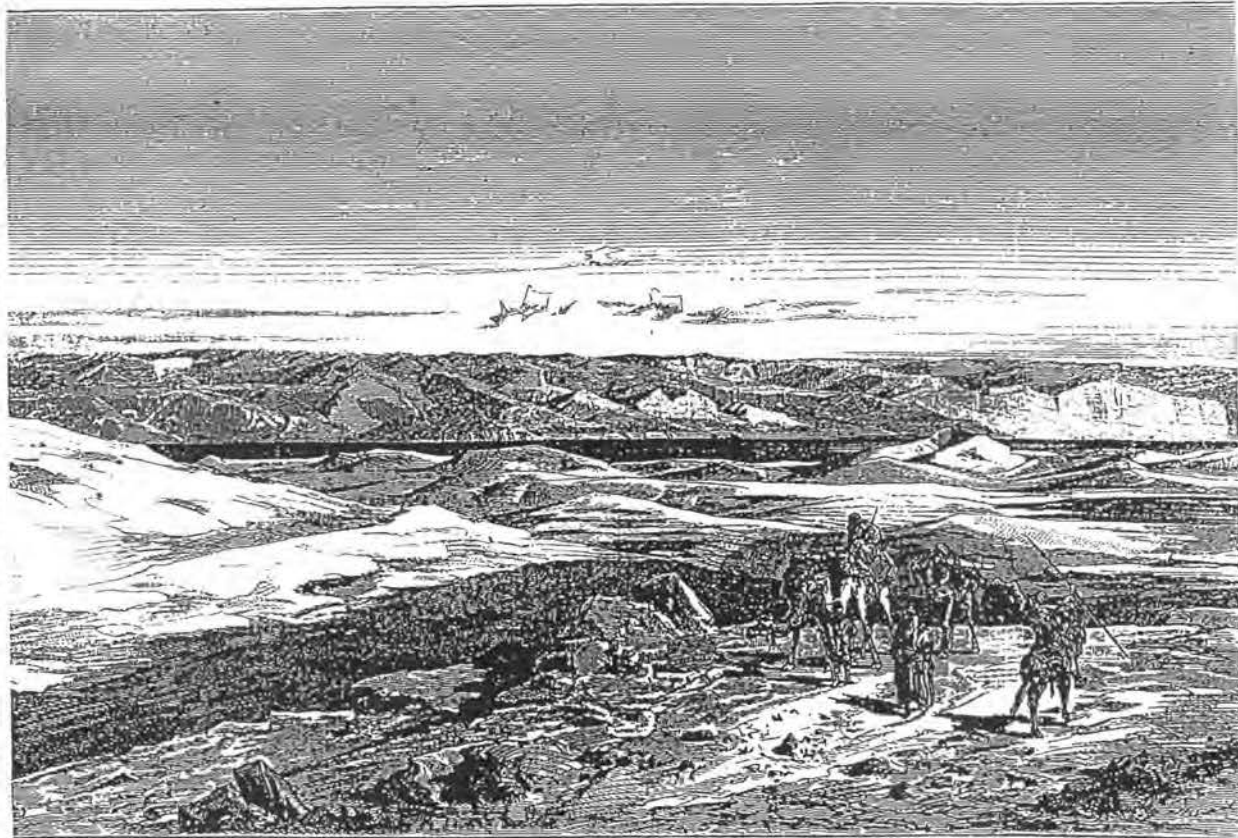
than this, it is the MOUNT OF ASCENSION! Forty days after his resurrection he led his disciples out as far as Bethany, and while he talked with them and blessed them, and a cloud received him up out of their sight. And while they stood astonished and awe struck, angels in white apparel stood by them: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into Heaven? This same Jesus which is taken from you into Heaven shall, in like manner, return again from Heaven." O Olivet! stepping-stone from which the victorious Son of God went back to glory, lifting thy majestic form above all the mountains around Jerusalem, it was fit thou shouldst be honored above them all! From the garden at thy base, to the place of ascension upon thy summit, what a radiance of glory clusters about thee! Mount of Ascension, with thee is associated the hope of glory; thou givest us assurance of the life everlasting!

(*Ibid.*, 134-135.)

