

~HAMATH (415)

(Ha'math)[Hamathite, Ha'math-ite]

.. The Entering In Of Hamath

.. Relations With Israel

- The city of **Hamath** was the capital of a small Canaanite kingdom in Syria during the early history of Israel. The rich agricultural region surrounding it also took the same name.
- During Greek and Roman times the classical name of the city was Epiphania, so named by Antiochus IV or Epiphanes. Today it is called **Hama**, a shortened form of its original name.
- The city of **Hamath** was located on the Orontes River, along important trade routes, 81 kilometers (50 miles) inland from the Mediterranean, about 190 kilometers (118 miles) North of Damascus and about 120 kilometers (75 miles) South of Aleppo.
- Though sometimes said to be of Hittite origin, **Hamath** was more likely founded by the **Hamathites**, relatives of the **Hittites** and one of the 70 post-Flood families. Heth and **Hamath**, the forefathers of these two family lines, were listed as the 2nd and 11th sons respectively of Canaan the son of Ham.
- And the sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. (**Genesis 10:6**)
- And Canaan became father to Sidon his firstborn and Heth. (**Genesis 10:15**)
- And the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite. (**Genesis 10:16**)
- And the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite. (**Genesis 10:17**)
- And the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the **Hamathite**, and afterward the families of the Canaanite were scattered. (**Genesis 10:18**)
- The sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim, Put and Canaan.
- The sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim, Put and Canaan. (**1**

Chronicles 1:8)

- As for Canaan, he became father to Sidon his firstborn and Heth. (**1 Chronicles 1:13**)
- And the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite. (**1 Chronicles 1:14**)
- And the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite. (**1 Chronicles 1:15**)
- And the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the **Hamathite**. (**1 Chronicles 1:16**)

See Also HITTITES

.. The Entering In Of Hamath

- The oldest account we have of **Hamath** tells how the 12 Israelite spies in the **16th Century B.C.E**, came up from the South as far as the entering in of **Hamath**, an oft-repeated phrase thought to refer, not to the gates of the city itself but, rather, to the southern boundary of the territory over which it ruled.
- So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob to the entering in of **Hamath**. (**Numbers 13:21**)
- It was to this limit that Joshua's conquest was pushed northward.
- This is the land yet remaining. All the regions of the Philistines and all the Geshurites (**Joshua 13:2**)
- And the land of the Gebalites and all of Lebanon toward the rising of the sun, from Baal-gad at the base of Mount Hermon as far as to the entering in of **Hamath**. (**Joshua 13:5**)
- Now these are the nations that Yehowah let stay so as by them to test Israel, that is, all those who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan. (**Judges 3:1**)
- It was only in order for the generations of the sons of Israel to have the experience, so as to teach them war, that is, only those who before that had not experienced such things. (**Judges 3:2**)

- The five axis lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, even the Sidonians and the Hivites inhabiting Mount Lebanon from Mount Baal-hermon as far as to the entering in of **Hamath**. (**Judges 3:3**)
- Some scholars, however, suggest that the expression, as far as to the entering in of **Hamath**.
- And the land of the Gebalites and all of Lebanon toward the rising of the sun, from Baal-gad at the base of Mount Hermon as far as to the entering in of **Hamath**. (**Joshua 13:5**)
- Should possibly read as far as **Lebi-hamath, Lion of Hamath**, hence a definite place. [See *Vetus Testamentum*, Leiden, 1952, p. 114]
- The exact location of this boundary, or place, is not certain. It was reckoned as the northern boundary of Israel's territory
- From Mount Hor you will mark out the boundary to the entering in of **Hamath**, and the termination of the boundary must prove to be at Zedad. (**Numbers 34:8**)
- And Solomon proceeded to carry on at that time the festival, and all Israel with him, a great congregation from the entering in of **Hamath** down to the torrent valley of Egypt, before Yehowah our God seven days and another seven days, fourteen days. (**1 Kings 8:65**)
- He it was that restored the boundary of Israel from the entering in of **Hamath** clear to the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Yehowah the God of Israel who spoke by means of his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet that was from Gath-hepher. (**2 Kings 14:25**)
- And Solomon proceeded to hold the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation from the entering in of **Hamath** down to the torrent valley of Egypt. (**2 Chronicles 7:8**)
- And as bordering on Damascus.
- For Damascus! **Hamath** and Arpad have become ashamed, for it is a bad report that they have heard. They have disintegrated. In the sea there is anxious care, it is not able to keep

undisturbed. (**Jeremiah 49:23**)

