

~JORDAN (243) (Jor'dan)

- The main river of the Promised Land, forming a natural border between most of East and West Palestine.
- And there is a boundary that Yehowah has put between us and you, the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad, namely, the **Jordan**. You have no share in Yehowah. And your sons will certainly make our sons desist from fearing Yehowah. (**Joshua 22:25**)
- Anciently the **Jordan** proper began its course upon its exit from the Hula Basin, a swamp area and lake now drained. The area North of the Hula Basin is characterized by numerous watercourses, the sources of the **Jordan**.
- The three principal streams that form the **Jordan**, from East to West, are the **Nahr Banyas**, **Nahal Hermon**, the **Nahr el-Leddán**, **Nahal Dan**, and the **Nahr Hasbani**, **Nahal Senir**.
- The Yarmuk and the Jabbok are the Jordan's main tributaries from the East. Today most of the **Jordan** is a very muddy stream.
- Upon emerging from the Hula Basin, the **Jordan** flows somewhat peacefully for about 3 kilometers (2 miles) but then rushes through basalt gorges on its way to the Sea of Galilee.
- From the southern end of the Sea of Galilee, the **Jordan** snakes its way to the Dead Sea for some 320 kilometers (200 miles), although the airline distance is only about 105 kilometers (65 miles).
- Within a distance of some 16 kilometers (10 miles) between the Hula Basin and the Sea of Galilee, the **Jordan** falls some 270 meters (890 feet). As it continues its course from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, the **Jordan** forms 27 cascading rapids and drops about 180 meters (590 feet) more.
- Below the Sea of Galilee, the **Jordan** flows through a valley measuring some 6 to 13 kilometers (3.5 to 8 miles) across. But at Jericho this valley has a width of about 22 kilometers (14 miles).

- It is through the valleys lower level, the *Zor*, with a width of about 0.5 to 3 kilometers (0.3 to 2 miles), that the Jordan turns and twists through dense thickets of thorns and thistles, vines and bushes, oleanders, tamarisks, willows, and poplars. Anciently, lions roamed in the proud thickets along the Jordan.
- Look! Someone will come up just like a lion from the proud thickets along the *Jordan* to the durable abiding place, but in a moment I will make him run away from her. And the one who is chosen I shall appoint over her. For who is like me, and who will challenge me, and who, now, is the shepherd that can stand before me? (*Jeremiah 49:19*)
- Look! Someone will come up just like a lion from the proud thickets along the *Jordan* to the durable abiding place, but in a moment I shall make them run away from her. And the one who is chosen I shall appoint over her. For who is like me, and who will challenge me, and who, now, is the shepherd that can stand before me? (*Jeremiah 50:44*)
- Listen! The howling of shepherds, for their majesty has been despoiled. Listen! The roaring of maned young lions, for the proud thickets along the *Jordan* have been despoiled. (*Zechariah 11:3*)
- Wolves and jackals can still be found there. The summers are extremely hot and humid in this jungle, with temperatures climbing well above 38° Centigrade (100° Fahrenheit). And in the spring, as the snow melts on Mount Hermon, the *Jordan* floods the *Zor*.
- The upper level of the valley, the *Ghor*, lies as much as 46 meters (150 feet) above the *Jordan's* jungle and is separated from it by bare and eroded grayish marl hills.
- The portion of the *Ghor* extending some 40 kilometers (25 miles) South of the Sea of Galilee contains cultivated land and pastures. Aside from this, most of the *Ghor* is uncultivated.
- However, in the time of Abraham and Lot, before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, apparently much more of it was productive, especially in the vicinity of the Dead Sea.
- So Lot raised his eyes and saw the whole District of the *Jordan*, that all of it was a wellwatered region before Yehowah brought

- Sodom and Gomorrah to ruin, like the garden of Yehowah, like the land of Egypt as far as Zoar. ([Genesis 13:10](#))
- Then Lot chose for himself the whole District of the **Jordan**, and Lot moved his camp to the east. So they separated the one from the other. ([Genesis 13:11](#))
 - The **Jordan's** shallow waters and its numerous rapids and whirlpools render it un-navigable. Reportedly, there are at least 60 places where it is possible to wade across the river when not at flood stage. In ancient times control of the rivers fords was militarily advantageous, as they were the main means for crossing the Jordan.
 - Then he said to them; Follow me, because Yehowah has given your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand. And they went following him and got to capture the fords of the **Jordan** against the Moabites, and they did not allow anybody to pass over. ([Judges 3:28](#))
 - And Gilead got to capture the fords of the **Jordan** ahead of Ephraim, and it occurred that when the escaping men of Ephraim would say; Let me pass over, then the men of Gilead would say to each one; Are you an Ephraimite? When he would say; No! ([Judges 12:5](#))
 - Then they would say to him; Please say Shibboleth. And he would say; Sibboleth, as he was unable to say the word correctly. And they would lay hold of him and slay him at the fords of the **Jordan**. So there fell at that time forty-two thousand out of Ephraim. ([Judges 12:6](#))
 - Usually the portion of the **Jordan** below the Sea of Galilee averages from 1 to 3 meters (3 to 10 feet) in depth and is approximately 27 to 30 meters (90 to 100 feet) wide. But in the spring the **Jordan** overflows its banks and is then much wider and deeper.
 - And at the instant that the carriers of the Ark came as far as the **Jordan** and the feet of the priests carrying the Ark were dipped in the edge of the waters, now the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest. ([Joshua 3:15](#))
 - At flood stage it would not have been safe for the Israelite nation of men, women, and children to cross the **Jordan**, especially not near Jericho. The current there is so swift that in more recent times bathers