OLIVET

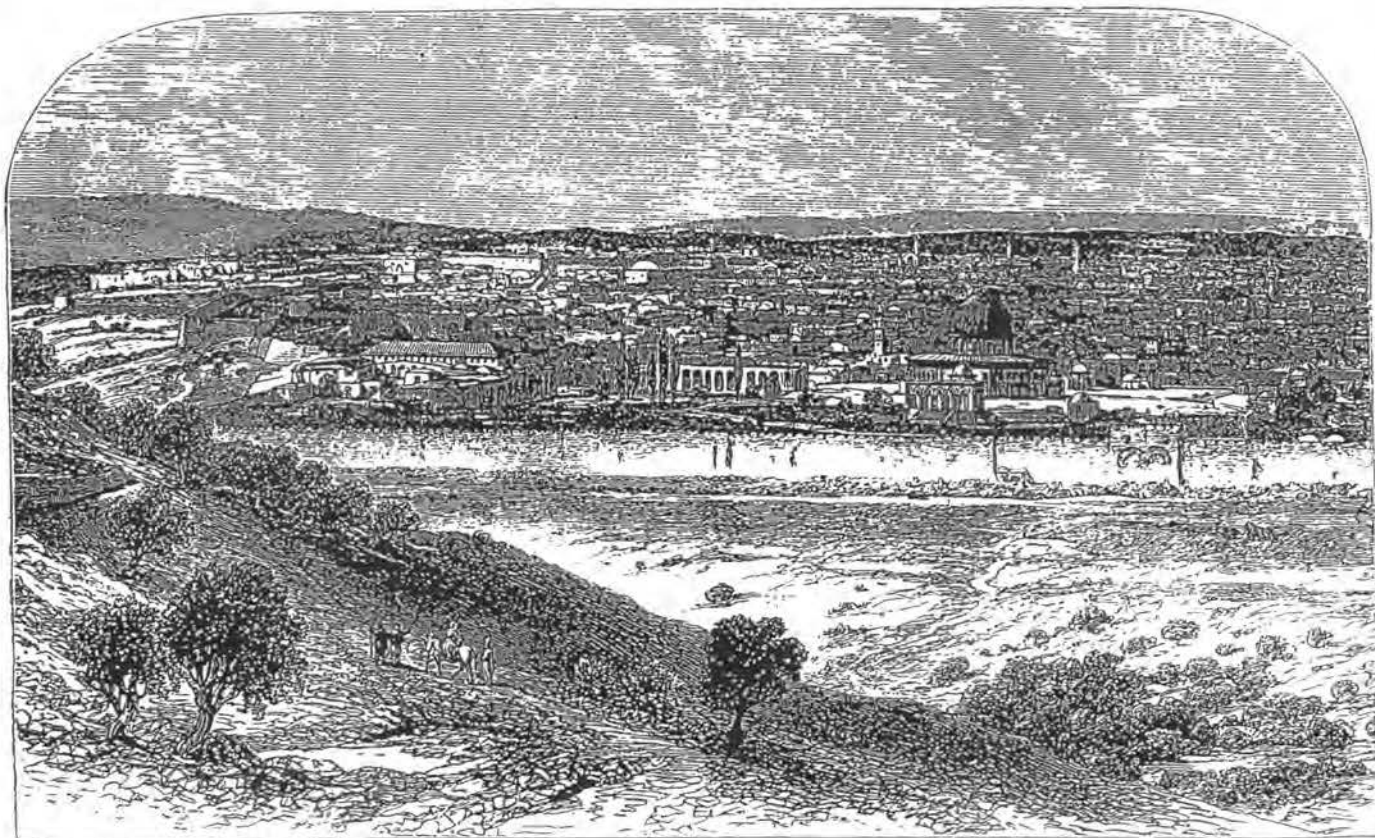


Map of the Mount of Olives, with its connections. (From the Ordnance Survey.)



Das Tote Meer vom Ölberge aus.

Eastward View from the Mt. of Olives



JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Westward View from the Mt. of Olives

5A. The Theologian and Olivet:

Schaff, who has been quoted repeatedly in this manual, has, as a theologian and historian, a special gift of describing holy sites. His lengthy chapter on his visit to Olivet deserves careful reading. (The points of the outline were added by this writer.)

