

Israel – A Believers Journey



Hosted By Tim Agee and Bruce Zupa

May 27th – June 7th















I Kings 18 : 20&21 and 30-40



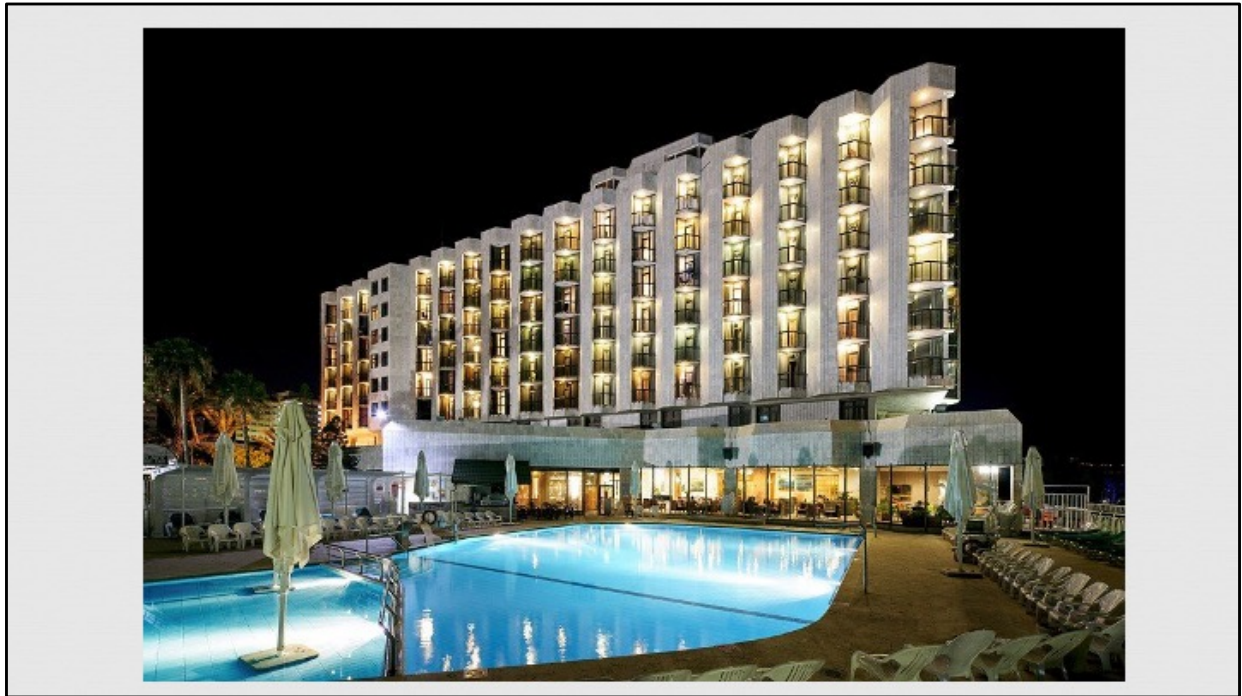
So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." And the people did not answer him a word.

















Sunrise on Sea



Praying by the Sea



Israel 2022 – Trip Preparation



Lesson 4

March 29, 2022

Future Class Dates



- ❧ April 5
- ❧ April 12 - Tim Out
- ❧ April 26
- ❧ May 10
- ❧ All classes will meet at 6:30pm
- ❧ Location - Bellevue Church of Christ / Room A120
- ❧ Will also be offered via Microsoft Teams for those who cannot meet in person.
- ❧ Please let Tim know in advance if you need us to setup a remote option.

Online Resources



✧ <https://www.teamagee.com/category/israel2020/>

✧ Journal of my trip to Israel from 2019 to 2020

✧ <https://www.teamagee.com/israel2022/>

✧ Copies of the slides from this class



En-Gedi



1 Sam 23:29; 24; 2 Samuel 22; Song of Solomon 1:14; 2
Chronicles 20:1–2; Ezekiel 47:10 Ezekiel 47:10



En-Gedi



- ❧ En-Gedi means “spring of the goat” or “spring of the kid.”
- ❧ It gets this name from the freshwater spring located there and from the many wild goats (Ibex) which live in the area.
- ❧ En-Gedi is mentioned numerous times in the Old Testament:
 - ❧ Joshua 15:62 first mentions En-Gedi in the tribal allotment given to Judah.
 - ❧ When fleeing from Saul, David left his place of refuge in the wilderness and dwelt in the strongholds of En Gedi (1 Sam 23:29).
 - ❧ In one of the caves there, David cut off the corner of Saul’s robe when he had entered to “relieve himself” (1 Samuel 24).

