

~NEGEB (437)

(Neg'eb)[Hebrew, *ne'ghev*, be parched, South]

.. Topography

.. History

- The Hebrew word *ne'ghev* is thought to be derived from a root meaning, **be parched** and often denotes the semiarid area South of the mountains of Judah.
- From the circumstance that this region lay South of Judah, *ne'ghev* also came to mean, **south** and is used with reference to a southern side
- And you must measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits and on the south side two thousand cubits and on the west side two thousand cubits and on the north side two thousand cubits, with the city in the middle. This will serve them as pasture grounds of the cities. (**Numbers 35:5**)
- A southern boundary
- And it passed on to Azmon and went out to the torrent valley of Egypt, and the boundarys termination proved to be at the sea. This came to be their southern boundary. (**Joshua 15:4**)
- And a southern gate
- And when the people of the land come in before Yehowah in the festal seasons, the one coming in by the way of the north gate in order to bow down should go out by the way of the south gate, and the one coming in by the way of the south gate should go out by the way of the gate to the north. No one should go back by the way of the gate by which he came in, for he should go out straight ahead of him. (**Ezekiel 46:9**)
- In some translations a distinction between the geographic designation and the compass direction is not maintained, resulting in confusing renderings. An example of this is;
- Following that Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the **Negeb**. (**Genesis 13:1**)

- Where translating *ne'ghev* as, **south**, **AS**, **KJ**, **Le**, makes it appear that Abraham went southward out of Egypt, when actually his direction was northward through the **Negeb** to Bethel. But this difficulty has been eliminated in many modern translations. **AT**, **JB**, **NW**, **RS**

.. Topography

- The **Negeb** of ancient times seems to have embraced an area extending from the district of Beer-sheba in the North to Kadesh-barnea in the South.
- So Abraham got up early in the morning and took bread and a skin water bottle and gave it to Hagar, setting it upon her shoulder, and the child, and then dismissed her. And she went her way and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. (**Genesis 21:14**)
- When Moses was sending them to spy out the land of Canaan, he proceeded to say to them; Go up here into the **Negeb**, and you must go up into the mountainous region. (**Numbers 13:17**)
- When they went up into the **Negeb**, they then came to Hebron. Now Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, those born of Anak, were there. Incidentally, Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan of Egypt. (**Numbers 13:22**)
- That is the way your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. (**Numbers 32:8**)
- The prophet Isaiah described this region as a land of hard conditions, a haunt of lions, leopards, and snakes.
- The pronouncement against the beasts of the south. Through the land of distress and hard conditions, of the lion and the leopard growling, of the viper and the flying fiery snake, on the shoulders of full-grown asses they carry their resources, and on the humps of camels their supplies. In behalf of the people they will prove of no benefit. (**Isaiah 30:6**)
- In the northern section, occasional springs, wells, and pools are found, and the tamarisk is one of the few trees that thrives there.
- After that he planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba and called there upon the name of Yehowah the indefinitely lasting God.

(Genesis 21:33)

- To the Southwest of Beer-sheba lie two small areas and one relatively large area of sand dunes. Much of the **Negeb** is a plateau between 450 and 600 meters (1,500 and 2,000 feet) above sea level, with peaks up to 1,050 meters (3,440 feet) in elevation. To the South and East of Beer-sheba there are rugged ridges, generally running from East to West.

.. History

- The cisterns, terrace walls, and ruins of many towns that have been found in the **Negeb** indicate that the area anciently supported a considerable population. Here the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac found pasturage for their large flocks.
- Following that Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the **Negeb**. (Genesis 13:1)
- And Abram was heavily stocked with herds and silver and gold. (Genesis 13:2)
- Now Abraham moved camp from there to the land of the **Negeb** and took up dwelling between Kadesh and Shur and residing as an alien at Gerar. (Genesis 20:1)
- Now Isaac had come from the way that goes to Beerlahairoi, for he was dwelling in the land of the **Negeb**. (Genesis 24:62)
- And in Abraham's time the Elamite king Chedorlaomer, with his three allies, defeated the inhabitants of the **Negeb**.
- Now it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim. (Genesis 14:1)
- That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, that is to say, Zoar. (Genesis 14:2)
- All these marched as allies to the Low Plain of Siddim, that is, the Salt Sea. (Genesis 14:3)
- Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but the thirteenth