1b. The panorama:

There are "mountains round about Jerusalem." Like Rome, Jerusalem is built on hills and surrounded by hills. It is 2,500 feet above the Mediterranean, and 3,700 feet above the Dead Sea. From the east and from the west there is a steady ascent to it; hence the phrase "to go up to Jerusalem." It stands on the mountain ridge which runs from north to south and forms the backbone of Palestine. It is built upon Mount Zion in the southwest and the lower Mount Moriah in the east. These two hills are separated by the Tyropoeon or Cheesemongers' Valley (which is nearly filled up with rubbish). Both are surrounded by ravines, which unite with the Tyropoeon in the south, Zion by the valley of Hinnom, Moriah by the valley of the Kedron or Jehoshaphat. The best place from which to study the panorama for orientation is Mount Olivet, with the Bible in the right hand and Josephus in the left. There you see the holy city in her lonely melancholy grandeur, with her walls and towers, her churches, mosques, and dome-roofed houses. It is the saddest, and yet the most impressive view in the world.

(Philip Schaff, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*. New York: American Tract Society, 1878, 271.)

2b. The final night in Gethsemane:

When Jesus passed out of St. Stephen's Gate (the ancient Fish-gate) down the ravine, and crossed that black winter torrent called Kedron (*i.e.*, the Black Brook), which is formed by the winter rains, but is entirely dry in summer (even in April as far as my experience goes), it was far more than Caesar's crossing the Rubicon for the military conquest of the world: it was the passage which decided the moral and eternal redemption of the world. David, betrayed by Ahithophel, one of his body-guard, took the same course in his flight from his rebellious son Absalom—a remarkable parallel, the typical import of which Jesus himself pointed out. In the garden of Gethsemane (*i.e.*, Oil-press), at the foot of the Mount of Olives, he was overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish, and endured the mysterious agony with all the powers of darkness, in the stead and in behalf of a fallen race. Here he was betrayed by the Judas-kiss, which he anticipated and made meaningless. Here the heathen garrison and the Jewish temple guard combined under the lead of the traitor, against the one unarmed Jesus; and yet, made cowards by conscience and overawed by the superhuman majesty of Jesus, like the profane traffickers in the temple, they fell to the ground before his "I am He!" The same words which cheered his trembling disciples on the stormy lake and after the resurrection, are here words of terror to his enemies, and will be on the day of judgment.

(*Ibid.*, 273-274.)

3b. The description of the garden:

There is no evidence to prove, but no good reason to deny, the identity of the spot now shown as GETHSEMANE. Some think it is too near the city and the thoroughfare for a place of retirement in that dangerous and dismal night. We reach it by an easy walk through St. Stephen's Gate over the dry bed of the Kedron. It lies on the slope of Mount Olivet, and is in the possession of the Franciscans. It is a garden with seven or eight majestic olive-trees, which are perhaps the oldest and certainly the most venerable trees in the world, though of course not of the time of our Lord—for Titus cut down all the trees round the city during the siege. But they may have sprouted from the roots of the original trees. The garden is enclosed by a new wall, and kept in very good order. A kind old



Zur Kibitze, in der Höhe des Gethsemane. (Nach Gortler.) (Zu B. 14.)

Franciscan monk gave us olive leaves and flowers from this every-memorable spot. The Greek Gethsemane is a short distance north of the Latin, and marked by a rude chapel in the rock. The two traditions may be reconciled by supposing that the Gethsemane of the Greek Church was the interior part of the garden, to which the Savior retired for prayer.

(*Ibid.*)



4b. The place of the ascension:

Tradition fixes the Ascension on the middle summit, in full sight of Jerusalem, but in plain contradiction to the narrative of Luke, who locates it near Bethany, on the retired eastern slope of the mountain. No importance, of course, can be attached to the mark of the foot of the ascending Jesus, pointed out in the Mohammedan mosque, but the mosque is well worth ascending on account of the magnificent view it affords over the most historic of all the historic regions on earth. A short distance from it a Russian lady erected a fine dwellinghouse. A little south of it the French Princesse Latour d'Auvergne, a relative of Napoleon III, built, in 1868, a church in the style of a campo santo over the spot where Christ is said to have taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer; and caused this Prayer of prayers to be inscribed on thirty-one slabs in as many different languages, as a symbol of the unity and universality of Christian devotion. A monument in white marble perpetuates her memory. West of this church we visited the chapel commemorating the composition of the Apostles' Creed, according to a tradition not older than the fourth century, and long since disproved as untenable. This Creed of creeds is apostolic indeed in spirit and power, but not in form, and gradually grew up from the inner life of the ancient Church.