- And this is the boundary of the land to the northern side, from the Great Sea by the way to Hethlon, as one comes to Zedad. (**Ezekiel 47:15**)
- **Hamath**, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the boundary of Damascus and the boundary of **Hamath**, Hazer-hatticon, which is toward the boundary of Hauran. (**Ezekiel 47:16**)
- And the boundary from the sea must prove to be Hazer-enon, the boundary of Damascus and north, northward, and the boundary of **Hamath**. This is the northern side. (**Ezekiel 47:17**)
- And these are the names of the tribes. From the northern extremity, on the side by the way of Hethlon to the entering in to **Hamath**, Hazer-enon, the boundary of Damascus northward, on the side of Hamath, and it must prove to have an eastern border and the western, Dan one portion. (**Ezekiel 48:1**)
- A pronouncement! The word of Yehowah is against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is where it rests, for Yehowah has an eye on earthling man and on all the tribes of Israel. (**Zechariah 9:1**)
- And **Hamath** itself will also border upon her, Tyre and Sidon, for she is very wise. (**Zechariah 9:2**)
- Some think it was the southern extremity of the Coele-Syria Valley, also called the Beqa` which runs between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountain ranges. Others say it was halfway between Baalbek and Riblah. Yet others suggest it was still farther North where the pass opens up between Homs and the sea.
- And the western side is the Great Sea, from the boundary straight ahead to the entering in to **Hamath**. This is the western side. (**Ezekiel 47:20**)

.. Relations With Israel

- Toi or Tou, king of **Hamath**, sent his son Joram, or Hadoram to congratulate King David for having defeated their common enemy Hadadezer. **Hamath** was then an independent kingdom.

- And David went on to strike down Hadadezer the son of Rehob the king of Zobah as he was going his way to put his control back again at the river Euphrates. (**2 Samuel 8:3**)
- Now Toi the king of **Hamath** got to hear that David had struck down all the military force of Hadadezer. (**2 Samuel 8:9**)
- So he sent Joram his son to King David to ask him about his welfare and congratulate him over the fact that he had fought against Hadadezer so that he struck him down, for Hadadezer had become trained in warfare against Toi, and in his hand there proved to be articles of silver and articles of gold and articles of copper. (**2 Samuel 8:10**)
- And David went on to strike down Hadadezer the king of Zobah at **Hamath** as he was going his way to set up his control at the river Euphrates. (**1 Chronicles 18:3**)
- When Tou the king of **Hamath** heard that David had struck down all the military force of Hadadezer the king of Zobah. (**1 Chronicles 18:9**)
- He immediately sent Hadoram his son to King David to ask him about his welfare and congratulate him over the fact that he had fought against Hadadezer so that he struck him down, for Hadadezer had become trained in warfare against Tou, and there were with him all sorts of articles of gold and silver and copper. (**1 Chronicles 18:10**)
- However, during Solomon's reign the kingdom of **Hamath** seems to have been under Israel's control, for Solomon built storage cities in that region.
- Furthermore, Solomon went to **Hamath-zobah** and prevailed over it. (**2 Chronicles 8:3**)
- Then he rebuilt Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities that he had built in **Hamath**. (**2 Chronicles 8:4**)
- After Solomon's death, **Hamath** gained its independence and remained independent except for a brief period in the **Ninth Century B.C.E.** when Jeroboam II temporarily brought it again under Israelite control.

- As for the rest of the affairs of Jeroboam and all that he did and his mightiness, how he fought and how he restored Damascus and **Hamath** to Judah in Israel, are they not written in the book of the affairs of the days of the kings of Israel? (**2 Kings 14:28**)
- About this time it was described as populous **Hamath**.
- Make your way over to Calneh, and see, and go from there to populous **Hamath**, and go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are they better than these kingdoms, or is their territory bigger than your territory? (**Amos 6:2**)
- In the **Eighth Century B.C.E.** **Hamath** and her neighbors, including the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, were overrun by the Assyrians in their sweep to world domination. Assyria's policy was to exchange and relocate her captives, and so people of **Hamath** were brought in to replace inhabitants of Samaria who, in turn, were moved to **Hamath** and other places.
- Subsequently the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon and Cuthah and Avva and **Hamath** and Sepharvaim and had them dwell in the cities of Samaria instead of the sons of Israel, and they began to take possession of Samaria and to dwell in its cities. (**2 Kings 17:24**)
- Have the gods of the nations that my forefathers brought to ruin delivered them, even Gozan and Haran and Rezeph and the sons of Eden that were in Tel-assar? (**2 Kings 19:12**)
- Where is he, the king of **Hamath** and the king of Arpad and the king of the cities of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? (**2 Kings 19:13**)
- Is not Calno just like Carchemish? Is not **Hamath** just like Arpad? Is not Samaria just like Damascus? (**Isaiah 10:9**)
- Whenever my hand has reached the kingdoms of the valueless god whose graven images are more than those at Jerusalem and at Samaria. (**Isaiah 10:10**)
- Will it not be that just as I shall have done to Samaria and to her valueless gods, even so I shall do to Jerusalem and to her idols? (**Isaiah 10:11**)

