

~OPHIR 2 (165)

(O'phir)

.. Location

- A place renowned as a source of much gold of the finest quality. Thus already in Job's time circa 1600 B.C.E, precious ore in the dust and pure gold were spoken of in parallel with the gold of **Ophir**.
- And if there is a placing of precious ore in the dust and gold of **Ophir** in the rock of torrent valleys. (**Job 22:24**)
- Pure gold cannot be given in exchange for it, and silver cannot be weighed out as its price. (**Job 28:15**)
- It cannot be paid for with gold of **Ophir**, with the rare onyx stone and the sapphire. (**Job 28:16**)
- The daughters of kings are among your precious women. The queenly consort has taken her stand at your right hand in gold of **Ophir**. (**Psalms 45:9**)
- Describes the queenly consort arrayed in precious gold of **Ophir**, and at;
- And I shall certainly bring home its own badness upon the productive land, and their own error upon the wicked themselves. And I shall actually cause the pride of the presumptuous ones to cease, and the haughtiness of the tyrants I shall abase. (**Isaiah 13:11**)
- I shall make mortal man rarer than refined gold, and earthling man rarer than the gold of **Ophir**. (**Isaiah 13:12**)
- In the pronouncement against Babylon, the relative rarity of **Ophir** gold is used to symbolize the scarcity of tyrannical men in Babylon after its fall.
- David donated 3,000 talents of gold from **Ophir** for construction of the temple, gold valued at \$1,156,050,000.
- David the king now said to all the congregation; Solomon my son, the one whom God has chosen, is young and delicate, but

the work is great, for the castle is not for man, but for Yehowah God. (1 Chronicles 29:1)

- And according to all my power I have prepared for the house of my God the gold for the goldwork, and the silver for the silverwork, and the copper for the copperwork, the iron for the ironwork, and the timbers for the timberwork, onyx stones, and stones to be set with hard mortar, and mosaic pebbles, and every precious stone, and alabaster stones in great quantity. (1 Chronicles 29:2)
- Three thousand talents of gold of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for coating the walls of the houses. (1 Chronicles 29:4)
- Later, the trading fleet of David's son Solomon regularly brought back from Ophir 420 talents of gold.
- 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)
- And they proceeded to go to Ophir and take from there four hundred and twenty talents of gold and bring it in to King Solomon. (1 Kings 9:28)
- The parallel account at, Reads 450 talents.
- And Hiram regularly sent to him by means of his servants ships and servants having a knowledge of the sea, and they would come with Solomon's servants to Ophir and take from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and bring it to King Solomon. (2 Chronicles 8:18)
- Some scholars have suggested that this difference came about when letters of the alphabet served as figures that an ancient copyist could have mistaken the Hebrew numeral letter *nun*, representing 50, for the letter *kaph*, standing for 20, or vice versa.

- However, the evidence is that all numbers in the **Hebrew** Scriptures were spelled out, rather than represented by letters. A more probable explanation, therefore, is that both figures are correct and that the gross amount brought was 450 talents, of which 420 were clear gain.
- In **1946 C.E.**, as confirmation of these Biblical accounts about imports of gold from **Ophir**, a potsherd was unearthed Northeast of Tel Aviv-Yafo. Thereon was an inscription saying **Ophir gold to *bet horon*, thirty shekels**. [*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 1951, Vol. X, pp. 265,266]
- In addition to being a source of a vast quantity of gold, the land of **Ophir** was also a source of the albug trees and precious stones imported by Solomon.
- And Hiram's fleet of ships that carried gold from **Ophir** also brought from Ophir timbers of albug trees in very great amount and precious stones. (**1 Kings 10:11**)
- And, besides, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from **Ophir** brought timbers of albug trees and precious stones. (**2 Chronicles 9:10**)
- However, when King Jehoshaphat, a hundred years later, attempted an expedition to that land, it ended in disaster, his Tarshish ships being wrecked at Ezion-geber at the head of the Gulf of `Aqaba.
- Jehoshaphat, for his part, made Tarshish ships to go to **Ophir** for gold, but they did not go, because the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber. (**1 Kings 22:48**)

See Also TARSHISH 4

•• Location

- The precise location of **Ophir** cannot be determined today with certainty. Of the several suggestions in this regard, three are particularly favored, India, Arabia, and Northeast Africa all being within reach of a fleet operating out of Ezion-geber at the head of the eastern arm of the Red Sea.
- In regard to India, all the goods brought back in the ships of Solomon and Hiram were available there. Josephus, Jerome, and the

Septuagint could also be marshaled to give some support to Ophirs being in India.

- On the other hand, those maintaining that Ophir was in the region of Northeast Africa in the vicinity of Somalia, at the lower extremity of the Red Sea, point out that it would have been a much closer source of supply for all the imported items than India.
- However, the weight of opinion appears to support the conclusion that **Ophir** was a region in Southwest Arabia in the vicinity of Yemen.
- Evidence offered for this view is based on the premise that the descendants of Juktans son **Ophir** settled in the Arabian Peninsula along with such brother tribes as the descendants of Sheba and Havilah.
- And Obal and Abimael and Sheba. (**Genesis 10:28**)
- And **Ophir** and Havilah and Jobab, all these were the sons of Juktan. (**Genesis 10:29**)
- The account of the visit of the queen of Sheba, likely from southern Arabia, is sandwiched in between two references to Solomon's trade with **Ophir**.
- 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's fleet of ships that carried gold from **Ophir** also brought from **Ophir** timbers of algum trees in very great amount and precious stones. (**1 Kings 10:11**)