



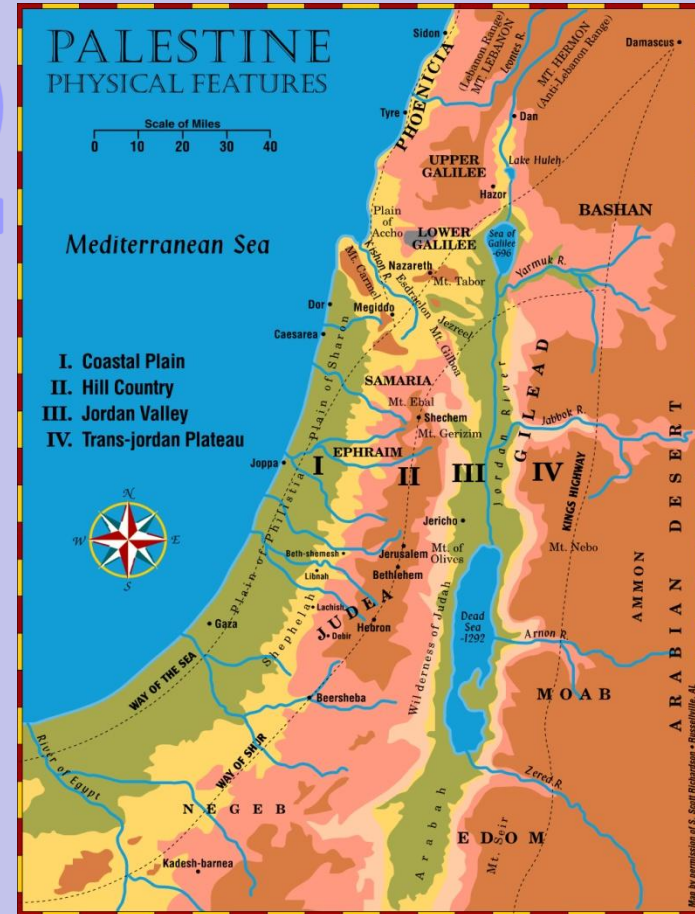
OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

Sunday Adult Class
9:45 AM

The Geography of Palestine

Part 2

The Land of Palestine



• Distinct Parallel Zones

- Mediterranean Sea
- Coastal Plain
- Western Hill Country
- Jordan Valley
- High Tableland
- Arabian Desert



The Coastal Plain

- **Three Divisions**
 - Plain of Phoenicia
 - Sea Trade
 - Canaanites
 - Plain of Sharon
 - Very fertile and wet
 - Canaanites occupied
 - Plain of Philistia
 - Very fertile
 - Land of the Philistines





The Hill Country

- Hill country west of Jordan was the Israelite stronghold
- Lebanon Mountain Range
 - Range nearest the Sea called Lebanon
 - 10,000 ft above sea level
 - Range to the East is called the Anti-Lebanons
 - Considered the northern boundary of Palestine during most of Bible history

Judges 1:19

19 And the LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.



Joshua 16:10

10 However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this day but have been made to do forced labor.





The Hill Country

- **Galilee**
 - 50 mile section from Leontes River to the Valley of Jezreel
 - Upper Galilee – high, rugged, 2,000-4,000 feet above sea level
 - Lower Galilee – rounded hills, 700 feet above sea level

Sea of Galilee





The Hill Country

- **Valley of Jezreel**
 - Series of valleys and plains that open together
 - Western portion of the plain is drained by the Kishon River that empties into the Sea



The Hill Country

- **Valley of Jezreel**
 - One of the most important sections of the land commercially and militarily during Israelite history



The Hill Country

- **Central Hill Country**
 - Highest peaks = 3,000 feet
 - Mt. Gilboa
 - Mt. Ebal
 - Mt. Gerizim

Genesis 12:6-7

6 Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.