- Have the gods of the nations that my forefathers brought to ruin delivered them, even Gozan and Haran and Rezeph and the sons of Eden that were in Tel-assar? (**Isaiah 37:12**)
- Where is the king of **Hamath** and the king of Arpad and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena and of Ivvah? (**Isaiah 37:13**)
- In the high places of Samaria, the **Hamathites** then set up images of their god Ashima, even though this worthless god had proved to be helpless against the Assyrians.
- However, each different nation came to be a maker of its own god, which they then deposited in the house of the high places that the Samaritans had made, each different nation, in their cities where they were dwelling. (**2 Kings 17:29**)
- And the men of Babylon, for their part, made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth, for their part, made Nergal, and the men of **Hamath**, for their part, made Ashima. (**2 Kings 17:30**)
- Have the gods of the nations at all delivered each one his own land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? (**2 Kings 18:33**)
- Where are the gods of **Hamath** and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? (**2 Kings 18:34**)
- In order, that Hezekiah may not allure you, saying; Yehowah himself will deliver us. Have the gods of the nations delivered each one his own land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? (**Isaiah 36:18**)
- Where are the gods of **Hamath** and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? (**Isaiah 36:19**)
- According to an extant cuneiform inscription, British Museum (21946), after the battle of Carchemish in **625 B.C.E.**
- For Egypt, concerning the military force of Pharaoh Necho the king of Egypt, who happened to be by the river Euphrates at Carchemish, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: (**Jeremiah 46:2**)

- **Nebuchadnezzar's forces overtook and destroyed the fleeing Egyptians in the district of **Hamath**. [Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles, by A. K. Grayson, 1975, p. 99]**
- **In this same area, a few years earlier, Pharaoh Nechoh had taken King Jehoahaz captive.**
- **Twenty-three years old was Jehoahaz when he began to reign, and for three months he reigned in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. (2 Kings 23:31)**
- **And he began to do what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, according to all that forefathers of his had done. (2 Kings 23:32)**
- **And Pharaoh Nechoh got to put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of **Hamath**, to keep him from reigning in Jerusalem, and then imposed a fine upon the land of a hundred silver talents and a gold talent. (2 Kings 23:33)**
- **Then in **607 B.C.E**, with the fall of Jerusalem, Zedekiah and other captives were taken to Riblah in the region of **Hamath**, and there before his eyes Zedekiah's sons, along with others of the nobility, were put to death.**
- **Furthermore, the chief of the bodyguard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and three doorkeepers. (2 Kings 25:18)**
- **And from the city he took one court official that had a command over the men of war, and five men from those having access to the king that were found in the city, and the secretary of the chief of the army, the one mustering the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land that were to be found in the city. (2 Kings 25:19)**
- **And Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard then took them and conducted them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. (2 Kings 25:20)**
- **And the king of Babylon proceeded to strike them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of **Hamath**. Thus Judah went into exile from off its soil. (2 Kings 25:21)**
- **And a military force of the Chaldeans went chasing after them,**

- and they got to overtake Zedekiah in the desert plains of Jericho. Then they took him and brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of **Hamath** that he might pronounce upon him judicial decisions. (**Jeremiah 39:5**)
- And the king of Babylon proceeded to slaughter the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes, and all the nobles of Judah the king of Babylon slaughtered. (**Jeremiah 39:6**)
 - Then they seized the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of **Hamath**, that he might pronounce upon him judicial decisions. (**Jeremiah 52:9**)
 - And the king of Babylon proceeded to slaughter the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and also all the princes of Judah he slaughtered in Riblah. (**Jeremiah 52:10**)
 - Furthermore, the chief of the bodyguard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and the three doorkeepers. (**Jeremiah 52:24**)
 - And from the city he took one court official that happened to be commissioner over the men of war, and seven men of those having access to the king, who were found in the city, and the secretary of the chief of the army, the one mustering the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land, who were found in the midst of the city. (**Jeremiah 52:25**)
 - So these Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguard took and conducted them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. (**Jeremiah 52:26**)
 - And these the king of Babylon proceeded to strike down and to put them to death in Riblah in the land of **Hamath**. Thus Judah went into exile from off its soil. (**Jeremiah 52:27**)
 - Nevertheless, God had promised that in due time he would restore a remnant of his captive people, including those in the land of **Hamath**.
 - And it must occur in that day that Yehowah will again offer his hand, a second time, to acquire the remnant of his people who will remain over from Assyria and from Egypt and from Pathros and from Cush and from Elam and from Shinar and from **Hamath**

and from the islands of the sea. (**Isaiah 11:11**)

- **And he will certainly raise up a signal for the nations and gather the dispersed ones of Israel, and the scattered ones of Judah he will collect together from the four extremities of the earth. (**Isaiah 11:12**)**