En-Gedi (Cont.)



- ✧ In 2 Samuel 22, David sings a song of praise to God for delivering him from Saul and in verse 2 calls God his rock, stronghold, and deliverer.
- ✧ The Song of Solomon (Song 1:14) describes En-Gedi as a vineyard (“fruitful of oasis”) when talking about his beloved.
- ✧ 2 Chronicles 20:1–2 says that in the reign of Jehoshaphat (800 BC) during the Divided Monarchy, an army of Moabites and Ammonites camped at En-Gedi in preparation to invade Israel.
- ✧ Ezekiel prophesies a time when fresh waters will flow from the Temple in Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea and make the Dead Sea fresh: “From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets” (Ezekiel 47:10).



Wild goats (Ibex) at En-Gedi



Wild goats (Ibex) at En-Gedi



Mountains at En-Gedi



Mountains at En-Gedi / Filled with Caves



Wild goats (Ibex) at En-Gedi



Lower waterfall at En-Gedi



Upper waterfall at En-Gedi



View toward the Dead Sea from up on the mountain at En-Gedi



Listening to a lesson about David from Dr. Rodney Cloud while on top of En-Gedi

Masada





Masada



- ❧ The name Masada means “fortress.”
- ❧ Masada is a mountain (mesa) that rises almost 1,500ft above the Dead Sea, but this is still just barely above sea level.
- ❧ Everything we know about Masada comes from Josephus and archaeological excavations.
- ❧ Herod the Great built two palaces on the mountain and fortified Masada between 37 and 31 BC.

Masada



- ✧ The palaces of Herod the Great were essentially abandoned by his sons after his death in 4 BC.
- ✧ The site was taken over by the Jewish zealots (the Sicarii - knife-wielding zealots) and became the last stronghold of the Great Jewish Revolt (66 to 73 AD). The Romans brought 8,000 troops to Masada in 73 AD and defeated the Jews who were living there.
- ✧ According to Josephus, the siege of Masada by Roman troops from 73 to 74 AD, at the end of the First Jewish–Roman War, ended in the mass suicide of the 960 Sicarii rebels who were hiding there. However, the archaeological evidence relevant to this event is ambiguous at best and rejected entirely by some scholars.



Masada – rising 1,500 ft above the Dead Sea



View of the Dead Sea and the Judean Wilderness from the top of Masada



Squares in the valley below the mountain where they have excavated the Roman encampments from when they brought 8,000 troops against Masada in 73 AD



The Snake Path and Snake Path Gate, from the time of Herod the Great, that were used to access Masada from the valley below. The Snake Path today is a hiking trail that provides access to the top of the mountain.



A quarry from the time of Herod the Great that was used to mine the rocks needed for building the palaces and other structures.



Northern Palace Complex



Northern Palace Complex - The storehouses. This storehouse had holes in the bottom that were silos for wheat and barley. It also had a two-handled jar for wine.



Northern Palace Complex – Terraces or Balconies / Picture taken from the upper terrace toward the middle and lower terraces / Built in “stair-steps” down the side of the mountain.



Model from the three terraces of the Northern Palace Complex



The remains of the three terraces today from the Northern Palace Complex



A bath house with the same 3 types of rooms from the bath house in Beth-She'an: (1) Cold room (2) Cool room (3) Hot room or sauna.



There was a very short and skinny door in the bath house between the cool room and the sauna. This may say something about the stature of Herod the Great.



In the Sauna, the floor was raised by series of short pillars. Fires were set through arches under the floor by the servants. Water was run under the floor and up the walls to make the surface hot and then cold water was poured on the walls and floor to make steam.



According to Josephus, when it became clear that the Romans were going to take over Masada, on April 15, 73 A.D., on the instructions of Ben Yair (in the synagogue), all but two women and five children, who hid in the cisterns and later told their stories, took their own lives rather than live as Roman slaves. Today it is hard to believe that the women in the cisterns could have heard what was being said in the Synagogue, which was relatively far away.