- year they rebelled. (**Genesis 14:4**)
- And in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer came, and also the kings who were with him, and they inflicted defeats on the Rephaim in Ashterothkarnaim, and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shavehkiriathaim. (**Genesis 14:5**)
 - And the Horites in their mountain of Seir, down to Elparan, which is at the wilderness. (**Genesis 14:6**)
 - Then they turned about and came to Enmishpat, that is, Kadesh, and defeated the whole field of the Amalekites and also the Amorites who were dwelling in Hazazontamar. (**Genesis 14:7**)
 - Centuries afterward, the Israelite spies sent by Moses entered the Promised Land from the **Negeb**, which at that time was inhabited by the Amalekites.
 - When Moses was sending them to spy out the land of Canaan, he proceeded to say to them; Go up here into the **Negeb**, and you must go up into the mountainous region. (**Numbers 13:17**)
 - When they went up into the **Negeb**, they then came to Hebron. Now Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, those born of Anak, were there. Incidentally, Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan of Egypt. (**Numbers 13:22**)
 - The Amalekites are dwelling in the land of the **Negeb**, and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are dwelling in the mountainous region, and the Canaanites are dwelling by the sea and by the side of the Jordan. (**Numbers 13:29**)
 - Under the leadership of Joshua, all the inhabitants of the **Negeb** were defeated
 - And Joshua proceeded to strike all the land of the mountainous region and the **Negeb** and the Shephelah and the slopes and all their kings. He did not let a survivor remain, and everything that breathed he devoted to destruction, just as Yehowah the God of Israel had commanded. (**Joshua 10:40**)
 - And Joshua proceeded to take all this land, the mountainous region and all the **Negeb** and all the land of Goshen and the Shephelah and the Arabah and the mountainous region of Israel

and its Shephelah. (**Joshua 11:16**)

- And cities in this region became part of the territory of the tribe of Simeon.
- Then the second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the sons of Simeon by their families. And their inheritance came to be in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Judah. (**Joshua 19:1**)
- And they came to have in their inheritance Beer-sheba with Sheba, and Moladah. (**Joshua 19:2**)
- And Hazar-shual and Balah and Ezem. (**Joshua 19:3**)
- And Eltolad and Bethul and Hormah. (**Joshua 19:4**)
- And Ziklag and Beth-marcaboth and Hazar-susah. (**Joshua 19:5**)
- And Beth-lebaoth and Sharuhem, thirteen cities and their settlements. (**Joshua 19:6**)
- Also, the nomadic Kenites, who were related to Moses through marriage, took up residence in the **Negeb**.
- And the sons of the Kenite, whose son-in-law Moses was, came up out of the city of palm trees with the sons of Judah to the wilderness of Judah, which is to the south of Arad. Then they went and took up dwelling with the people. (**Judges 1:16**)
- Meanwhile Saul said to the Kenites; Go, depart, go down from the midst of the Amalekites, that I may not sweep you away with them. As for you, you exercised loving-kindness with all the sons of Israel at the time of their coming up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from the midst of Amalek. (**1 Samuel 15:6**)
- After that Saul went striking down Amalek from Havilah as far as Shur, which is in front of Egypt. (**1 Samuel 15:7**)
- The Israelites evidently did not maintain control over the area. Over the years there were repeated clashes with the Canaanites of the **Negeb** and particularly with the Amalekites.
- And afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the

Canaanites inhabiting the mountainous region and the **Negeb and the Shephelah. (**Judges 1:9**)**

- **And it occurred that, if Israel sowed seed, Midian and Amalek and the Easterners came up, yes, they came up against them. (**Judges 6:3**)**
- **Then Samuel said to Saul; It was I whom Yehowah sent to anoint you as king over his people Israel, and now listen to the voice of the words of Yehowah. (**1 Samuel 15:1**)**
- **This is what Yehowah of armies has said; I must call to account what Amalek did to Israel when he set himself against him in the way while he was coming up out of Egypt. (**1 Samuel 15:2**)**
- **Now go, and you must strike down Amalek and devote him to destruction with all that he has, and you must not have compassion upon him, and you must put them to death, man as well as woman, child as well as suckling, bull as well as sheep, camel as well as ass. (**1 Samuel 15:3**)**
- **Accordingly Saul summoned the people and took the count of them in Telaim, two hundred thousand men on foot and ten thousand men of Judah. (**1 Samuel 15:4**)**
- **And Saul proceeded to come as far as the city of Amalek and to lie in ambush by the torrent valley. (**1 Samuel 15:5**)**
- **Meanwhile Saul said to the Kenites; Go, depart, go down from the midst of the Amalekites, that I may not sweep you away with them. As for you, you exercised loving-kindness with all the sons of Israel at the time of their coming up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from the midst of Amalek. (**1 Samuel 15:6**)**
- **After that Saul went striking down Amalek from Havilah as far as Shur, which is in front of Egypt. (**1 Samuel 15:7**)**
- **And he got to catch Agag the king of Amalek alive, and all the other people he devoted to destruction with the edge of the sword. (**1 Samuel 15:8**)**
- **But Saul and the people had compassion upon Agag and upon the best of the flock and the herd and the fat ones and upon the rams and upon all that was good, and they did not wish to devote**