(*Ibid.*, 275-276.)

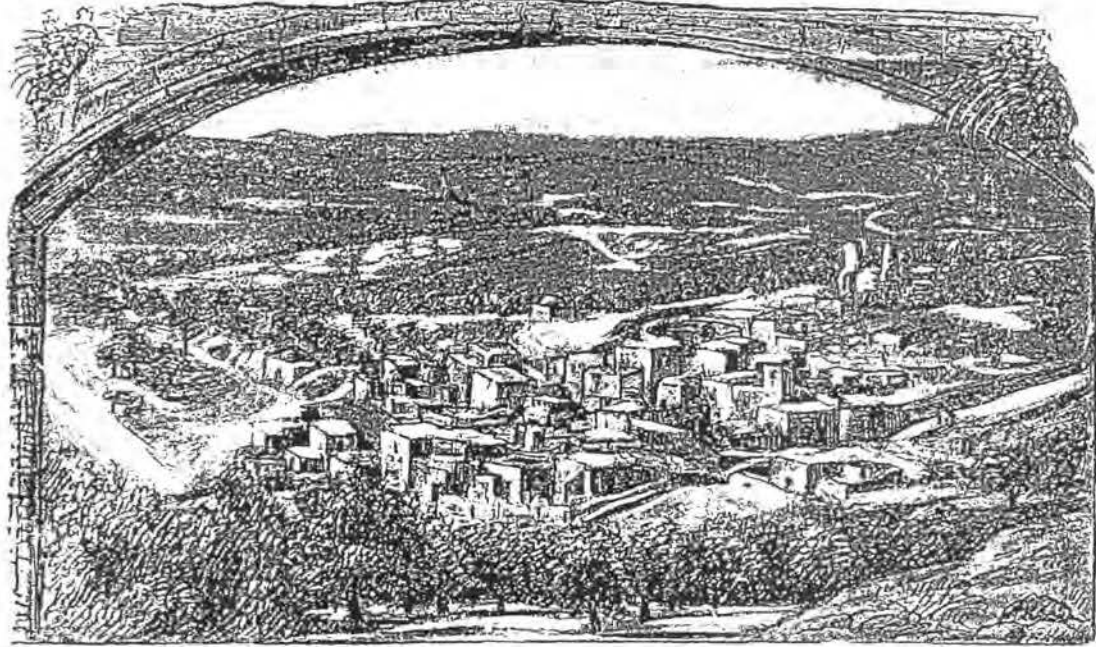


JESUS ASCENDS TO HEAVEN.

5b. The description of Bethany:

From the top of the Mount of Olives it is an easy descent to Bethany on its southeastern declivity. It can also be reached by the road to Jericho which leads round the mountain. It is only two miles from Jerusalem. It is now a miserable village of about forty hovels, inhabited by beggarly Mohammedans. They call it, in honor of Lazarus, "El-Azariyeh," and show the house of Martha and Mary, the house of Simon the leper, the tower of Lazarus, and his reputed sepulchre, a wretched cavern in the limestone rock, like a cellar, with about twenty-five steps, to which we descend by the dim light of a taper.

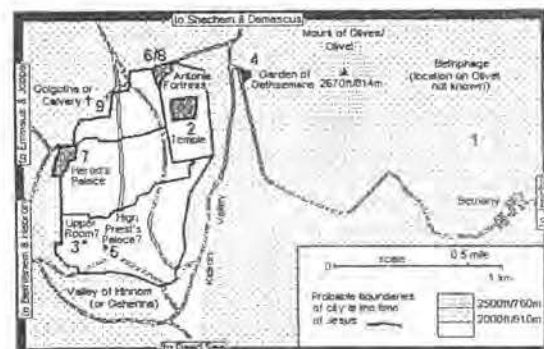
There is no probability of the genuineness of these particular localities; on the contrary, the grave of Lazarus was some distance from the village.



