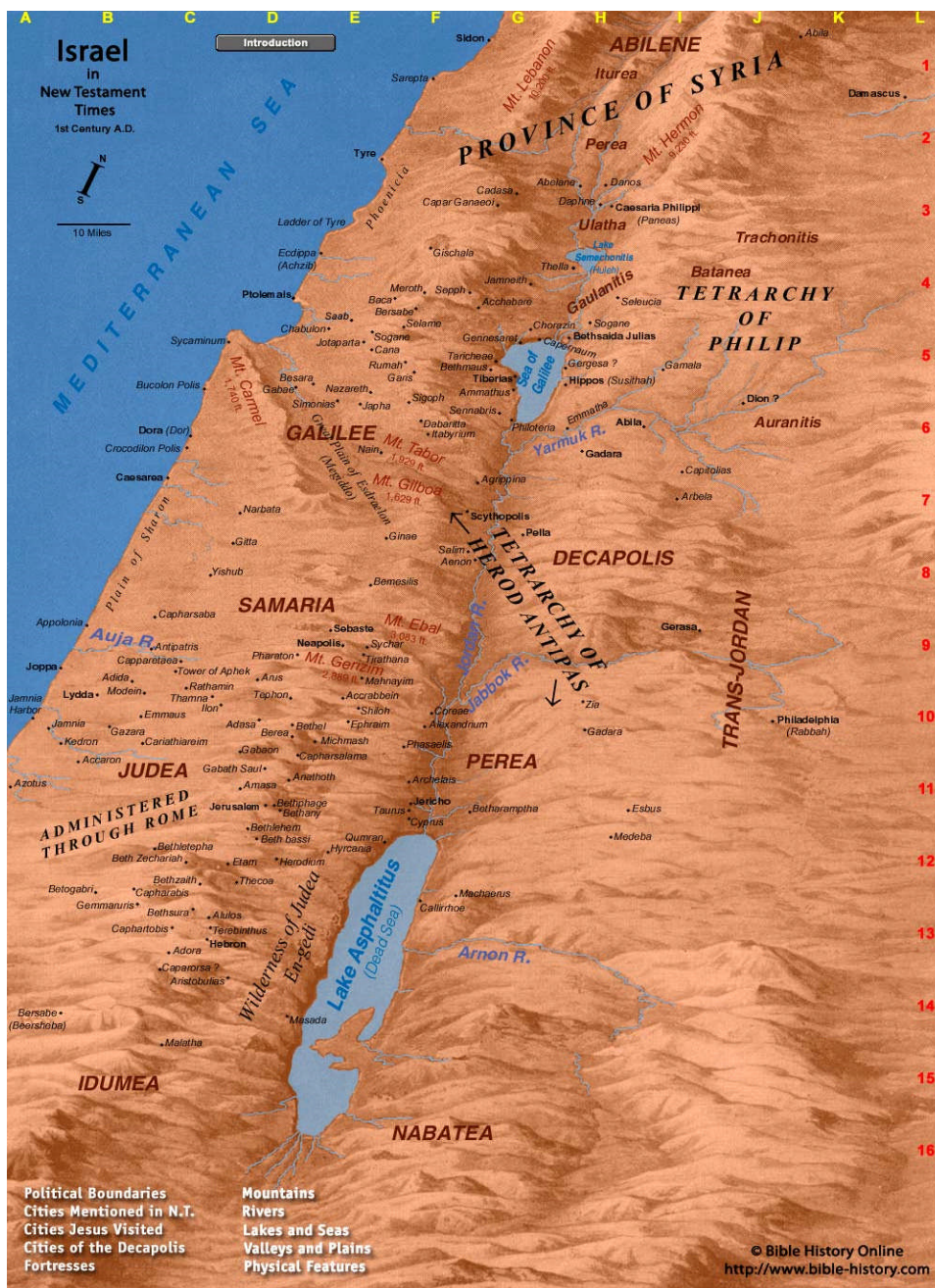


## Doctrine of the Moabites

1. The origin of the Moabites is rooted in an incestuous act between Lot and his eldest daughter.
  - *Genesis 19:30 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. 31 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. 33 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose....37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.*
2. The children of the union between Lot and his eldest daughter settled in the rich highlands on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, extending as far north as the mountain of Gilead from which area they expelled a race of giants called the Emims, the original inhabitants.



