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### Ezion-Geber

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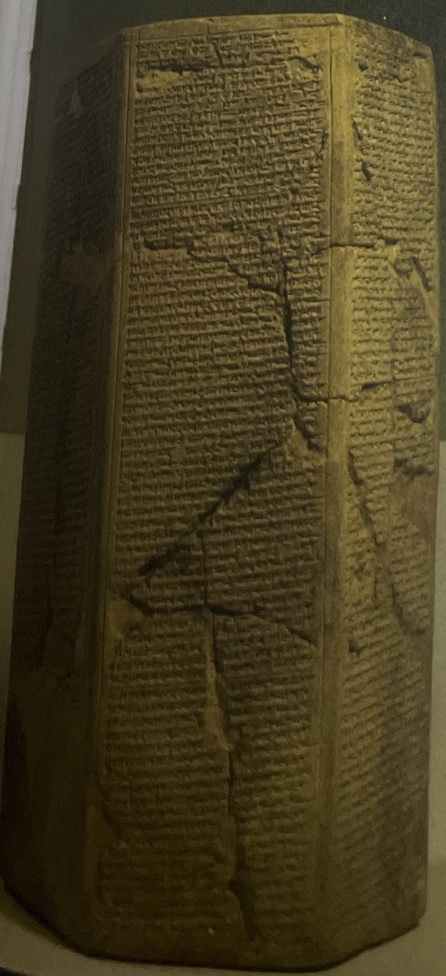
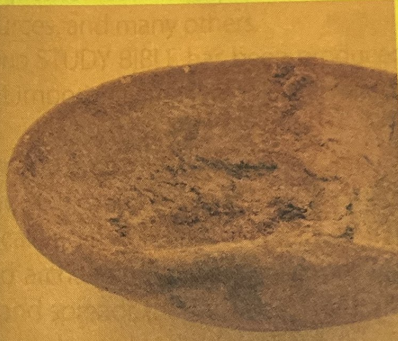
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# ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

# STUDY BIBLE



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up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.

**20** So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."

**21** And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying:

"Praise the LORD,  
For His mercy endures forever."<sup>a</sup>

20:21 <sup>a</sup>Compare Psalm 106:1 20:25 <sup>a</sup>A few Hebrew manuscripts, Old Latin, and Vulgate read *garments*; Septuagint reads *armor*.

**22** Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.

**23** For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy *them*. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

**24** So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped.

**25** When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies,<sup>b</sup> and

## LANDS AND PLACES

### Ezion-Geber—2 Chronicles 20:36

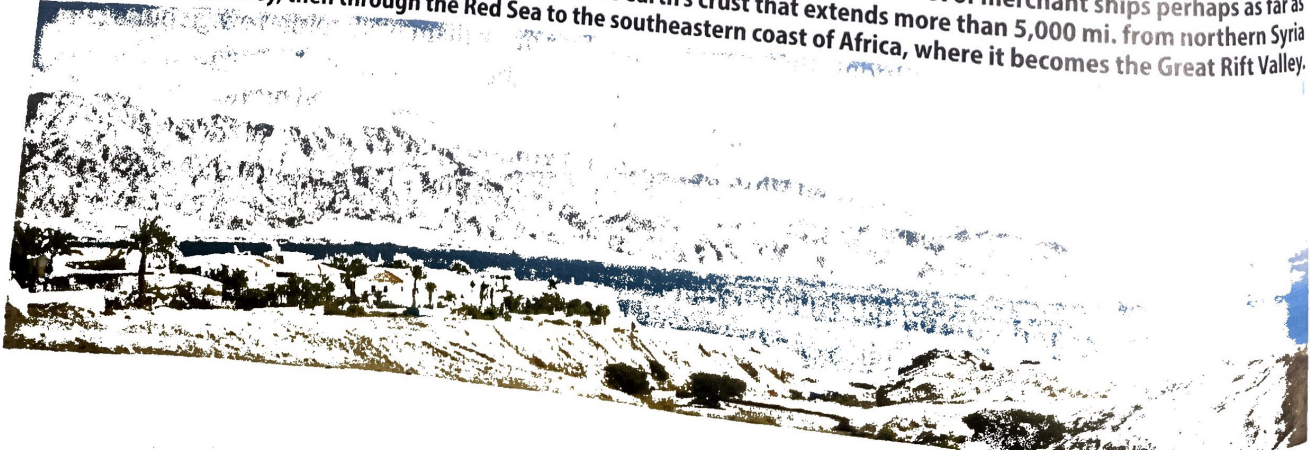
As a site near an Israelite encampment during their wilderness wanderings in Sinai (Num. 33:35-36), Ezion-Geber is the place where King Solomon later built a fleet of ships, from which they sailed to Ophir to bring back gold (1 Kings 9:26; 2 Chron. 8:17-18). After Solomon's death, the Edomites seized the harbor. Later Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, recaptured it. He also constructed a fleet of trading vessels, but they wrecked at Ezion-Geber (1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chron. 20:36).

