

## ~ATAROTH 1 (55)

(At'a-roth) [Crowns, that is, circular enclosures]

- A town on the East side of the Jordan, among those requested by the tribes of Gad and Reuben as their possession. The section was considered especially suitable for the livestock of these tribes.
- Now the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad had come to have numerous livestock, very many, in fact. And they began to see the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, and, look! The place was a place for livestock. (**Numbers 32:1**)
- Hence the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and said this to Moses and Eleazar the priest and to the chieftains of the assembly. (**Numbers 32:2**)
- **Ataroth** and Dibon and Jazer and Nimrah and Heshbon and Elealeh and Sebam and Nebo and Beon. (**Numbers 32:3**)
- The land that Yehowah defeated before the assembly of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock. (**Numbers 32:4**)
- And they went on to say; If we have found favor in your eyes, let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan. (**Numbers 32:5**)
- The town was thereafter rebuilt by the Gadites.
- And the sons of Gad proceeded to build Dibon and **Ataroth** and Aroer. (**Numbers 32:34**)
- The Moabite Stone of King Mesha also mentions this place, in lines 10 and 11 of the inscription. In part it says; **Now the men of Gad had always dwelt in the land of Ataroth, and the king of Israel had built Ataroth for them, but I fought against the town and took it and slew all the people of the town. And I brought back from there Arel, or Oriel, its chieftain and I settled there men of Sharon and men of Maharith.** [Ancient Near Eastern Texts, edited by J. B. Pritchard, 1974, p. 320]

- The location of this site is generally considered to be present-day Khirbet `Attarus, East of the Dead Sea and some 13 kilometers (8 miles) Northwest of Dibon, mentioned after Ataroth in;
- Ataroth and Dibon and Jazer and Nimrah and Heshbon and Elealeh and Sebam and Nebo and Beon. (Numbers 32:3)
- The ruins are located on the West slope of a mountain bearing the same name and about 750 meters (2,500 feet) high. Although this location is within the territory of Reuben, it appears that there was some mutual sharing of tribal territory between Gad and Reuben.