



## 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.
- ✧ 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 (Gen 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).



Bedouin town near Be'er Sheva (June 2022)



Bedouin town near Be'er Sheva (June 2022)





Looking towards the Negev Desert (June 2022)



Tel Be'er Sheva with 15 Strata (June 2022)



Remains of city wall at Be'er Sheva from 9<sup>th</sup> Century BC / Most of this has been reconstructed / Note line near the ground (January 2020)



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. (June 2022)



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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. (January 2020)



Main gate of Be'er Sheva / Note rooms on left-side of gate (June 2022)



View over the casement wall toward the modern city of Beer-Sheba (June 2022)





Outer casement wall at Tel Be'er Sheva (June 2022)



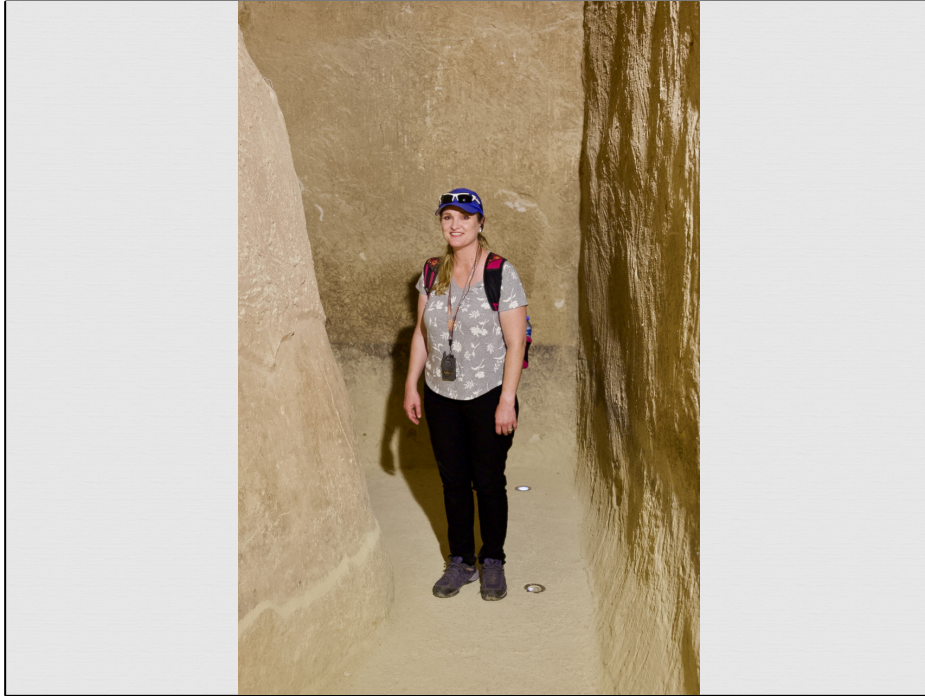
Overview of the excavations at Be'er Sheva / Note store houses in the upper left and main gate to the upper right (January 2020)



Entrance to ancient water system at Be'er Sheva (January 2020)



This water system was designed to bring in water from the Hebron Mountains via wadi and channels into cisterns deep inside the Tel. The girls are standing in one of the cisterns. (June 2022)



This water system was designed to bring in water from the Hebron Mountains via wadi and channels into cisterns deep inside the Tel. Olivia is standing in one of the cisterns. (June 2022)



Reproduction of an altar that was found at Tel Be'er Sheva (June 2022)



Feral cat at Be'er Sheva (January 2020)



Feral cat at Be'er Sheva (January 2020)