have actually been swept away. However, Yehowah miraculously dammed up the **Jordan**, making it possible for the Israelites to cross on dry land.

- And it came about that when the people pulled away from their tents just before passing over the **Jordan**, with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people. (**Joshua 3:14**)
- And at the instant that the carriers of the Ark came as far as the **Jordan** and the feet of the priests carrying the Ark were dipped in the edge of the waters, now the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest. (**Joshua 3:15**)
- Then the waters descending from above began to stand still. They rose up as one dam very far away at Adam, the city at the side of Zarethan, while those descending toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were exhausted. They were cut off, and the people passed over in front of Jericho. (**Joshua 3:16**)
- Meanwhile the priests carrying the ark of Yehowah's covenant kept standing immovable on dry ground in the middle of the **Jordan** as all Israel were passing over on dry ground, until the whole nation had completed passing over the Jordan. (**Joshua 3:17**)
- Centuries later a like miracle occurred once for Elijah while in the company of Elisha, and once for Elisha alone.
- And there were fifty men of the sons of the prophets that went and kept standing in view at a distance, but, as for both of them, they stood by the **Jordan**. (**2 Kings 2:7**)
- Then Elijah took his official garment and wrapped it up and struck the waters, and gradually they were divided this way and that way, so that both of them went across on the dry ground. (**2 Kings 2:8**)
- After that he picked up the official garment of Elijah that had fallen off him, and went back and stood by the shore of the **Jordan**. (**2 Kings 2:13**)
- Then he took the official garment of Elijah that had fallen off him and struck the waters and said; Where is Yehowah the God of Elijah, even He? When he struck the waters, then they were

gradually divided this way and that way, so that Elisha went across. (**2 Kings 2:14**)

- The **Jordan** also figured in the miraculous healing of Naaman. Helped to the right viewpoint by his servants, Naaman, who regarded the rivers of Damascus as better than all the waters of Israel, obediently bathed seven times in the **Jordan**. After the seventh time he was completely healed of his leprous condition.
- However, Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying; Going there, you must bathe seven times in the **Jordan** that your flesh may come back to you, and be clean. (**2 Kings 5:10**)
- At this Naaman grew indignant and began to go away and say; Here I had said to myself; To me he will come out all the way and will certainly stand and call upon the name of Yehowah his God and move his hand to and fro over the place and actually give the leper recovery. (**2 Kings 5:11**)
- Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not bathe in them and certainly be clean? With that he turned and went away in a rage. (**2 Kings 5:12**)
- His servants now approached and spoke to him and said; My father, had it been a great thing that the prophet himself had spoken to you, would you not do it? How much more, then, since he said to you, Bathe and be clean? (**2 Kings 5:13**)
- At that he went down and began to plunge into the **Jordan** seven times according to the word of the man of the true God, after which his flesh came back like the flesh of a little boy and he became clean. (**2 Kings 5:14**)
- In the **First Century C.E.**, John the Baptizer immersed many repentant Jews in the waters of the **Jordan**. He also had the privilege of baptizing Jesus, the perfect Son of God, there.
- In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. (**Matthew 3:1**)
- Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the country around the Jordan made their way out to him. (**Matthew 3:5**)

- Then Jesus came from Galilee to the **Jordan** to John, in order to be baptized by him. (**Matthew 3:13**)
- But the latter tried to prevent him, saying; I am the one needing to be baptized by you, and are you coming to me? (**Matthew 3:14**)
- In reply Jesus said to him; Let it be, this time, for in that way it is suitable for us to carry out all that is righteous. Then he quit preventing him. (**Matthew 3:15**)
- After being baptized Jesus immediately came up from the water, and, look! The heavens were opened up, and he saw descending like a dove God's spirit coming upon him. (**Matthew 3:16**)
- Look! Also, there was a voice from the heavens that said; This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved. (**Matthew 3:17**)

See Also DISTRICT OF THE JORDAN