The Valley of Jezreel



Mount Gilboa



Mount Carmel



Mount Ebal



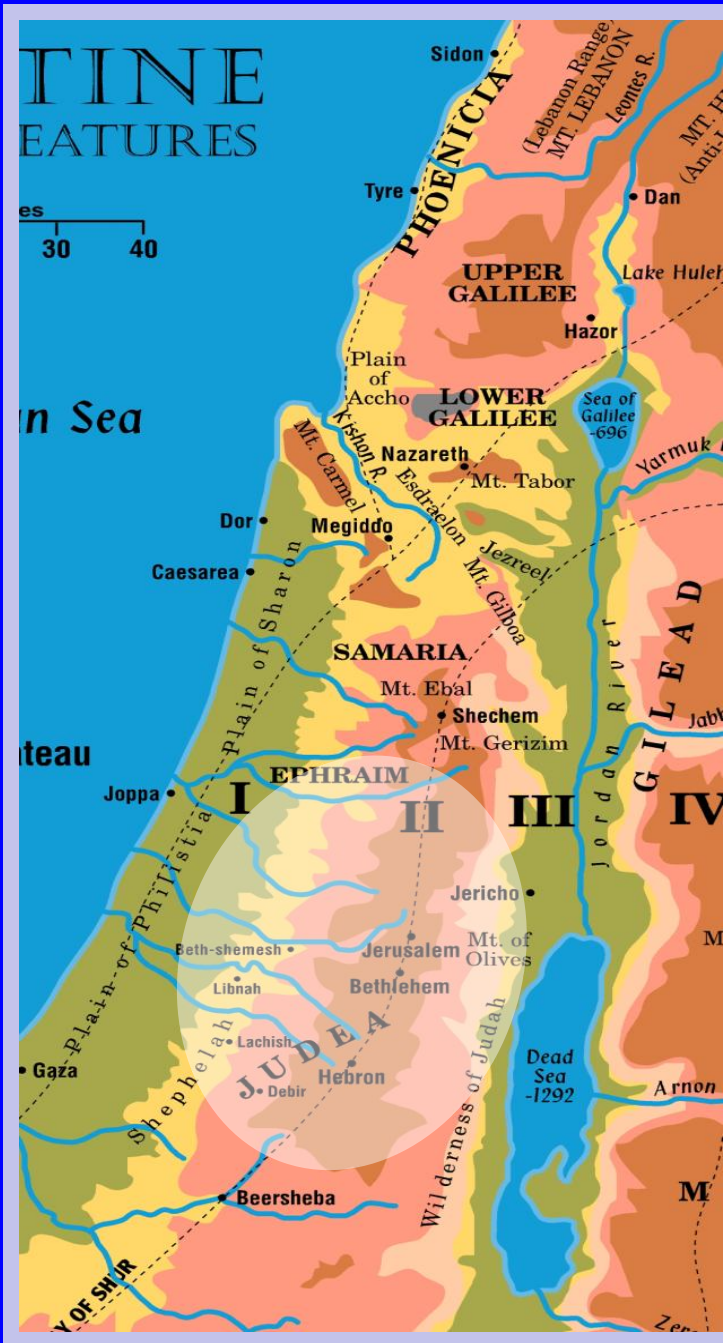
Joshua 8:30-35

30 At that time Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, 31 just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the people of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, "an altar of uncut stones, upon which no man has wielded an iron tool." And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings. 32 And there, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. 33 And all Israel, sojourner as well as native born, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark before the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, to bless the people of Israel.



