

**~ELAH 6 (69)**  
**(E'lah) [Big Tree]**

- A low plain, or valley, perhaps named for an outstandingly large tree located therein. The low plain of **Elah** was the site of the encounter between the Israelites and the Philistines, championed by Goliath.
- As for Saul and the men of Israel, they collected themselves together and took up camping in the low plain of **Elah**, and they went drawing up in battle formation to meet the Philistines. (**1 Samuel 17:2**)
- Meantime, Saul and they and all the other men of Israel were in the low plain of **Elah**, fighting against the Philistines. (**1 Samuel 17:19**)
- To this the priest said; The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the low plain of **Elah**, here it is, wrapped up in a mantle, behind the ephod. If it is what you would take for yourself, take it, because there is no other here except it. And David went on to say; There is none like it. Give it to me. (**1 Samuel 21:9**)
- It is usually associated with the fertile **Wadi es-Sant**, one of the principal wadis extending from the Philistine plains through the Shephelah into the mountainous regions of Judah, passing between the suggested locations of Azekah and Socoh.
- And the Philistines went collecting their camps together for war. When they were collected together at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, then they took up camping between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. (**1 Samuel 17:1**)
- It thus lay about 25 kilometers (15 miles) Southwest of Jerusalem. The well-watered plain is about half a kilometer (0.25 miles) wide and quite level. The opposing forces faced each other across this valley, each side having a strong position on a mountainside, the Philistines perhaps to the South and the Israelites to the North or Northeast. Through the low plain ran the torrent valley, probably the dry streambed still found there.

- **And he proceeded to take his staff in his hand and to choose for himself the five smoothest stones from the torrent valley and to place them in his shepherd's bag that served him as a receptacle, and in his hand was his sling. And he began approaching the Philistine. (1 Samuel 17:40)**
- **Perhaps the delay of forty days spent by the two armies was due in part to the weak position in which either side would place itself in having to cross over this torrent valley and then go up against the enemy force on the opposing mountainside.**
- **And the Philistine kept coming forward at early morning and at evening and taking his position for forty days. (1 Samuel 17:16)**
- **David selected five smooth stones from the torrent valley when crossing over to face Goliath. After David's victory, the routed Philistine army fled down the valley to the Philistine plain and the cities of Gath and Ekron.**
- **At that the men of Israel and of Judah rose and broke into shouting and went in pursuit of the Philistines clear to the valley and as far as the gates of Ekron, and the fatally wounded of the Philistines kept falling on the way from Shaaraim, both as far as Gath and as far as Ekron. (1 Samuel 17:52)**