Bethany is pleasantly located, has good water, and is surrounded by cultivated spots and numerous fig, olive, almond, and carob trees. It was once a home of peace, inhabited by three children of peace and visited by the Prince of peace. It was the sacred spot of the friendship of Jesus. Here he revealed more of his *human* nature than elsewhere. Here he enjoyed the hospitality of Martha, the practical housekeeper, and allowed her contemplative sister Mary to sit at his feet and to perform, in the foreboding presentiment of his death, that touching service of devoted love for which she will be commemorated to the end of time. Here he wept tears of friendship over the grave of Lazarus "whom he loved." The eternal Son of God dissolved in tears! How far more natural, lovely, and attractive is weeping, sympathizing Saviour, than a cold, heartless stoic! How near these tears bring him to every child of sorrow and grief! But here also he revealed himself as the Resurrection and the Life, and wrought the greatest of miracles by the creative words, "Lazarus, come forth!" This act is a seal of his divinity and a pledge of our future resurrection. There is no escape from the plain, circumstantial narrative of John, one of the eyewitnesses. We must admit the truth, or resort to the disgraceful hypothesis of imposture, which explains nothing, but perverts the supernatural miracle into an unnatural monstrosity. Spinoza said to his friends, if he could believe the resurrection of Lazarus, he would dash to pieces his entire system of philosophy, and embrace without repugnance the common faith of Christians. This is sound reasoning. If Christ could raise the dead to life, he could easily perform the lesser miracles of healing, and must truly have been the eternal Son of God.

We left Bethany as we left other spots in Palestine, for ever consecrated to memory. It is a melancholy shadow of the past, but it may again become, at some future day, a delightful suburban retreat of domestic happiness and peace.

(*Ibid.*, 276-277.)



6A. The Mt. of Olives in Prophecy: Zech. 14:1-4

Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,
And your spoil will be divided in your midst.

2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 Then the Lord will go forth
And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west, *Making* a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.

1b. The return of the Lord:

Dr. Unger shows have the above passage strongly argues for a literal, physical return of Christ at the end of the Tribulation. ***It is then that the Mount of Olives will witness the climax of world history***, as Christ descends with the holy angels and heavenly saints to establish a kingdom of peace and righteousness for a thousand years.

And his feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. . . . His feet are the Lord's feet, as verse 3 demonstrates. How can the Lord's (Jehovah's) feet stand on the Mount of Olives? Because they are the feet of His resurrected, glorified humanity, which ascended to heaven from the same locality, and because "*this same Jesus* who was taken up. . . into heaven shall so come *in like manner*" as the disciples witnessed Him "go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). The "so" and "in like manner" evidently also mean, in the light of Zechariah 14:4 that He ascended from Olivet personally and visibly in His glorified humanity and will so return to the same spot personally and visibly in His glorified humanity. . . . At his glorious advent Messiah's feet [once nail-pierced] **shall stand** on the Mount of Olives. The word **stand**, '*amedhu*, with "feet" as the subject and the preposition "on" (locative use of '*al*, denoting place) can only mean "touch" or "rest firmly on." Messiah's feet shall "come in contact with" or "rest on" the Mount of Olives. A person is commonly said to "stand," i.e., "be erect," not sitting or reclining. But here **the feet** are said to "stand" to emphasize the personal, bodily return of the Lord to the earth, for the feet standing can only mean they support the weight of the human body in question. The language is apparently designed to compel a literal rather than a mystical interpretation of the Lord's second coming.

(Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Commentary Zechariah*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963, 245-246 [emphasis in the original].)

2b. The reference to Olivet:

The Mount of Olives, as the place of the Lord's appearing in glory, is said to be **before Jerusalem on the east**. Although this is the only time **the Mount of Olives** is mentioned by this name in the Old Testament (cf. "the ascent of Olives" in II Samuel 15:30), this can scarcely be the reason for the topographical notation describing the location of the site. The mountain was so dominant and in such close proximity to the holy city that it was well known, being plainly visible to every eye. Why then, the

appended geographical description? The following reasons may be suggested. (1) *From this mountain the glory of God departed and will return to Jerusalem.* "The glory of the God of Israel" (Ezek. 11:22), also called "the glory of the Lord," left Jerusalem *by the east* previous to the Babylonian captivity and the beginning of "the times of the Gentiles" (Ezek. 11:23), and *from the east* the same glorious symbol of the divine Presence is seen to return. "And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. . ." (Ezek. 43:2), marking the termination of "the times of the Gentiles."