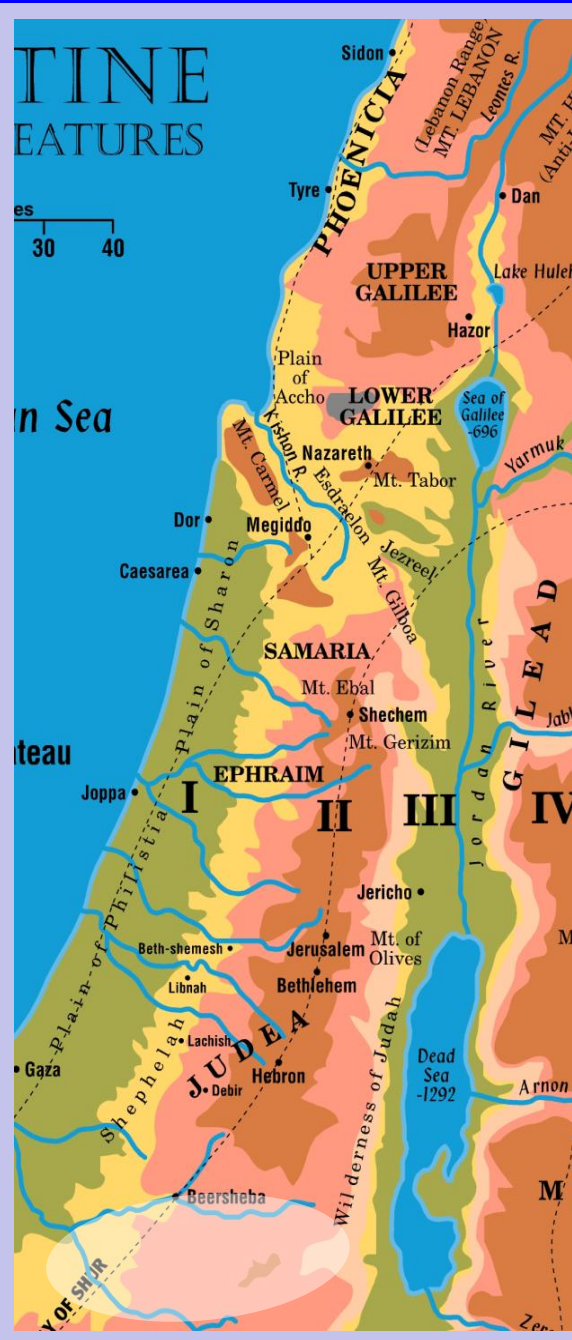
The Hill Country

- **Hill Country of Judah**
 - 50 mile stretch of land averaging about 2,000 feet above sea level
 - Shallow valleys and domelike mountains
 - Bethlehem is 3,800 feet above the Dead Sea 14 miles away



The Hill Country

- **Hill Country of Judah**
 - From Mt. of Olives to the Dead Sea the land falls from 2,680 feet above sea level to 1,292 feet below sea level!



The Hill Country

- **Negeb**

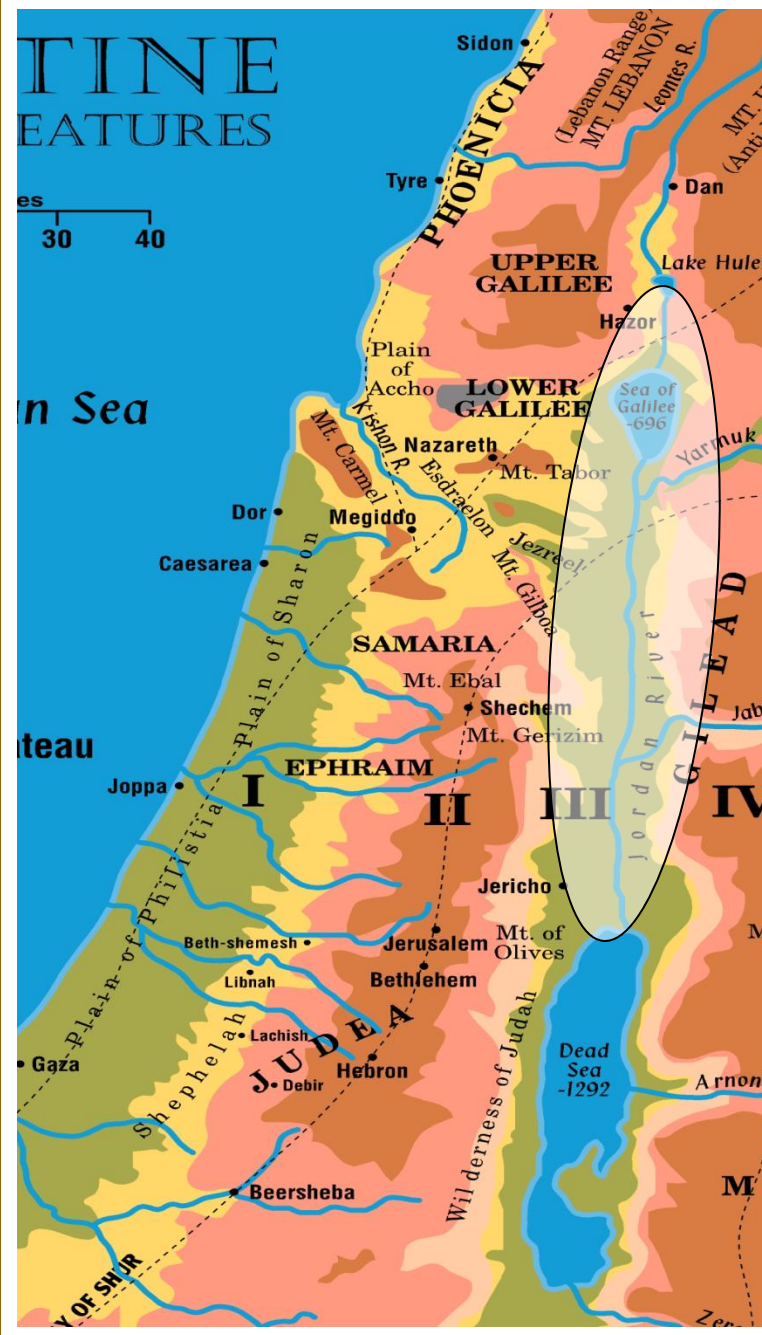
- Name is usually applied to the semi-desert region between Beersheba and Kadesh-barnea
- South of Hebron the hills descend gradually to the rolling hills of the Negeb “the south”
- Forms a buffer zone between Canaan and the true desert of the Sinaitic Peninsula