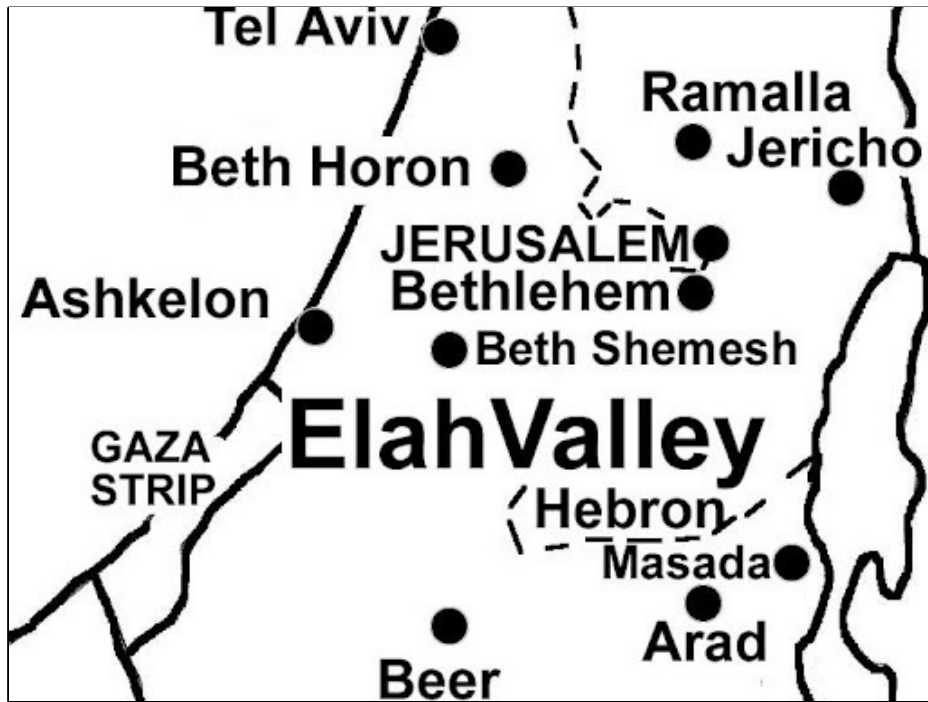


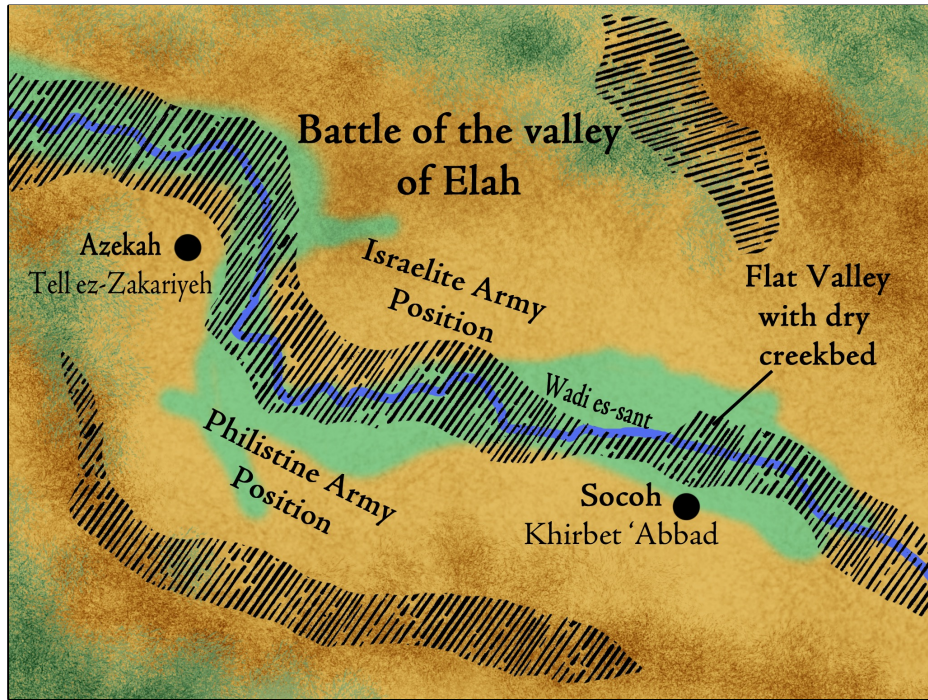
McDonalds near Tel Be'er Sheva (June 2020)

# 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.



Valley of Elah...the Israelite forces were probably on the hills on the north side of the valley (to the left), with the Philistines opposite them. (June 2022)



Valley of Elah...the Israelite forces were probably on the hills on the north side of the valley (behind us), with the Philistines opposite them. (June 2022)



Valley of Elah...the Israelite forces were probably on the hills on the north side of the valley, with the Philistines opposite them (Pictured here). (June 2022)





Dry creek-bed (Wadi) in the Valley of Elah (June 2022)



Selecting five smooth stones from the wadi (June 2022)



Selecting five smooth stones from the wadi (June 2022)

# Herodium

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# Herodium



- ❧ Herodium was the administrative center for Herod the Great. It is located 7.5 miles south of Jerusalem and 3.1 miles southeast of Bethlehem.
- ❧ The site is a large, man-made hill that looks like a volcano or an archaeological Tel, but was built by Herod the Great ~ 23 to 15 B.C.
- ❧ The mountain is 2,487 feet above sea level, the highest peak in the Judaeen desert.
- ❧ There was a fortress-palace on the top of the mountain, and at the bottom was a palace, bathhouse, and giant freshwater swimming pool. Herod the Great is also believed to have been buried there.
- ❧ A signet ring (bulla) of Pontius Pilate was found at Herodium.
- ❧ In the second century AD, Herodium was occupied by the Jews during the second Jewish revolt.