(2) Accordingly, *the idea prevailed in antiquity that from the east salvation would arise*, like the sun, dispensing its salutary light, "even the Sun of righteousness (Messiah) . . . with healing in its beams . . ." (Mal. 4:2). (3) Moreover Zechariah's prophecy doubtless echoes the Ezekiel passages where similar topographical notations occur. "And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain *which is on the east side of the city*" (Ezek. 11:23). "And, behold the glory . . . came from *the way of the east*" (Ezek. 43:2). "And the glory of the Lord came into the house [millennial temple] by the way of the gate *whose prospect is toward the east*" (Ezek. 43:4).

(*Ibid.*, 245-246 [emphasis in the original].)

3b. The river of life: **Zech. 14:8**

And in that day it shall be
That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem,
Half of them toward the eastern sea
And half of them toward the western sea;
In both summer and winter it shall occur.

This writer is taking the liberty to adapt some of the material from a chapter he wrote in a *Festschrift* for Dr. Charles Ryrie.

The River of Life in Ezekiel 47:1-12 and Zechariah 14:8:

Woven throughout Old Testament prophecy is a constant theme of spectacular physical and geographical changes to occur when Christ returns. Zechariah 14 describes many features of this upheaval, including a new river to flow from Jerusalem into the desert (Zech. 14:8).

The Prophet Ezekiel concludes his temple vision (chaps. 40-46) with the description of this same miraculous, life-giving stream issuing from the temple. The river is also mentioned by Joel (Joel 3:18), some 250 years before Ezekiel, and by Zechariah after the Babylonian exile.

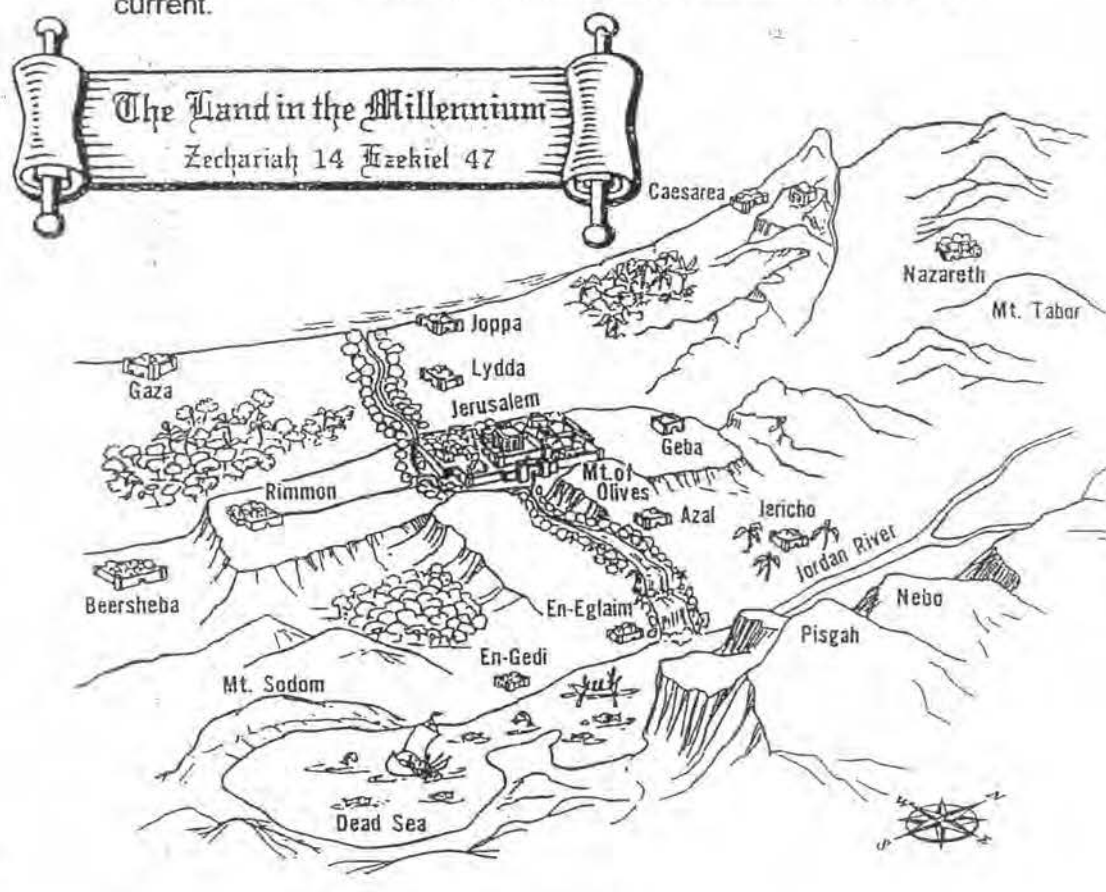
1c. The commencement of the River: Zech. 14:8; Ezek. 47:1-2