A synagogue from the time of the Jewish control of Masada. Josephus records that a speech was made at this synagogue by Eleazar ben Ya'ir during the Roman attack in 73 AD, and that 10 men were chosen to kill all the remaining Jews to prevent their capture (cast "Lots"). It seems almost impossible for Josephus to know this. Many today still hold to the traditional view of what happened at Masada, some modern scholars believe that Josephus adapted a story from his past when he was a Jewish commander, and that this "suicide" was a myth given to strengthen the state of Israel. My opinion is that all of the Jews at Masada died at the hands of the Romans.



A section of the outer casement wall from the time of Herod the Great known as the “Casement of the Scrolls.” It was given this name because two of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found there. One of these two scrolls contained the passage from Ezekiel about the vision of the valley of the dry bones (Ezekiel 37).



The point where the Romans built a ramp and breached the casement wall during the attack in 73 AD.

The Dead Sea



Gen 14:3; Num 34:3, 12; Deut 3:17; 4:49; Josh. 3:16, 12:3, 15:2, 5, 18:19;
2 Kgs 14:25; Ezek 47:18; Zech 14:8





The Dead Sea



- ❧ The Dead Sea is the lowest place in the world at 1,412 ft (430m) below sea level.
- ❧ The water in the Dead Sea is 36% salt, 8 times more than any ocean. Needless to say, nothing can grow in this lake. It is 50 km long, 18 km wide, and 300 m deep at its lowest point.
- ❧ The Dead Sea used to be much larger, but that since the flow of the Jordan River is now being controlled by a dam, the water in the Dead Sea is receding 1.5 meters every year.

The Dead Sea (Cont.)



- ❧ Scripture contains 16 references to the Dead Sea.
- ❧ It is referred to by the names “Salt Sea” (Gen 14:3; Num 34:3, 12; Deut 3:17; Josh. 3:16, 12:3, 15:2, 5, 18:19), “Sea of the Arabah” (Deut 3:17, 4:49; Josh 3:16, 12:3; 2 Kgs 14:25) and the “Eastern Sea” (Ezek 47:18; Zech 14:8).
- ❧ The names are used once each to communicate direction (*toward the*).
- ❧ Only once is the Dead Sea designated as a location (Gen 14:3).
- ❧ The remaining 12 references to the Dead Sea are used in the context of describing the borders of the promised land.



Sunrise at the Dead Sea (Southern End – Resort Area)



Salt on the bank of the Dead Sea, just south of Jericho



Salt on the bank of the Dead Sea, just south of Jericho / Wild goats (ibex)



Floating on the Dead Sea



Rocks and salt crystals that line the bottom of the sea



Sinkholes near the Dead Sea that are being caused by the rapid shrinking of the sea.



Canals that are bringing water from the northern end of the Dead Sea to the resort area in the south.



Pools that are being used to collect water from the canals at the resort area in the south.



Pools that are being used to collect water from the canals at the resort area in the south.

Tel Be'er Sheva / Be'er Sheba



Genesis 21:25, 32-22; 22:19; 26:23, 25; 46:1

"From Dan to Beersheba" - Judges 20:1; 1 Samuel 3:20; 2 Samuel 3:10,
17:11, 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25; 1 Chronicles 21:2; 2 Chronicles 30:5



Tel Be'er Sheva



- ❧ Tel Be'er Sheva lies east of the modern city of Be'er Sheba and west of the new Bedouin town of Tel Sheva.
- ❧ 15 strata have been discovered at this Tell, but most of what has been excavated, and is visible, is from the 9th century BC (time of Ahab).
- ❧ The name of this ancient city is derived from "be'er," meaning "well or fountain" and "sheva," meaning "oath."
- ❧ Be'er Sheva (or Beer-sheba) is mentioned 33 times in the Bible.
- ❧ "From Dan to Beersheba" is a biblical phrase used nine times to refer to the settled areas of the Tribes of Israel between Dan in the North and Beersheba in the South (Judges 20:1; 1 Samuel 3:20; 2 Samuel 3:10, 17:11, 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25; 1 Chronicles 21:2; 2 Chronicles 30:5).

Tel Be'er Sheva (Cont.)



- ✧ It was a significant center in the patriarchal narratives:
 - ✧ Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba (Genesis 22:19)
 - ✧ Abraham and Abimelech entered a covenant at Beer-sheba (Genesis 21:32)
 - ✧ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beer-sheba (Genesis 21:33).
 - ✧ The Lord spoke to both Isaac and Jacob, Abraham's son and grandson respectively, at Beer-sheba (Genesis 26:23; 46:1).
- ✧ Beer-sheba is the site of two significant wells from scripture: Abraham's well at Beer-sheba was seized by Abimelech's men (Genesis 21:25), and Isaac's servants dug a well at Beer-sheba also (Genesis 26:25).



