

~ELATH (133)

(E'lath) [possibly, Ram, or, Place of the Ram, Eloth, E'loth, plural]

- A site first mentioned in Moses recapitulation of the Israelites 40-year trek through the wilderness.
- So we passed on away from our brothers, the sons of Esau, who are dwelling in Seir, from the way of the Arabah, from **Elath** and from Ezion-geber. Next we turned and passed on by the way of the wilderness of Moab. (**Deuteronomy 2:8**)
- **Elath** is mentioned along with Ezion-geber and lay on the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom.
- And there was a fleet of ships that King Solomon made in Ezion-geber, which is by **Eloth**, upon the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom. (**1 Kings 9:26**)
- This points to a location on the Northeast arm or branch of the Red Sea known as the Gulf of `Aqaba. Scholars basically agree with Jerome, of the **Fourth** and **Fifth Centuries C.E.**, who identified **Elath** with the city then known as **Aila**, associated with the Nabataeans.
- This would place **Elath** at or near the present-day Arab city of **`Aqaba** situated at the Northeast corner of the gulf, the modern Jewish city called **Elat** being at the Northwest corner.
- **Elath** was part of the Edomite domain when the Israelites passed through the region on their way to Canaan. Seals bearing the Edomite name of Qos`anal, servant of the king, dated by archaeologists as from the **Seventh Century B.C.E.** have been found in the **Elath** area.
- Evidently as a result of David's conquest of Edom, **Elath** and neighboring Ezion-geber came under Judean control.
- And David proceeded to make a name when he came back from striking down the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, eighteen thousand. (**2 Samuel 8:13**)
- And he kept garrisons placed in Edom. In all Edom he placed garrisons, and all the Edomites came to be servants of David, and Yehowah kept saving David wherever he went. (**2 Samuel 8:14**)

- And they are mentioned in connection with Solomon's shipbuilding activities.
- And there was a fleet of ships that King Solomon made in Ezion-geber, which is by **Eloth**, upon the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom. (**1 Kings 9:26**)
- It was then that Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to **Eloth** upon the shore of the sea in the land of Edom. (**2 Chronicles 8:17**)
- The fact that Ezion-geber is referred to as by **Eloth** may indicate that **Elath** or **Eloth** was the more prominent of the two sites, at least at that time.
- Control of **Elath** evidently reverted to Edom during the reign of Jehoram of Judah.
- In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and then made a king reign over them. (**2 Kings 8:20**)
- Consequently Jehoram passed over to Zair, also all the chariots with him. And it came about that he himself rose up by night and got to strike down the Edomites that were surrounding him and the chiefs of the chariots, and the people went fleeing to their tents. (**2 Kings 8:21**)
- But Edom kept up its revolt from under the hand of Judah down to this day. It was then that Libnah began to revolt at that time. (**2 Kings 8:22**)
- In the following century the city was restored to Judah and rebuilt by King Uzziah or Azariah.
- Then all the people of Judah took Azariah, he at the time being sixteen years old, and they made him king in place of his father Amaziah. (**2 Kings 14:21**)
- He himself built **Elath** and got to restore it to Judah after the king lay down with his forefathers. (**2 Kings 14:22**)
- Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, he being sixteen years old, and they made him king in place of his father Amaziah. (**2 Chronicles 26:1**)

- He it was that rebuilt **Eloth** and then restored it to Judah after the king had lain down with his forefathers. (**2 Chronicles 26:2**)
- Then, during the rule of Ahaz, **761-746 B.C.E**, it was wrested from Judah by the Syrians and was re-occupied by the Edomites, thereafter never returning to the Judeans.
- At that time Rezin the king of Syria restored **Elath** to Edom, after which he cleared out the Jews from **Elath**, and the Edomites, for their part, entered **Elath** and kept dwelling there down to this day. (**2 Kings 16:6**)
- The **Masoretic** text here reads Syria or Aram **Hebrew**, '*Aram*' instead of Edom '*Edhohm*'. Most current scholars, however, accept the latter reading, in the margin, believing that a scribe confused the **Hebrew** letter *da'leth* with the similar-shaped letter *rehsh*.
- Essentially an oasis, **Elath** was a stopping point on the caravan route leading from South Arabia to Egypt, Canaan, or Damascus. Along with Ezion-geber, it was also located at the gateway for the ships of Tarshish that plied the waters to and from Arabia, East Africa, and possibly India.
- For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish on the sea along with Hiram's fleet of ships. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish would come carrying gold and silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks. (**1 Kings 10:22**)
- And there was a fleet of ships that King Solomon made in Ezion-geber, which is by **Eloth**, upon the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom. (**1 Kings 9:26**)
- And Hiram kept sending in the fleet of ships his own servants, seamen, having a knowledge of the sea, along with the servants of Solomon. (**1 Kings 9:27**)
- **Aramaic** writings, such as wine receipts from the period of the Persian Empire, have been found in the area, also remnants of high-quality pottery of Grecian style, perhaps intended for trans-shipment to Arabia.