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Chemosh

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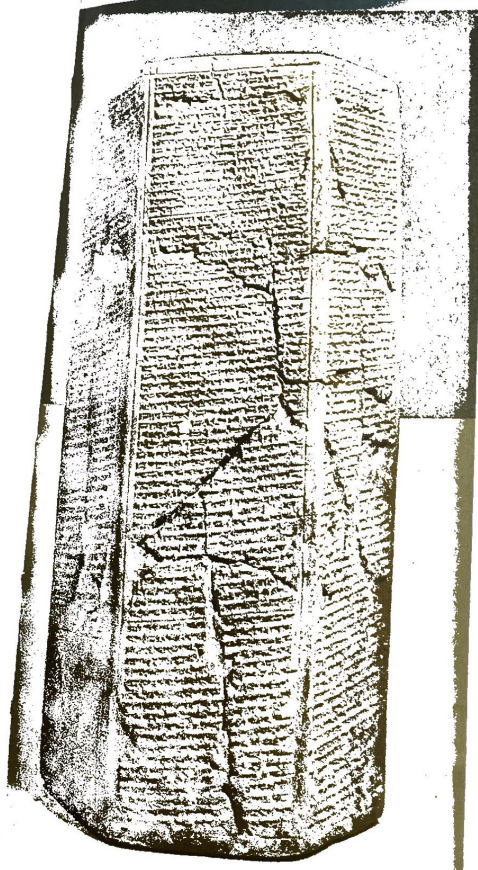
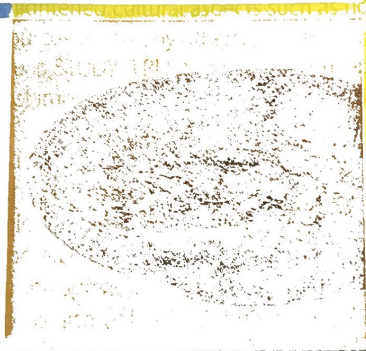
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ARCHAEOLOGY
AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

STUDY BIBLE



JEREMIAH 48

- The high stronghold^a is shamed and dismayed—
- 2 No more praise of Moab.
In Heshbon they have devised evil against her:
'Come, and let us cut her off as a nation.'
You also shall be cut down. O Madmen!^b
The sword shall pursue you;
- 3 A voice of crying shall be from Horonaim:
'Plundering and great destruction!'
- 4 'Moab is destroyed;
Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard:'
- 5 For in the Ascent of Luhith they ascend
with continual weeping;
For in the descent of Horonaim the
enemies have heard a cry of destruction.
- 6 'Flee, save your lives!
And be like the juniper^d in the wilderness.
- 7 For because you have trusted in your works
and your treasures,
You also shall be taken.
And Chemosh shall go forth into captivity,
His priests and his princes together.

48:1 ^aHebrew *Misgab* 48:2 ^aA city of Moab 48:4 ^dFollowing Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *Proclaim it in Zoar*. 48:6 ^eOr *Aroer*, a city of Moab 48:11 ^fThe text uses masculine and feminine pronouns interchangeably in this chapter.



Chemosh—Jeremiah 48:13

The Hebrew Bible mentions Chemosh (or Kemoš) eight times—three specifically as the god of the Moabites (1 Kings 11:5, 33; 2 Kings 23:13). The Old Testament refers to Moab as the “people of Chemosh” twice (Num. 21:29; Jer. 48:46). In addition, a prophetic oracle predicts Moab’s downfall and loss of confidence in their god Chemosh (Jer. 48:7, 13, 46). Solomon built a high place for the deity on the Mount of Olives (1 Kings 11:7; 2 Kings 23:13). Chemosh in the Bible is always recognized as a Moabite god, except for Judges 11:24 (unless perhaps Moab and Ammon were allied in this battle, but this is not mentioned).

Chemosh is primarily known as the patron deity of the Moabites, a situation analogous to Yahweh of Israel. However, other peoples of the Ancient Near East worshipped him as early as the third millennium BC. The name *Kamiš* (*ḫka-mi-iš*) shows up in an archive in Palace G at Ebla in a deity list dating

• Ray, Jr. “Kemoš and Moabite Religion,” 17–31.

