

BIBLE ATLAS

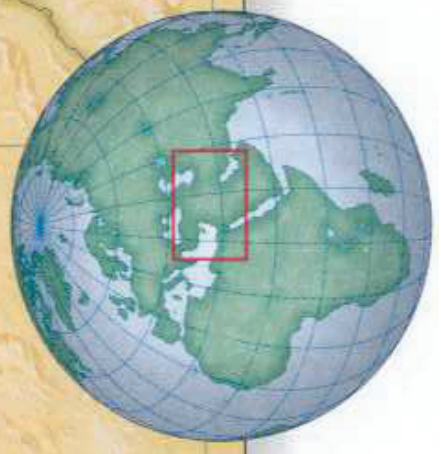
ACCESS FOUNDATION

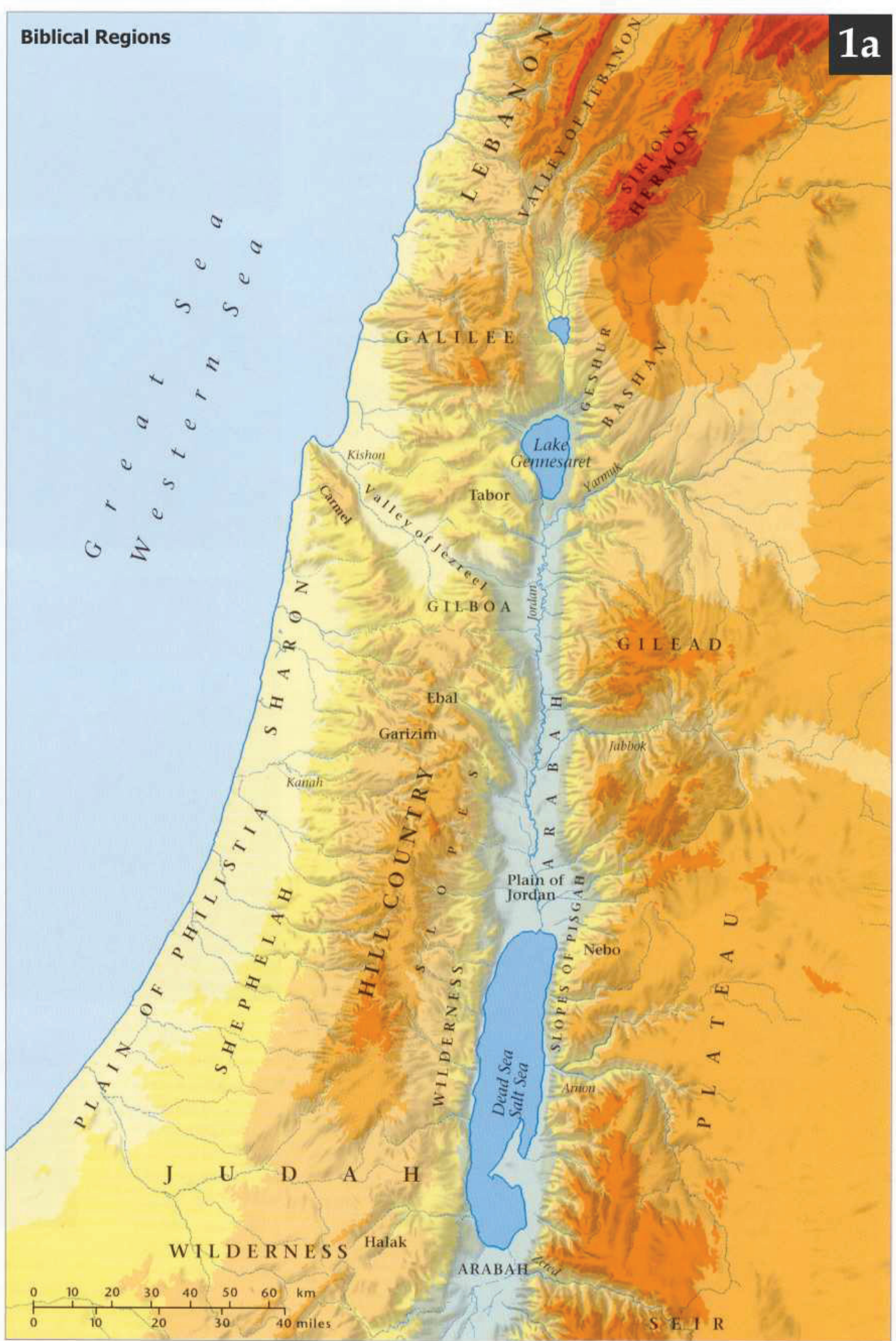
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Editor