The Jordan Valley

- **Part of the Great Rift Valley**

- Rift: A crack in the earth's crust. Runs along two fault lines



The Jordan Valley

- Begins on the NE shores of the Mediterranean and extends down the Jordan through Palestine, Arabah, Gulf of Aqaba, the Red Sea, and into Eastern Africa
 - 4,000 miles long
 - The portion from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is called “**EI Ghor**” today



The Jordan Valley

- **Valley is narrow**
 - 2–15 miles wide with cliffs on either side
 - Tropical growth (jungle like) in the valley

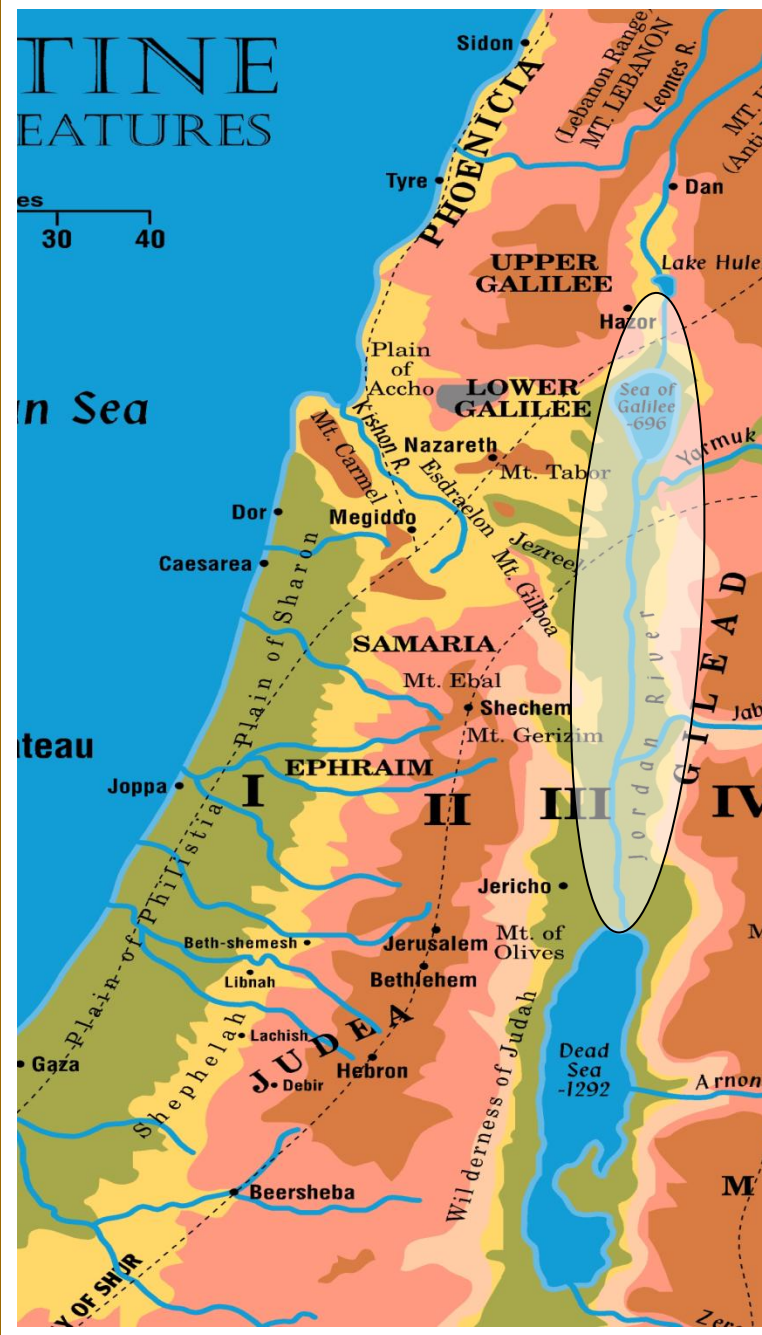
1 Kings 13:23-25

23 And after he had eaten bread and drunk, he saddled the donkey for the prophet whom he had brought back. 24 And as he went away a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body. 25 And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown in the road and the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

Jeremiah 49:19

19 Behold, like a lion coming up from the jungle of the Jordan against a perennial pasture, I will suddenly make him run away from her. And I will appoint over her whomever I choose. For who is like me? Who will summon me? What shepherd can stand before me?