- 8 And the plunderer shall come
city:
No one shall escape.
The valley also shall perish,
And the plain shall be destroyed,
As the LORD has spoken.

- 9 “Give wings to Moab,
That she may flee and get away.
For her cities shall be desolate,
Without any to dwell in them.
- 10 Cursed is he who does the work of the
deceitfully,
And cursed is he who keeps back blood
from blood.

- 11 “Moab has been at ease from his youth;
He has settled on his dregs,
And has not been emptied from vessel,
Nor has he gone into captivity.
Therefore his taste remained in him,
And his scent has not changed.

- 12 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,
says the LORD,
“That I shall send him wine-workers

to ca. 2400–2300 BC. as one of the city’s primary gods, with his own temple. His name appears as the twelfth month in a new Eblaite calendar with its own religious feast, *ḫka-mi-iš*: month of the feast of *Kamiš*) and is a source of the place name Carchemish (*kar-kamiš* market of Chemosh).

The name *Kmš* compounded with “mud” or “clay” (*ḫmš-ka-mi-iš*) appears in two tablets containing god lists (Ugarit 5.7.36) from Ugarit. From this, one could assume Chemosh was a god of the netherworld, as the epithet “dust,” and others are all associated with Babylonian gods of the underworld. The association of Kemoš (*ḫka-mi-iš*) with the Mesopotamian god Nergal in a list of Assyrian gods further strengthens such an interpretation. Nergal (*ḫka-mi-iš* N.ERIGAL) was the Sumerian netherworld god of the city of Kutha, located ca. 32 km (20 mi) northeast of Babylon.

626–539 BC (IR II)

- Who will tip him over
And empty his vessels
And break the bottles.
13 Moab shall be ashamed of you,
As the house of Israel was ashamed
of Bethel, their confidence.

- 14 “How can you say, ‘We are strong
And strong men for the valley,
And Moab is plundered and goes
from her cities;
Her chosen young men have
the slaughter,’ says the LORD,
Whose name is the LORD.

- 16 “The calamity of Moab
And his affliction come
17 Bemoan him, all you who know
And all you who know
Say, ‘How the strong
The beautiful rod!’

- 18 “O daughter inhabitant of Moab,
Come down from your high place
And sit in thirst;
For the plunderer has come
against you,
He has destroyed your high place.

- 19 O inhabitant of Aroer,
Stand by the way,
Ask him who flees,
And her who escapes,
Say, ‘What has happened to Moab?’
20 Moab is shamed,
Wail and cry,
Tell it in Arnon.

- 21 “And judgment will be pronounced
country:
On Holon and on the plain,
22 On Dibon and on the plain,
23 On Kirjathaim and on the plain,
Meon,
24 On Kerioth and on the plain,
On all the plain,
Far or near,
25 The horn of Moab will be broken,
And his strength will be broken.

- 26 “Make him like a man of war,
Because he has despised the day of wrath,
Moab shall be like a man of war,
And he shall be like a man of war.

48:31 ^fFollowing De

GODS AND GODDESSES

Marriage and Divorce

19 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, that He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

2 The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

3 And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made^a them at the beginning made them male and female,^b

4 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"

5 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

6 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

7 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

8 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,^d and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

9 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

10 He said to them, "Whoever marries his wife, as he is joined to her, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

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Jesus Teaches on Celibacy

11 But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:

12 For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

13 Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

15 And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.

Jesus Blesses Little Children

13 Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

15 And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.⁹ But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "You shall not murder; 'You shall not commit adultery; 'You shall not steal; 'You shall not bear false witness;'

19 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "You shall not murder; 'You shall not commit adultery; 'You shall not steal; 'You shall not bear false witness;'

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LANDS AND PLACES

Perea—Matthew 19

Perea was the Greek name for the territory east of the Jordan River during the Roman period. Josephus (*Wars* 3.3.41) described it as extending from Machaerus in the south to Pella in the north and from Philadelphia (Rabbah-Amman) to the Jordan River, east to west, with its capital at Gadara (Umm Qais). Eusebius (*Onomasticon* 32.5-7; 33.5-7; and 136.7, 13; 18.3) further identified its northern extent as being near Jabesh (Tall Abu al-Kharaz), with Esbous (Heshbon) on its border and Madaba as outside of the territory or roughly from the River Arnon (Wadi Mujib) to the Wadi el-Yabis.