Chapter 1

The Face of the Ancient Near East







MODERN STATES AND THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

ELEVATIONS

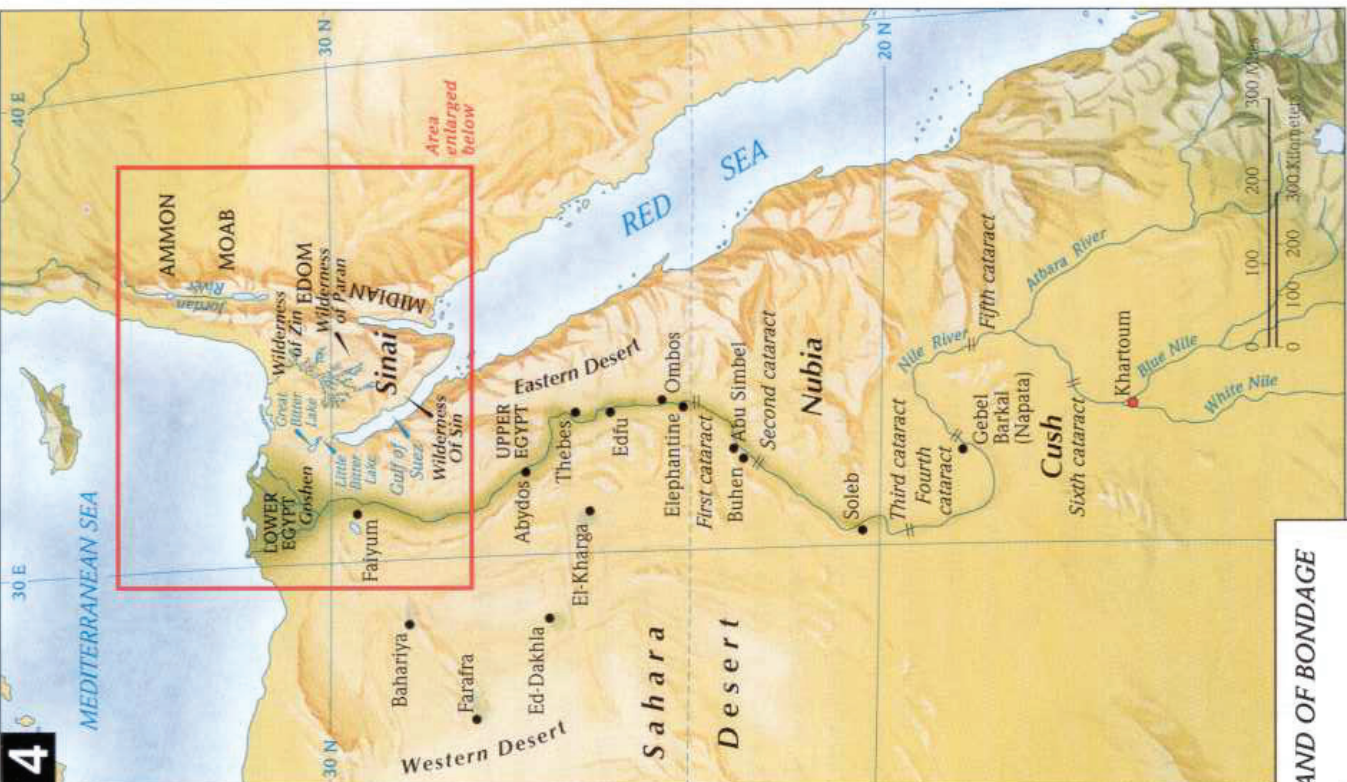
Feet	Meters
13,120	4,000
6,560	2,000
1,640	500
656	200
0 (Sea level)	0 (Sea level)
Below sea level	Below sea level

- Fertile Crescent
- National capitals
- City (modern name)
- Other cities
- Mountain peaks
- Canal
- Present day international boundaries