Ezion-Geber was once thought to be connected with Tell el-Kheleifeh, at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba, a site probably to be equated with ancient Elath. The actual site of Ezion-Geber is now thought to be at Pharoah (Coral) Island (Isle of Graia), 200 m off of the coast of the Sinai Peninsula and

approximately 11 km (7 mi) south of modern-day Eliat. The Island is only about 11 ha. (9.6 ac.) in size and has a 55 x 27.5 m (180 x 90 ft) harbor built on its western, or mainland side. This design is similar to other ancient Phoenician harbors, where the ancient traders placed docks and warehouses in facilities on off-shore islands, as we find at such sites as Tyre, Sidon, and Arwad. As a result they would be safe from any attacks from the neighboring mainland city. The entire island is surrounded with a casemate (double) perimeter wall with nine towers, a fortification typical of the time of Solomon, and a casemate jetty now submerged. In addition, the ceramics found on the island date this fortification system to the tenth century BC, the time of Solomon.

<sup>a</sup> Flinder, "Is This Solomon's Seaport?", 4.

**Solomon used Ezion-Geber on the Gulf of Aqaba as a port from which to send his fleet of merchant ships perhaps as far as India. The Gulf of Aqaba is part of a huge fault in the earth's crust that extends more than 5,000 mi. from northern Syria down the Jordan Valley, then through the Red Sea to the southeastern coast of Africa, where it becomes the Great Rift Valley.**



precious jewels, more than three da- were three da- was so much.

**26** And on the Valley of Berachah therefore the army of Berachah

**27** Then the army of Jerusalem, with them rejoiced

**28** So they struck instruments of the LORD

**29** And the those counted fought against his God gave

**31** So Jehoshaphat reigned twenty-three years

**32** And he did not turn the sight of his eyes

**33** Nevertheless he turned away from his hearts to

**34** Now and last, the son of the king

**35** After himself very with

**36** And to go to on Geb

**37** But the prophet you have has de- wrecked

**21** vid. TH

# RULERS AND EMPIRES



## Herod's Successors—Matthew 2:22

Herod the Great died on March 12, 4 BC, and the Romans divided his kingdom among Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Herod Philip. Archelaus killed perhaps 3,000 people during a riot following his father's death. In AD 6 Augustus deposed him, banished him to Gaul, and established proconsuls over Judea.

Herod Antipas was born to Herod by his fourth wife, Malthace, about 21 BC. Becoming tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea in 4 BC at his father's death, he founded the cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias, the latter project antagonizing the Jews as it was built over burial tombs. Antipas erected his palace there, and it served as the capital of Galilee. First married to the daughter of Aretas IV (9 BC–AD 40), Antipas divorced her to marry Herodias. He had John the Baptist executed and tried Jesus before sending him back to Pilate (Luke 23:11). Some of his staff were followers of Jesus (Luke 8:3; Acts 13:1).

