

Introduction

Although the Bible contains the message of salvation for all peoples in all times, it originates in a particular place and at a particular time. It does not consist of a set of philosophical ideas or academic theories, but tells the story of God's dealings with a particular people – the Jews.

The history of the Jews was bound up with their land: 'The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. It is a land that the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end' (Deuteronomy 11:10–12).

The Bible is full of journeys. We follow Abraham on his epic journey from his father's home in Ur to the land of Canaan. We follow the Hebrews on their journey from slavery in Egypt to their eventual arrival in the Promised Land. We read about the growth of the kingdom of Israel under King David; and later about the exile and return of the people of Judah.

In the New Testament we follow Jesus on his travels around Palestine, and Paul on his unique series of missionary journeys. Finally we trace the letters from John to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor.

But now, centuries later, and in lands distant from Palestine, it is helpful to have maps to show us where all these places were,

The Western Wall, Jerusalem which incorporates masonry dating from the time of Herod the Great.





The western shore of the Dead Sea. Some of the rocks are coated in salt crystals.

and where the travelers went. What was Mesopotamia? Where did Moses cross the Red Sea? Why were so many battles fought across the length and breadth of Palestine? Where was Golgotha – the Place of the Skull? And where was it that Paul’s merchant ship foundered on the voyage to Rome?

All these questions are answered – or at least illuminated – by the maps in this book. We have not attempted to produce a book for university professors and research students – they have plenty readily available – but a clear, straightforward set of maps that will provide an accessible backdrop to the Bible narrative.

The Atlas also includes a gazetteer. By looking up the place you want to find in the gazetteer, you will find a map number and grid reference for locating it on each map where it appears.

Preface to Revised Edition

The Student Bible Atlas was first published in 1989 and has since been translated into more than twenty-five languages worldwide. For this revised edition every map has been re-created using new digital resources, and every location checked and updated. A completely new selection of photographs has been included, and the gazetteer carefully revised and reviewed. Every effort has been taken to ensure that this tool for biblical research and study is as useful as possible for the twenty-first century reader.

Tim Dowley, May 2015