The Jordan Valley

• The Jordan River

- Eleven miles from Lake Huleh (no longer in existence today) to the Sea of Galilee. The river drops 900 feet (80 feet per mile)
- Descends another 600 feet in 65 miles to reach the Dead Sea



The Jordan Valley

- **The Jordan River**
 - Covers 80 miles from Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea
 - It takes 200 miles of wandering river to cover the 80 miles



The Jordan Valley

- **The Jordan River**
 - River bed varies from 80 to 180 feet wide with an average depth of 5-12 feet
 - Jordan Valley is 14 miles wide at Jericho. It was flood season when the Israelites crossed the river to take Jericho

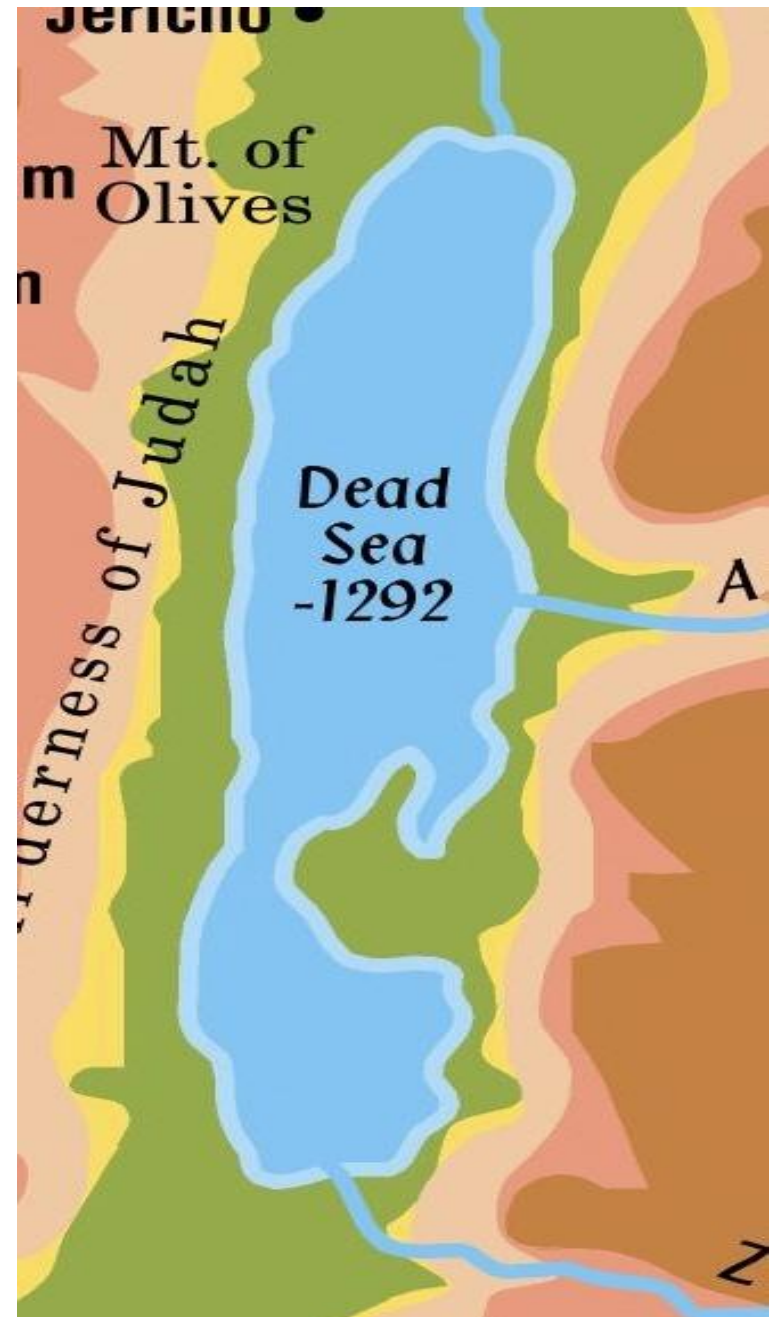
• **Joshua 3:15-16**

Joshua 3:15-16

15 and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest), 16 the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho.