In Zechariah's prophecy, the river is said to originate in Jerusalem and to divide, one branch flowing into the Dead Sea, the other into the Mediterranean. In Ezekiel 47 only the river flowing eastward is described, as an angelic guide takes Ezekiel on a prophetic excursion along the river.

At the other eastern front of the temple Ezekiel sees a spring emerging (Ezek. 47:1-2). The waters begin at the immediate dwelling place of Christ who is the source of all spiritual and physical life. The miraculous waters "trickled forth" at first, and yet, without any tributaries, increased in depth and volume.

2c. The course of the River: Ezek. 47:3-5

The angel led Ezekiel along the riverbank, measuring the waters. After 1,750 feet (1,000 cubits) the waters were ankle-deep. In another 1,750 feet the waters had become knee-deep, then waist-deep at another 1,750 feet, until at another 1,750 feet the river was so deep that one could swim in it. In the distance from Jerusalem to the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives (about 1 ½ miles), the trickle became a spring, the spring a brook, the brook a stream, and the stream a raging river. To accent the dramatic size and depth of the river, Ezekiel refers to it in verse 9 as "rivers," literally "a double river," because of its raging current.



3c. The Changes Through the River: Ezekiel 47:6-12

The river continued to flow eastward, cascading into the Arabah (Ezek. 47:8), the desolate Jordan Valley rift extending from the Sea of Galilee southward to the Dead Sea and then to the Gulf of Aqabah. The river issued into the Dead Sea, healing its salty waters and rejuvenating the desert. The most inhospitable, arid, barren, desolate land on the face of the earth will become a fruitful land, lush with vegetation.

Along the banks of the supernatural yet literal river will grow "very many trees on the one side and on the other" (Ezek. 47:7). These marvelous trees shall be "for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof

for medicine" (v. 12). These trees will have an inexhaustible quantity of fruit all year long. The leaves of the tree will provide healing, apparently for those who were redeemed in the Tribulation and entered the Millennium in their physical bodies, and for their offspring.

The Dead Sea which will be healed is today a symbol of death and destruction. The stench of sulphur hanging in the air reminds one of the judgment of Genesis 19. Presently the Dead Sea can hardly sustain microorganisms, apart from some freshwater springs along its northwestern shores. As proof for the genuine healing, the sea will bring forth "a very great multitude of fish" (Ezek. 47:9). Fishermen will find the Dead Sea an ideal place for their trade, with an abundance of fish like those found in the Mediterranean Sea. Fishermen will spread their nets from En-Gedi ("fountain of a kid"), located on the middle of the western shore, to En-Eglaim ("spring of the two calves"), perhaps located along the northwestern shore near Qumran.

The swamps and marshes near the southern end of the Dead Sea "will not be healed; they shall be given to salt" (Ezek. 47:11). Though Ezekiel does not explain why the salt flats will remain, several explanations can be offered. Salt, essential for the preparation of food, will also be required for some of the memorial sacrifices offered in the temple (Ezek. 43:24; cf. Lev. 2:13). Further, the Dead Sea is an important source of minerals for Israel and possibly will be in the future. The Lord may also want to demonstrate to the rest of the world for 1,000 years how stagnant and lifeless the entire Dead Sea had been before the river of living water healed it.

