

LESSON 36

Bible Geography

- Objective** : To give the students a general knowledge of the places mentioned in the Bible, thereby increasing their faith in the Word of God.
- Study Aids** : The maps of the world, the Mediterranean lands and the land of Palestine.
- References** : Deu. Chapter 2-3.
- Memory Verse** : Deu. 8:7-8.

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey;

Introduction :

Which continent does our country belong to? Which are the continents close to it on the west? Which sea touches all the three continents? Just see the map and learn it. The Mediterranean Sea is on the North of Africa, South of Europe and West of Asia. Mediterranean Land are in the centre of the earth where human habitation began and the ancient civilization developed. The Bible lands are located here. The knowledge about these will enable us to understand the Bible better and know its facts.

THE BIBLE LANDS:

The present day nations in the middle-east are mainly Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Turkey etc. The Bible lands include these as well as other European countries like Greece, Cyprus, and Italy etc. Many of these countries were known differently in the ancient times. Let us study at first about the main oceans, rivers and mountains in these parts.

A) MAIN OCEANS:

1. The Persian Gulf:

This lies on the north east of Bible lands and between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula consisting of Saudi Arabia, Qatar etc. The rivers Euphrates and Tigris merge into this sea. The centre of the ancient Empires such as Babylon and Medo- Persia was in the banks of these rivers. The Babel Tower from where the nations were scattered by confusion of language, the city of Ur-Abraham's hometown, Nineveh, Babylon, Shushan etc. were all situated here.

2. Red Sea:

Red Sea lies north east of the Bible lands (Between the Arabian Peninsula and Africa). It is divided in to two tributaries like bays known as Suez and Aquaba. Suez is linked to the Mediterranean Sea by a Canal, which is known as Suez Canal. This artificial canal is 1000 miles long. Egypt is the famous country on the north west of Red Sea where the Sinai Peninsula lies. The Israelites crossed Red Sea at the western bay called Suez.

3. Mediterranean Sea:

This vast ocean lies in the middle of the Bible land among the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, 'the Great Sea' mentioned in the Old Testament is the same Sea(Josh 1:4).

4. The Dead Sea:

It is also called salt sea (Gen 14:3). This lies in the middle of Palestine towards south. This body of water came in to being as the result of some ancient cities namely Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim having been set on fire from heaven. This lies, 1290 feet below the sea level. This is also known as 'the sea of the plain'.(Josh 3:16) and eastern sea.(Jan 15:5, Joel 2:20).

5. The Sea of Galilee:

It lies north of Palestine. Since its water is not salty and it lies as alake receiving in the river Jordan and sending it out in the south it is not fit to be called a sea. Its other names are: the lake Gennasaret (Lk. 5:1) and the Sea of Tiberias (Jn 6:1). It is 682 feet below the sea level.

In addition to this, another lake named Merom lies on the north of the Sea of Galilee on the route of the river Jordan.

B) IMPORTANT RIVERS:

1. Tigris: The name Hiddekel mentioned in Gen 2:14 refers to the same river (Dan 10:4). Flowing from the mount Ararat towards south joins the river Euphrates and merges in to the Persian Gulf, its length is 1146miles.

2. Euphrates: This river also begins from the mount Ararat an joins the Tigris and merges in to the Persian Gulf. Length is 1800 miles.

3. Nile: This river of Egypt beginning from the middle Africa flows towards north an merges in to the Mediterranean. The child Moses was put in to this river. This is the longest river in the world (6690 Kilometers).

4. Ulai: The three rivers Chebar, Ahava and ulai are the tributaries of Euphrates(Dan 8:1, Ezekiel 1:1, Ezra 8:21).

C) MOUNTAINS :

1. Ararat: It stands on the north east of the Bible lands, between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea in Armenia. It was on this mountain of Russia that the Noah's ark rested (Gen 8:4).

2. Lebanon: The Lebanon hills are standing on the west of Ararat along the coast line of Mediterranean towards South. These border the countries Syria and Palestine. The most important peak of Lebanon hills is Hermon . Its height 9116 feet.

3. Sinai: It is situated south of Palestine close to the Red Sea. One of its Peaks is Horeb. God gave the Law to Israel on this mountain. Besides these mountains, the Bible talks about other mountains like Olive, Tabor, Moriah, Carmel, Gilboa etc.

D) TOPOGRAPHY:

On the east of the bible lands lie countries like Medo-Persia, Messoppttamia, Chaldea and on the south lies the Arabian desert, Palestine the focal point among the Bible lands lies very close to the Mediterranean Sea. Syria bounds it on the north.

On the north west of the Bible lands lie Asia Minor, Greece, Italy and on south west lies Egypt.