Remains of city wall at Be'er Sheva from 9th Century BC / Most of this has been reconstructed / Note line near the ground



70-meter deep well outside the wall that could possibly either be the well of Abraham that is described in Gen 21 or the well of Isaac as described in Gen 26.



70-meter deep well outside the wall that could possibly either be the well of Abraham that is described in Gen 21 or the well of Isaac as described in Gen 26.



Overview of the excavations at Be'er Sheva / Note store houses in the upper left and main gate to the upper right



Entrance to ancient water system at Be'er Sheva



Feral cat at Be'er Sheva



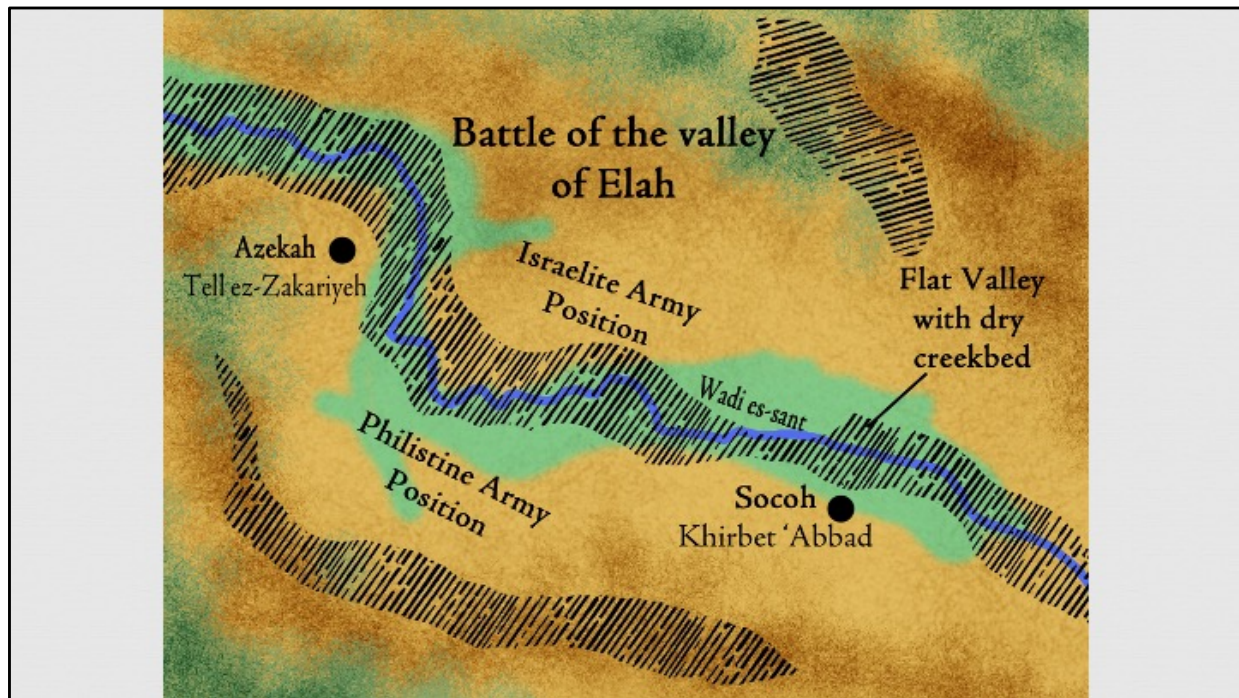
Feral cat at Be'er Sheva

Valley of Elah



1 Samuel 17; 21:9





Valley of Elah



- ❧ The Valley of Elah is the modern Wadi es-Sant, and is the location where David killed Goliath in 1 Samuel 17 (Also mentioned in 21:9 in connection with the battle).
- ❧ It is home to several important archaeological sites, including those identified as the ancient towns of Azekah and Socho (1 Sam 17:1).
- ❧ The Valley of Elah ran east to west between Israelite and Philistine territory, with Gath to the west, which made it a likely spot for a clash between the two powers.
- ❧ In 1 Samuel 17, the Israelite forces were probably on the hills on the north side of the valley, with the Philistines opposite them.



Dry creek-bed (Wadi) in the Valley of Elah



Dry creek-bed (Wadi) in the Valley of Elah



Selecting five smooth stones from the wadi