The name Perea seems to have been derived from the phrase "beyond the Jordan" (cf. Matt. 4:25, Mark 3:8, John

3:26, and Josephus, *Wars* 2.4.57), a translation from the Hebrew and Aramaic name. While Josephus frequently mentions it, the NT, except in variant readings of Luke 6:17, does not employ the term *Perea*, along with Judea and Galilee, were Jewish districts (*Bava Batra* 3:2). During NT times, Galilean Jews went through the territory of Perea to avoid traveling through Samaria on the way to Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples also used this route (Luke 17:11; 18:31, 35; 19:1), spending occasional periods in Perea (Matt. 19:1; John 10:40; 11:7). He was baptized there (Matt. 3:13; John 1:28). Perea was the region where John the Baptist was active during his ministry (John 1:28). This was also where he died (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.5.116-119).



NU-Text and M-Text omit all.

^{19:4} NU-Text reads created. ^aGenesis 1:27; 5:2 ^{19:5} Genesis 2:24 ^{19:9} Or fornication ^{19:16} NU-Text omits Good. ^{19:17} NU-Text reads Why do you ask Me about what is good? ^{19:18} NU-Text reads There is One who is good.

Sela—2 Kings 14:7

A place name (meaning “rock”), it is associated with sites on both side of the Jordan River. They include:



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- A spot connected with the border of the Amorites (Judg. 1:36) at the Ascent of Akrabbim (Scorpions), in the Negev.
- A site mentioned in the woe-oracle against Moab (Isa. 16:1), in Transjordan.
- A fortified Edomite site in Transjordan conquered by Amaziah, king of Judah (2 Kings 14:7; 2 Chron. 25:11, 12), possibly also

mentioned metaphorically in Isaiah 42:11. Formerly identified with Umm el-Bayyarah at Petra (another name for “rock”), the lack of archaeological evidence for occupation there before the 7th century BC disqualified it in favor of the site of es-Sela’, further north, near Tifilla, that does have evidence for occupation from as early as the 9th century BC. In addition, the last king of Babylon (Nabonidus) invaded Edom on his way to Teima, in Arabia, in 552 BC, and the Edomites may have suffered the same fate as the Jews (the killing of children; cf. Ps. 137:9). A relief recently found on a cliff across from the site has a very worn cuneiform inscription along with Neo-Babylonian divine symbols and a standing figure of king Nabonidus.

The Brook Zered—Numbers 21:11, 12

During biblical times, Brook Zered (Heb. *naḥal zered*), modern Wadi el-Ḥesa, formed a natural border between the territories of Moab and Edom in present-day Jordan. At the end of the period of wilderness wanderings (Deut. 2:14), the children of Israel encamped at Iye-Abarim (lit. "ruins of Abarim") (Num. 21:11-12; 33:44), on the opposite side of Moab, before crossing the valley of the Zered, close to where it empties into the southeastern plain of the Dead Sea. There they would encounter the Amorites.

Other biblical passages refer to the Brook Zered as "this dry stream bed" (2 Kings 3:16), the "brook of the Arabah" (Amos 6:14), and the "Brook of the Willows" (Isa. 15:7).

Starting in the Arabian Desert region of eastern Transjordan, the Brook Zered heads 56 km (35 mi) in a northwesterly direction before discharging into the Dead Sea near eṣ-Ṣafi, a site associated with biblical Zoar. While the area is marginal for dry farming, a recent archaeological survey of the wadi has yielded numerous ancient sites which were inhabited, except for a few periods, from the Paleolithic until the present.