- *Deuteronomy 2:11 Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.*
3. The Moabites were driven from the area they had conquered southward by the warring Amorites who crossed the Jordan River. The River Arnon formed their new northern boundary.
    - *Numbers 21:13 From thence they [the Moabites] removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.*
    - *Judges 11:18 Then they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon was the border of Moab.*



4. Prior to the invasion of the Amorites, the territory occupied by Moab was distinct.

- There was the “field of Moab” referring to the enclosed corner south of the Arnon River.
- ❖ *Genesis 36:35 And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.*

- ❖ *1 Chronicles 1:46 And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.*
  - There was the “land of Moab” referring to the open rolling country north of the Arnon River, opposite Jericho and reaching up to the hills of Gilead. Here Moses gave the Law to Israel and here Moses looked out over the Promised Land.
  - ❖ *Deuteronomy 1:5 On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying,*
  - ❖ *Deuteronomy 32:49 Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession:*
  - There was the sunken district in the tropical area of the Jordan Valley where the children of Israel encamped prior to entering the Land of Promise.
  - ❖ *Numbers 22:1 And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho.*
5. Upon entering the Promised Land, the Israelites avoided passing through the Moabites.
- *Judges 11:18 Then they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of [the River] Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for [the River] Arnon was the border of Moab.*
6. Israel did conquer the Amorites who were occupying the territory from which the Moabites had been expelled.
7. Following the conquest of Canaan the relations between the Moabites and the Israelites was strained with periods of war and times of peace.

### **Subjugation to Eglon, King of Moab**

- A time for war. *Judges 3:12 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord. 13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees. 14 So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.*

### **Ehud, a Divine Deliverer from the Tribe of Benjamin**

*15 But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man left-handed: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab. 16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh. 17 And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man. 18 And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present. 19 But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him. 20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat. 21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly: 22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.*

### **The Escape of Ehud**

*23 Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them. 24 When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber. 25 And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them: and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth. 26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.*

### **Reverse Subjugation of Moab to Israel**

*27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them. 28 And he said unto them, Follow after me: for the Lord hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over. 29 And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour; and there escaped not a man. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years.*

- A time of peace.
    - ❖ The story of Ruth indicates friendly co-existence and free political and social interaction between Moab and Bethlehem, one of the towns of Judah.
    - ❖ Because he was a descendent from Ruth, David had Moabite blood in his veins.
    - ❖ David entrusted his parents to the protection of the king of Moab when he was being hunted by king Saul. *1 Samuel 22:3 And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. 4 And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.*
7. The period of peace gave way to aggression once more when David made war against the Moabites.
- *2 Samuel 8:2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.*
  - *1 Chronicles 18:2 And he smote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.*
8. Following the collapse of the northern kingdom, at the death of king Ahab of Israel (871-852 BC), the Moabites ceased to pay tribute and moved to assert their independence by waging war against Judah.
- *2 Kings 3:5 But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.*
9. In the war that ensued, Israel, Judah and Edom united in a coalition to attack Moab. The military campaign was successful and the Moabites were defeated. Pursued back into their own territory, Moabite cities and farms were destroyed. Seeking to appease false gods, Mesha, king of the Moabites, killed and offered his child as a burnt propitiatory offering. Thousands looked on. The story is told in 2 Kings 3.

*“Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. 2 And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. 3 Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.*

### **King Mesha of Moab Pays Tribute**

*4 And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.*

### **The Revolt of Moab**

*5 But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.*

### **The Military Alliance of Israel, Judah and Edom**

*6 And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and numbered all Israel. 7 And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses. 8 And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom. 9 So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom: and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the cattle that followed them. 10 And the king of Israel said, Alas! That the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!*

### **The Word of the Prophet Elisha**

*11 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may inquire of the Lord by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah. 12 And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.*

### **Elisha's Contempt for King Jehoshaphat of Judah**

*13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.*

*14 And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. 15 But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.*

### **Elisha's Military Strategy**

*16 And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches. 17 For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts. 18 And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand. 19 And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones. 20 And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.*

### **A Deceptive Sight**

*21 And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border. 22 And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood: 23 And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil.*

### **The Entrapment of the Moabites**

*24 And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country. 25 And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.*

### **The Retreat of the Moabites**

*26 And when the king of Moab [Mesha] saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not.*

### **A Desperate Act of Worship**

*27 Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.”*



***Special Note.***

The blood-thirsty god of the Moabites was Chemosh. His cult worship was brought to Jerusalem by King Solomon who embraced it because of the beautiful Moabite women.

- *1 Kings 11:1 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites.*
- *1 Kings 11:7 Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.*

11. During his reign the good king Josiah (641–609 BC) destroyed the cult worship of Chemosh within Judah (2 Kings 23).



**The Moabite Stone**  
**Victory Stele of King Mesha of Moab c. 1891**

12. The prophet Isaiah foretold the final annihilation of the Moabites who worshipped the god Molech.

- *Isaiah 25:10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. 11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands. 12 And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.*