**Oslo II Map**  
Outlining Areas A, B, and C



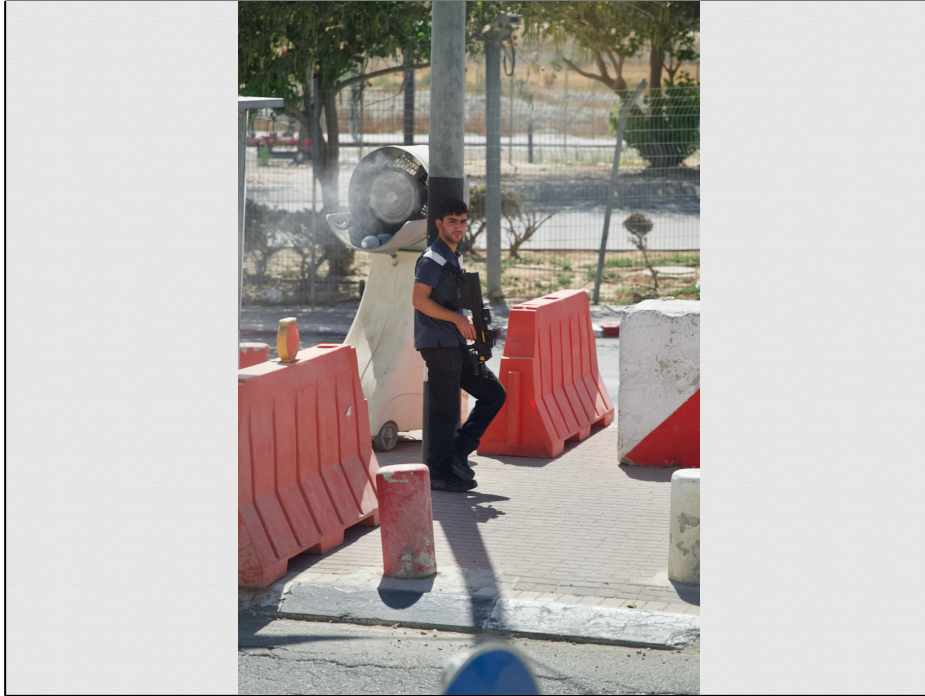


Peak of Herodium rising up in the Judean Wilderness (June 2022)



Checkpoint to enter the West Bank (Palestinian Authority) - (June 2022)





Checkpoint to enter the West Bank (Palestinian Authority) - (June 2022)



Warning sign in the West Bank (June 2022)



Warning sign in the West Bank (June 2022)



Herodium – artificial mountain built by Herod the Great / 2,487 feet above sea level (June 2022)



Feral cat at Herodium (January 2020)



Model of fortress (on top), tomb of Herod, and theatre at Herodium (Note the steps leading up into the mountain. (June 2022)



Reproduction of signet ring (bulla) of Pontius Pilate that was found at Herodium (June 2022)



Excavated remains of the fresh-water pool and palace at the base of the hill. (June 2022)





Steep path to the top of Herodium which offers incredible views all the way to Jerusalem, the Wilderness of Judaea, and the Dead Sea. This used to be the primary way to the top of the mountain for visitors until the restoration of the stairs. (January 2020)



Rolling stones from the time of the second Jewish revolt against the Romans (June 2022)



View toward Jerusalem (Over the hill to the right) - (June 2022)



View of the Wilderness of Judaea, and the Dead Sea. (June 2022)



View toward Bethlehem (June 2022)



Remains of the theatre at Herodium (January 2020) / Note the progress of the restoration



Same theater in June 2022 (Complete restoration) / Compare original seats at the top to restored seats at the bottom. / At the top of the theatre is the restored Royal Guest Room



Inside the Royal Guest Room (June 2022) / The exterior building for the Royal Guest Room is new, but inside are plaster and frescoes from the original structure. Supposedly this room was built for the reception of Marcus Agrippa, but this is not based on any reliable source.





The tomb of Herod the Great. No inscription has been found at the tomb, but it was described by Josephus that Herod was buried here. (January 2020)



The tomb of Herod the Great. No inscription has been found at the tomb, but it was described by Josephus that Herod was buried here. (June 2022) / The tomb is also being restored



Newly restored steps leading into and on top of Herodium (June 2022)



Newly restored steps leading into and on top of Herodium (June 2022)



The remains of the fortress on top of the mountain (January 2020)



The remains of the fortress on top of the mountain (June 2022)



Model of the fortress on top of the mountain (January 2020)



Main tower from the fortress (January 2020)





Main tower from the fortress (June 2022)



Bathhouse within the fortress (January 2022)



A ritual bath (Mikveh) from time period of the 2nd revolt (January 2020)



A reception hall that was converted to a synagogue in the 2nd century AD (January 2020)



A tunnel that leads down through the hill to the outside. The first part of this tunnel is from Herod's water system, and the second part is from the time of the 2nd Jewish revolt in the 2nd century AD. (January 2020)



A tunnel that leads down through the hill to the outside. The first part of this tunnel is from Herod's water system, and the second part is from the time of the 2nd Jewish revolt in the 2nd century AD. (June 2022)



Cistern from Herod's water system (June 2022)