- them to destruction. As for all the goods that were despicable and rejected, these they devoted to destruction. (**1 Samuel 15:9**)
- And it came about while David and his men were coming to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites made a raid on the south and on Ziklag, and they proceeded to strike Ziklag and burn it with fire. (**1 Samuel 30:1**)
 - And to carry off captive the women and all that were in it, from the smallest to the greatest. They did not put anyone to death, but they drove them along and went on their way. (**1 Samuel 30:2**)
 - When David came with his men to the city, why, there it was burned with fire, and, as for their wives and their sons and their daughters, they had been carried off captive. (**1 Samuel 30:3**)
 - And David and the people that were with him began to raise their voice and weep, until there was in them no power to weep anymore. (**1 Samuel 30:4**)
 - And David's two wives had been carried off captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. (**1 Samuel 30:5**)
 - And it became very distressing to David, because the people said to stone him, for the soul of all the people had become bitter, each one because of his sons and his daughters. So David took to strengthening himself by Yehowah his God. (**1 Samuel 30:6**)
 - Hence David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech; Do, please, bring the ephod near to me. And Abiathar came bringing the ephod near to David. (**1 Samuel 30:7**)
 - And David began to inquire of Yehowah, saying; Shall I chase after this marauder band? Shall I overtake them? At this he said to him; Go in chase, for you will without fail overtake them, and you will without fail make a deliverance. (**1 Samuel 30:8**)
 - Promptly David got on his way, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and they went on as far as the torrent valley of Besor, and the men that were to be left behind stood still. (**1 Samuel 30:9**)

- **And David kept up the chase, he and four hundred men, but two hundred men that were too tired to pass over the torrent valley of Besor stood still. (1 Samuel 30:10)**
- **And they got to find a man, an Egyptian, in the field. So they took him to David and gave him bread that he might eat and gave him water to drink. (1 Samuel 30:11)**
- **Further, they gave him a slice of a cake of pressed figs and two cakes of raisins. Then he ate and his spirit returned to him, for he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights. (1 Samuel 30:12)**
- **David now said to him; To whom do you belong, and where are you from? To which he said; I am an Egyptian attendant, a slave of an Amalekite man, but my master left me because I took sick three days ago. (1 Samuel 30:13)**
- **We were the ones that made a raid on the south of the Cherethites and upon that which belongs to Judah and upon the south of Caleb, and Ziklag we burned with fire. (1 Samuel 30:14)**
- **At this David said to him; Will you lead me down to this marauder band? To this he said; Do swear to me by God that you will not put me to death, and that you will not surrender me into the hand of my master, and I shall lead you down to this marauder band. (1 Samuel 30:15)**
- **Accordingly he led him down, and there they were spread disorderly over the surface of all the land eating and drinking and having a feast on account of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and the land of Judah. (1 Samuel 30:16)**
- **And David went striking them down from the morning darkness until the evening, that he might devote them to destruction, and not a man of them escaped except four hundred young men that rode upon camels and took to flight. (1 Samuel 30:17)**
- **And David got to deliver all that the Amalekites had taken, and his two wives David delivered. (1 Samuel 30:18)**
- **And there was nothing of theirs lacking, from the smallest to the greatest and to sons and daughters and from the spoil, even to**

- anything that they had taken for themselves. Everything David recovered. (1 Samuel 30:19)
- So David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drove before that other livestock. Then they said; This is David's spoil. (1 Samuel 30:20)
 - From the city of Ziklag, given to him by the Philistine king Achish, David made raids upon the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites of the **Negeb**.
 - Then David said to Achish; If, now, I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities of the countryside, that I may dwell there, for why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you? (1 Samuel 27:5)
 - Accordingly Achish gave him Ziklag on that day. That is why Ziklag has come to belong to the kings of Judah down to this day. (1 Samuel 27:6)
 - And the number of the days that David dwelt in the countryside of the Philistines came to be a year and four months. (1 Samuel 27:7)
 - And David proceeded to go up with his men that they might raid the Geshurites and the Girzites and the Amalekites, for they were inhabiting the land that extended from Telam as far as Shur and down to the land of Egypt. (1 Samuel 27:8)
 - Apparently not until David's reign as king, after the defeat of the Edomites, did Israel gain complete control of the **Negeb**.
 - 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)
 - The later Judean king Uzziah evidently built towers and hewed out cisterns in this region.
 - Further, he built towers in the wilderness, and hewed out many

cisterns, for there was a great deal of livestock that became his, and also in the Shephelah and on the tableland. There were farmers and vinedressers in the mountains and in Carmel, for a lover of agriculture he proved to be. (**2 Chronicles 26:10**)

- **After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, Obadiah foretold that the Israelites would be restored to their land, including the **Negeb**.**
- **And they must take possession of the **Negeb**, even of the mountainous region of Esau, and of the Shephelah, even of the Philistines. And they must take possession of the field of Ephraim and of the field of Samaria, and Benjamin must take possession of Gilead. (**Obadiah 1:19**)**
- **And as for the exiles of this rampart, to the sons of Israel will belong what the Canaanites possessed as far as Zarephath. And the exiles of Jerusalem, who were in Sepharad, will take possession of the cities of the **Negeb**. (**Obadiah 1:20**)**