The Jordan Valley

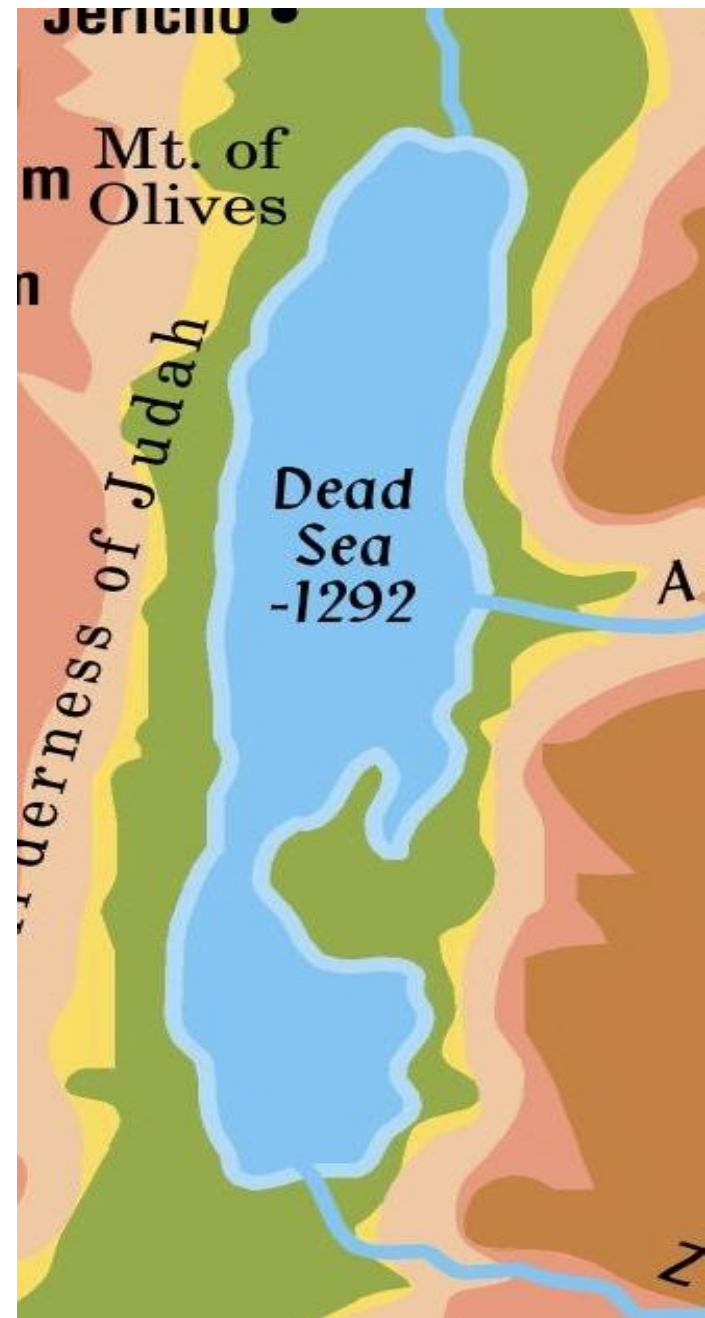
- **The Dead Sea**
 - 48 miles long
 - Maximum width is 10 miles
 - Deepest point on land (-1292ft)
 - Depth of Sea another 1300ft



