



Valley of Elah Fact Sheet

Location: In southern Judean Hills, about 15 mi west of Bethlehem, and 12 mi east-northeast of Ashkelon and the Mediterranean Sea.



Meaning of Name: “oak tree”

Bible References: 3x

- *1 Sam 17:2 & 17:19* – location of battle between David/Israelites & Goliath/Philistines
- *1 Sam 21:9* – Valley referenced when David took the sword of Goliath from Ahimelech at Nob





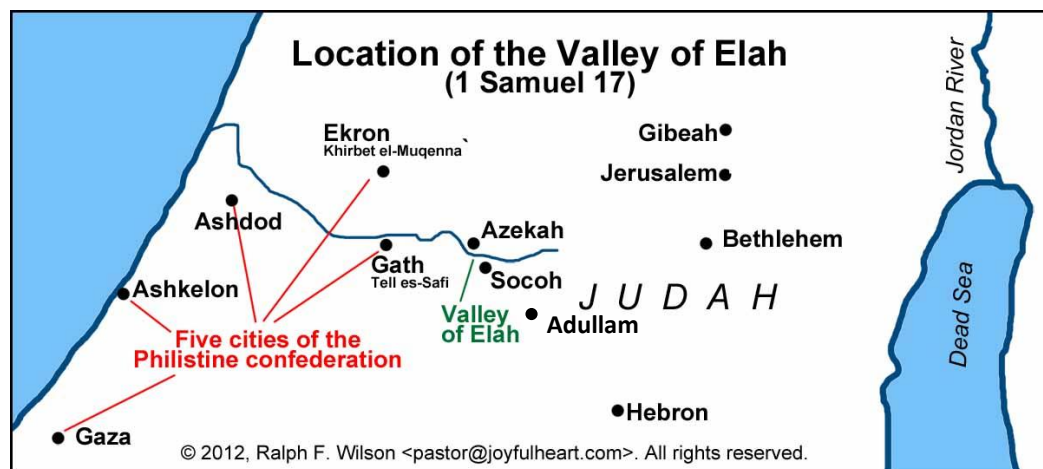
Past: This valley served as a critical corridor between the coastal cities of Ashkelon, Ashdod and Jaffa to the central Judean cities of Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem. While it was no doubt of strategic importance during the biblical time period, the only recorded event to take place there was the battle of the Israelites against the Philistines, highlighted by the defeat of Goliath by David.



Included in the area is the Elah stream, where David selected the five stones for his showdown with Goliath, and the ancient cities of Azekah, Shochoh and Shaaraim, cities of Judah that are referenced as far back as the book of Joshua and encampments of the

Philistines during their battle with King Saul and the Israelites.

Just a bit further from the valley, the biblical sites of Gath, Ekron, and the cave of Adullam can be found.





Present: Today, the valley of Elah is still a no-man's land of sorts, running close to the current 1967 lines that created the West Bank. The stream of Elah is dry for the vast majority of the year. Aside from the occasional small highways that run through the valley and a few kibbutzim, the area is relatively untouched.



Aerial view of Elah looking east

Future: This valley is not mentioned in any prophetic sense in Scripture.

Consider This:

- Most maps depicting the battle lines of the Israelites and Philistines show the Israelites having the northern high ground, with the Philistines camping along the southern hills of the valley; if the Philistines were pursued to Shaaraim (1 Sam 17:52), the Philistines must have held that city as well. This means that the valley was divided as east (Israelites) and west (Philistines).
- Note the prevalence of the number “5” in the events surrounding the battle:
 - The Philistines had 5 cities (1 Sam 6:17)
 - David used 5 stones (1 Sam 17:40)
 - Goliath appears to come from a family of 5 brothers (2 Sam 21:19-22)
 - 5 cities involved in the battle (Ekron, Gath, Azekah, Shocoh, Shaaraim)