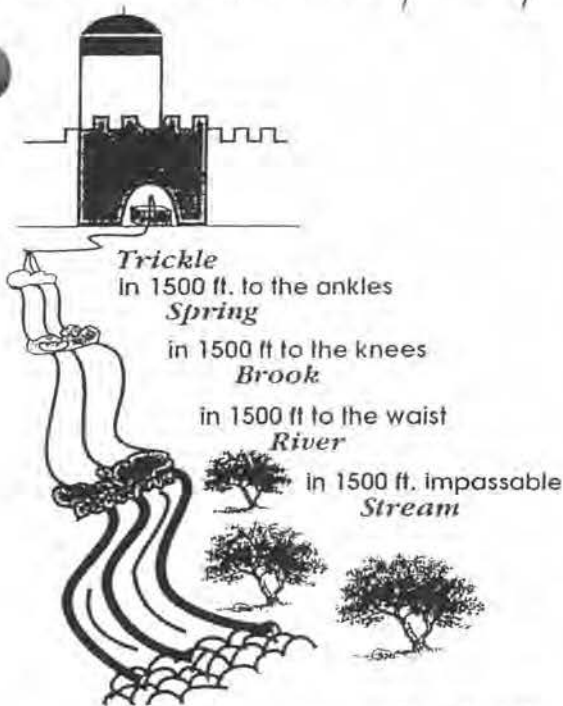
4c. The Controversy Over the River:

Unfortunately many commentators spiritualize the river and thus cannot agree on its interpretation. The early church fathers saw the river as a symbol of baptism. Some see it as the stream of church history. Many speak of the river as emblematic of spiritual life, with some saints only ankle-deep or knee-deep Christians. Others identify the river with the stream of the Gospel, denying any literal future aspect of the prophecy. Derek Kidner, in relating the river with the river of paradise in Genesis 2, speaks of it simply as "vitality that flows from holy ground" (*Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, Downer's Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1967, 63), whatever that might mean.

Only the literal interpretation can do justice to magnificent prophetic passages such as Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 47. It is demonstrably true in the interpretation of these and other passages that "*sane literal* interpretation . . . cannot fail to lead to happy results in exegesis. Spiritualizing and mysticalizing interpretation, on the other hand . . . are bound to produce endless confusion" (Merrill F. Unger, *Zechariah: Prophet of Messiah's Glory*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, 239).

If one denies the literalness of the river, where does one stop? The events of the Second Advent outlined by Zechariah and Ezekiel are interrelated. The rebellion of the nations at Armageddon is followed by the ravishing of Jerusalem, which in turn is followed by the return of the Lord, the removal of the mountains, the revelation of the river, the redemption of nature, and the reign of Christ. The Germans have a proverb: "Wer A sagt der muss auch B sagen." He who says A also must say B. An interpreter who sees the return of the Lord as a literal

The River of Life



event should also subscribe to a literal fulfillment of its accompanying events.

If the river is not literal, why would Zechariah and Ezekiel list so many actual geographical places in the context? Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives, the Arabah, the Dead Sea, En-Gedi, En-Eglaim, and the salt flats are quite specific locations.

If the river were not literal, why would other passages of Scripture mention the river as well? Psalm 46:4 mentions a river which will make Jerusalem glad. Joel 3:18's millennial prediction envisions a fountain coming out of the temple and watering the valley of Shittim in which the Dead Sea is located. In fact, the millennial changes predicted by Zechariah and Ezekiel are simply a microcosm of the healing of the curse that will take place all over the world.

Apparently every desert on earth will become lush and green. Joel speaks of other rivers of Judah flowing with water (Joel 3:16). Isaiah writes of

waters breaking out in the wilderness, streams in the desert, and floods upon the dry ground (Isa. 43:19-20; 44:3). The wilderness will become a fruitful field (Isa. 32:15; 55:13). The changes described for the wilderness of Judea will be worldwide as deserts such as the Sahara, Gobi and Mojave will become lush forests. The redeemed will be there to witness the transformation as the Redeemer saves the groaning creation from the curse of sin (Rom. 8:22). At that time the carol "Joy to the World" will take on its fullest meaning. "No more let sin and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground. He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found." (Wesley and Elaine Willis and John and Janet Masters, eds. *Basic Theology Applied*, 1995, 287-290).