The Jordan Valley

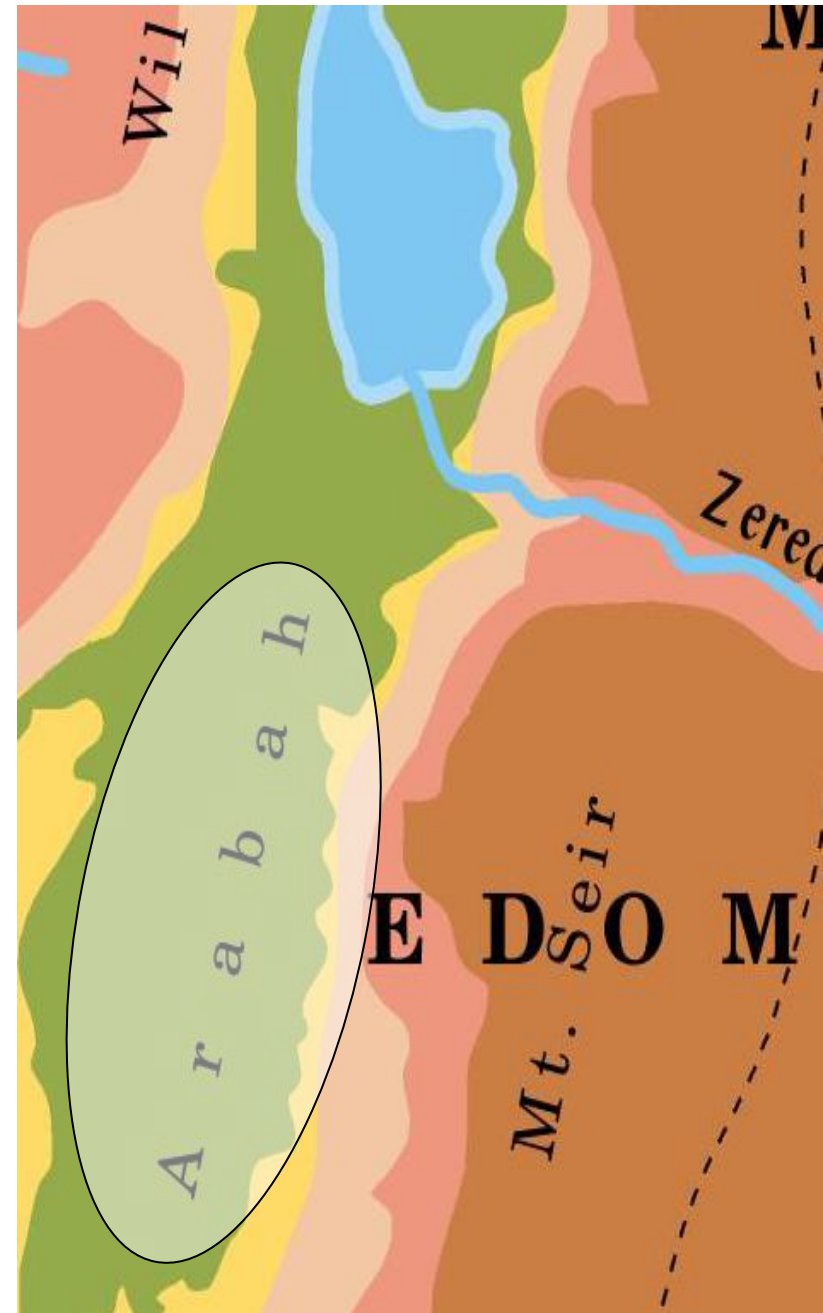
- **The Dead Sea**

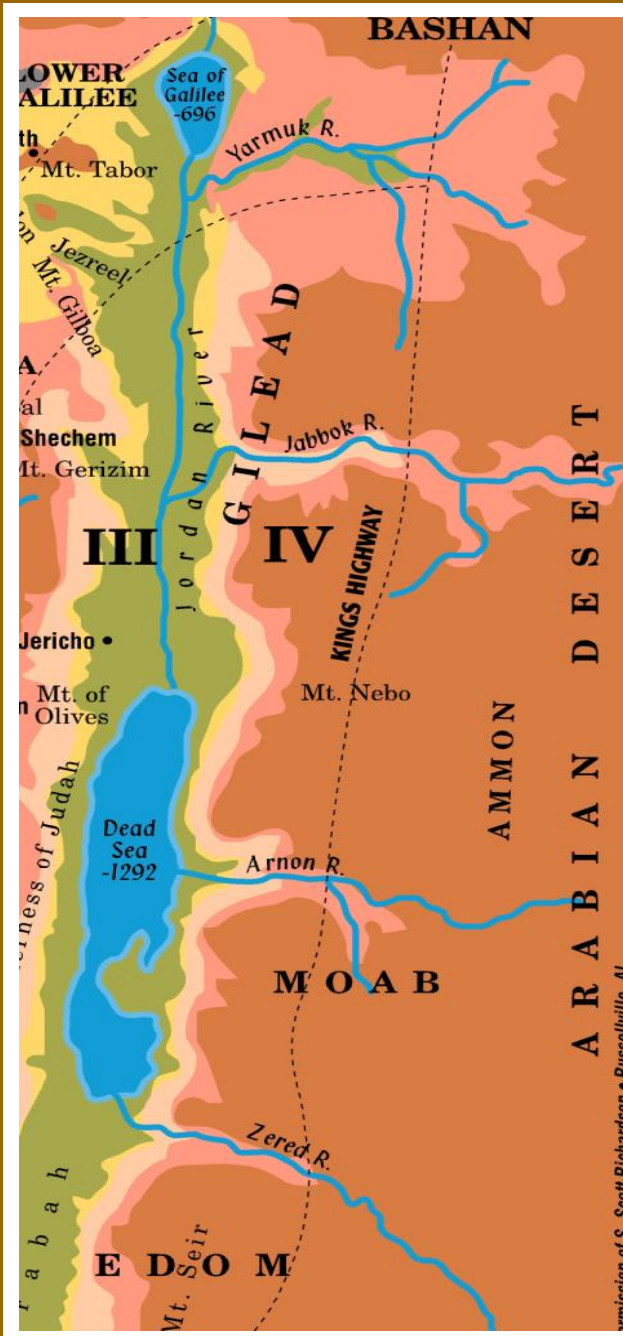
- 6 ½ million tons of water flowed into the Dead Sea each day
 - Jordan, Arnon, Zered rivers flow into it
 - NOTHING flows out of it because the evaporation rate is so great
- Water is 25% solid substance – five times saltier than the oceans