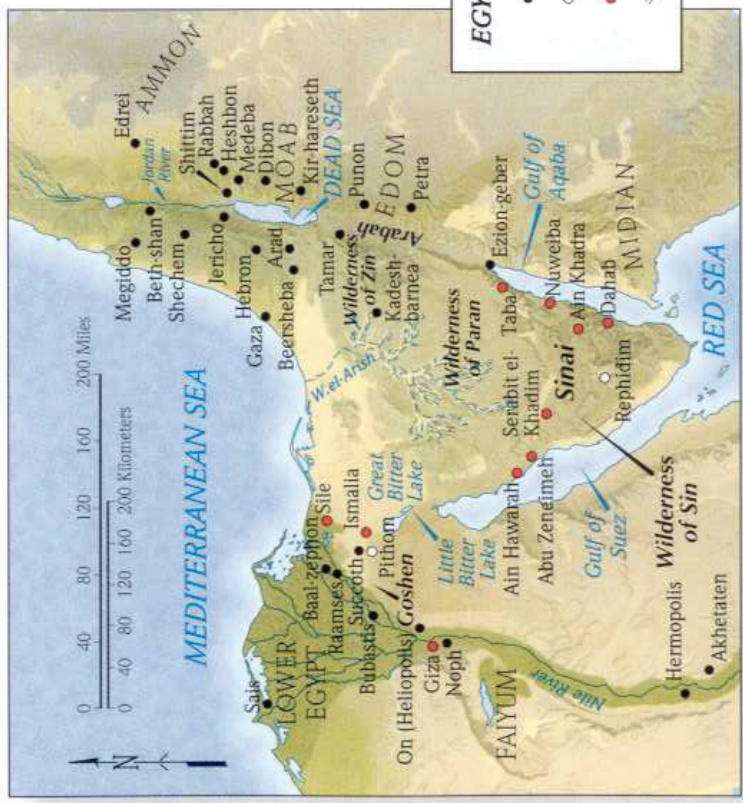
MESOPOTAMIA: HOMELAND OF ABRAHAM

- City
- City (modern name)
- City (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak



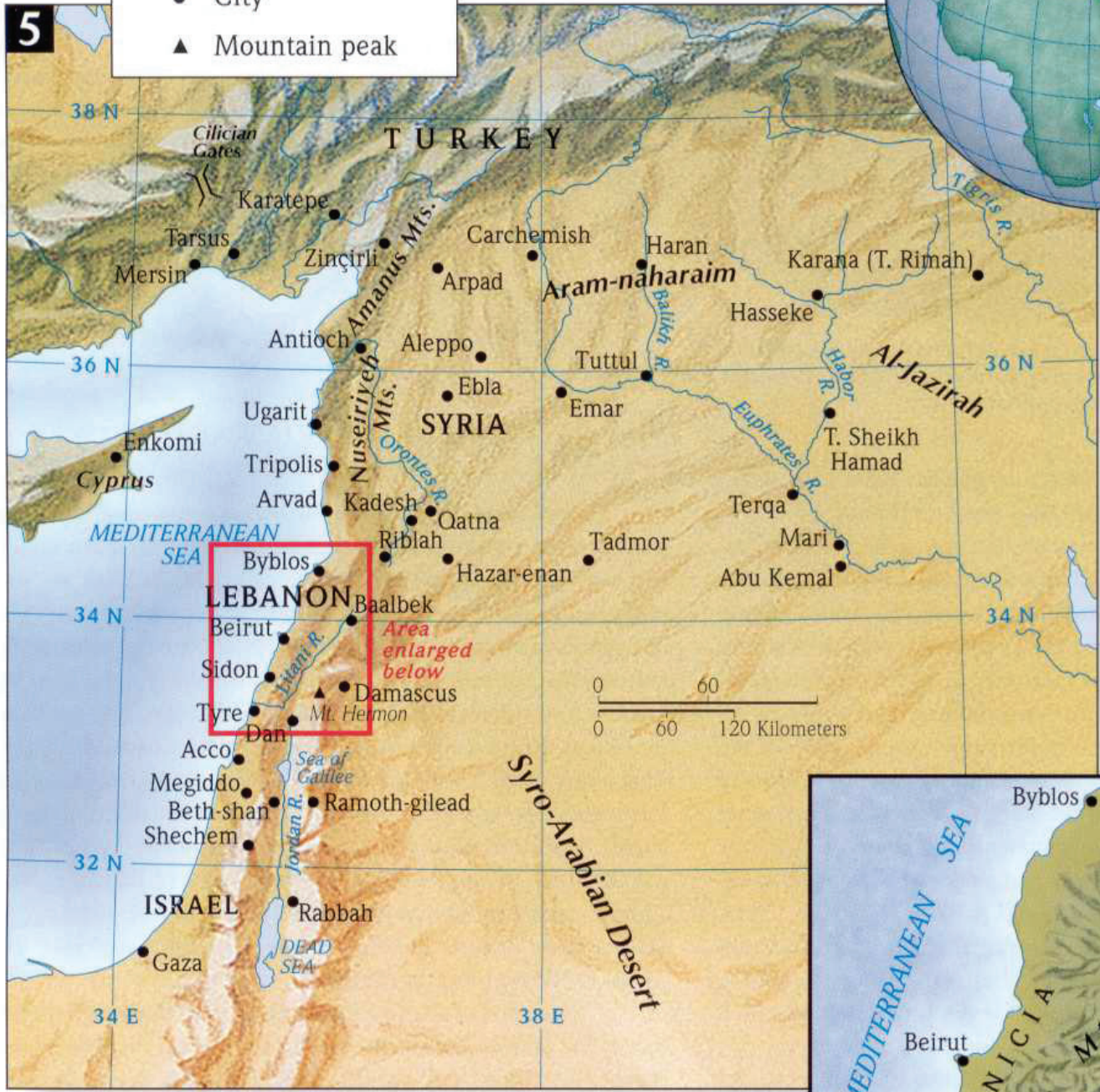
EGYPT: LAND OF BONDAGE

- City
- City (uncertain location)
- City (modern name)
- ≡ Cataract



SYRIA AND LEBANON

- City
- ▲ Mountain peak



5



THE KING'S HIGHWAY

A second, less important interregional highway linked Arabia with Damascus. This "King's Highway" (Num. 21:22) extended from Ezion-geber at the top of the Gulf of Aqabah through the Transjordan to Damascus. Important cities along this route included Kir-hareseth, Dibon, Heshbon, Ramoth-gilead, Ashtaroth, and Karnaim. Caravans conveyed spices and perfumes as well as other goods from the Arabian Peninsula along this route. Though of less importance militarily than the International Coastal Highway, the economic potential of the King's Highway occasioned many conflicts between Israel, Damascus, and other minor kingdoms of the Transjordan region.

"INTERNATIONAL ROUTES"

- City
- International Coastal Highway
- King's Highway
- Sea routes
- Other routes





The Middle East
Physical Geography

The major countries of the Middle East border on deserts to the west and south, and mountains to the north and east. A mountain range also extends from north to south paralleling the Mediterranean coast.

The foothills along the Syrian and Arabian deserts are forested mainly with oaks and pines. The great rivers of the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates flow through the desert lands, making them irrigable. The whole area serves as a land bridge between the two continents of Africa and Asia.

International Routes

The routes in the Middle East conform to the terrain and climate of the area. Two major routes demand special mention. The coastal route (Via Maris or Way of the Sea, cf. Isaiah 9.1) connects Egypt with Assyria and Babylon. Beginning in Tanis it skirts the coast to Gaza, crosses the Carmel range at Megiddo and goes through the Plain of Jezreel to Hazor. Here it divides in two branches, one going north through the Beqaa valley between the Lebanon and the Antilebanon ranges along the Orontes valley

to Hamath, and then to Aleppo. From Aleppo it divides again, turning south to Tiphseh on the Euphrates and continuing beyond to Mari, Babylon and Ur, or going north to Carchemish and then eastward to Haran, Gozan (Guzanu) and Nineveh. From Hazor the alternative route goes to Mari by way of Damascus and Tadmor (Palmyra).

The second major route is the King's Highway (cf. Numbers 20.17; 21.22 and map 2), which goes south from Damascus to Elath and on to the oasis of Tema and to Southern Arabia.