Antipas had good relations with Emperor Tiberius, but things changed during the reign of Caligula, who made Herodias' brother, Agrippa I, king of Judea. Herodias goaded her husband to seek the same title, and they set off to Rome to do so. In the meantime, Agrippa, who was good friends with Caligula, brought a number of accusations against Antipas, who was then banished either to Gaul or Spain in AD 38/39.

Herod Philip was born to Herod and Cleopatra of Jerusalem about 20 BC. Like his brothers, of whom he was closest to Archelaus, he was brought up in Rome. When Herod died, he became tetrarch of Batanea, Trahonitis, Auranitus, Gaulanitus, and Iturea, areas north and east of the Sea of Galilee. The majority of the region's population was non-Jewish. He married Herodias and then later her daughter Salome, but produced no offspring. His capital was at Paneas, which he rebuilt and renamed Caesarea Philippi, dedicating it to the emperor and himself. Also he built Bethsaida Julias, the home of some of Jesus' disciples. Philip was an easygoing, moderate, though somewhat showy ruler. When he died in AD 33/34, the Romans annexed his territory to Syria.

Herod Agrippa I was a grandson of Herod through Mariamne. Following the deaths of his father (Aristobulus) and uncle (Alexander) by Herod in 7 BC, his mother, Bernice, the daughter of Herod's sister Salome, took him and his brother (Herod of Chalcis) to Rome. Bernice was close to Antonia, the daughter of Mark Antony, who later became the mother of

the future emperor Claudius. So Agrippa grew up with Claudius and his brother (Drusus). Agrippa married Cypros, the granddaughter of Herod's brother Phasael, and fathered five children, including Herod Agrippa II. Agrippa was lavish with his resources, which reduced him to poverty, and he then took a series of positions, first with Antipas, then with the governor of Syria, and finally came to Rome, where he cultivated a friendship with Gaius Caligula, the adopted son of Tiberius. Later Agrippa expressed a wish that Caligula might soon become emperor. After Tiberius heard this, he imprisoned Agrippa. However, when Tiberius died six months later, Caligula did become emperor (in AD 37). Caligula not only released Agrippa but also gave him the territories that Herod Philip had before his death.

When Caligula died in AD 41, Agrippa was in Rome and was instrumental in Claudius, his former playmate, becoming emperor, at which time Claudius extended Agrippa's kingdom to include Judea. Agrippa began working on the third wall of Jerusalem, but had to quit when rumors of revolt arose. Responsible for the death of James, the brother of John, Agrippa attempted also to execute Peter (Acts 12:1-19). Both Luke (Acts 12:20-23) and Josephus (*Antiquities* 19.343-50; 20.15) record the death of Agrippa I in AD 44 at Caesarea Maritima. The Romans once again placed Judea under procurators, with the privilege of appointing the high priest in Jerusalem given to Agrippa's brother, Herod of Chalcis.

Herod Agrippa II was too young to inherit his father's territory when he died, but when his uncle, Herod of Chalcis, died in AD 48, Claudius gave his territory to Agrippa II a year later (AD 49/50), as well as that of Herod Philip in AD 53, shortly before his own death. Nero (AD 54-68) later added four cities, including Tiberias, to the holdings of Agrippa II. Agrippa II appointed high priests in Jerusalem, deposing the high priest Ananus for stoning James, the brother of Jesus in AD 62.

Agrippa, his wife, and sister, Bernice, were at Paul's trial in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 25:13-27). He sponsored building projects at Berytus (Beirut) and Paneas and supplied materials to enlarge the Jerusalem Temple, a project interrupted by the revolt that began in AD 66 and lasted until AD 73/74. During this time Agrippa supported Rome, while at the same time trying, when possible, to protect the Jews. His army was with the Roman army of Titus for the final attack on Jerusalem in AD 70. Agrippa II is believed to have died in AD 100.