The Jordan Valley

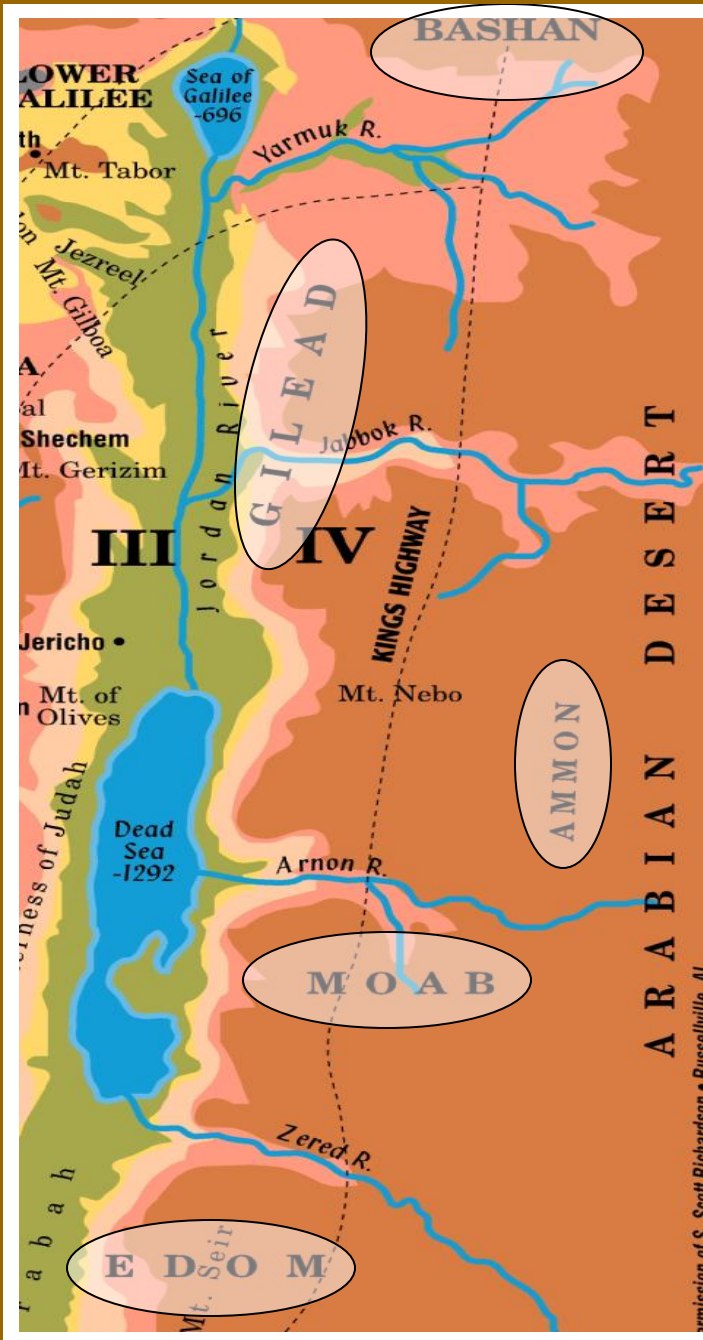
- **The Arabah**
 - Trough-like valley that gradually rises in elevation as it continues southward 110 miles to Eziongeber at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba
 - Barren and rugged valley





Trans-Jordan Plateau

- **Extension of the Anti-Lebanons**
 - Plateau of Moab forms a wall 3,000 feet high
 - Mountains on the east side are higher than those on the west
 - Moses viewed the Promised Land from one of the peaks on Mt. Nebo (Deuteronomy 34)



Trans-Jordan Plateau

- **Regions of the Trans-Jordan:**

- Bashan
- Gilead
- Moab
- Edom
- Ammon



Trade Routes

- **Way of the Sea**
 - Coastal plain
 - Through Megiddo
 - Busy route

PALESTINE PHYSICAL FEATURES

Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30 40

Mediterranean Sea

- I. Coastal Plain
- II. Hill Country
- III. Jordan Valley
- IV. Trans-jordan Plateau



Trade Routes

- **Way of Shur**
 - Along hill country
 - Israelite main route



Trade Routes

- **King's Highway**
– Trans-Jordan Plateau
- Wars fought to gain control of the routes