Ammon in the Hebrew Bible: a Textual Analysis and Archaeological Context of Selected References to the Ammonites of Transjordan

James Roger Fisher, Andrews University

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First Advisor
J. Bjørnar Storfjell

Second Advisor
William H. Shea

Third Advisor
Randall W. Younker

Abstract
The study of the Transjordanian Iron-Age (ca. 1200-550 BC) state of Ammon is important to students of the Bible because of the numerous references to the Ammonites (bene 'ammon) included in the historical and prophetic sections of the Hebrew canon. The book of Genesis traces the ancestry of the "Sons of Ammon" to an eponymous ancestor named Ben Ammi—son/grandson of Abraham's nephew Lot (Gen 39:17).

Chapter 1 points out how Ammon—though often ignored or slighted in studies up to the mid-20th century—increasingly receives scholarly attention. It also shows a need for applying the results of archaeological research to facilitate a fuller understanding of the biblical text.

Chapter 2 outlines recent trends in the relationship between the fields of biblical studies and archaeology. Criteria are set forth for evaluating published works combining emphases on the fields of biblical studies and archaeology, especially as they relate to the study of the Ammonites. The term "archaeological context" is examined and differentiated from "archaeological commentary."

Chapter 3 tabulates all references to the Ammonites in the Hebrew Bible and compares...
key references to those in the LXX. A study of the familial relationships within the courts of David and Solomon suggests interesting possibilities for identifying a number of interrelationships which existed between the royal houses of Ammon and Israel. Many Ammonite references cluster around two important themes—tribal/kindred loyalty and honor for Yahweh's temple (or a lack thereof).

Chapter 4 gives a topographical and archaeological background for selected Ammonite references. Ammon's heartland (near modern Amman) was centered around the head waters of the Jabbok River (Nahal Zarqa), strategically located along important trade corridors—the north-south King's Highway and the east-west routes to Jerusalem and to the Canaanite coast. Districts of Ammonite control are identified, and an archaeological summary is given for each biblical site with Ammonite connections and for individuals identified as being Ammonites. Occupations of Ammonite people, the status of women in Ammonite society, and interrelations between Ammon and other contemporary states are explored. The comparative richness of Ammon's cultural heritage and its rise to relative prosperity as a vassal state are chronicled. Evidence of Ammonite cult and religion—including the existence Ammonite deities Milkom and Astarte—is depicted on seals and figurines, and in the Amman Citadel Inscription which included Milkom's divine oracle to be displayed publicly on the acropolis. Ammon's inclusion in the Hebrew prophetic oracles is briefly mentioned.

Chapter 5 summarizes the interrelationship between biblical references to Ammon and the results of archaeological research. The archaeological evidence is shown to be consistent with the biblical portrayal of Ammon in the Hebrew Bible. However, additional in-depth study of the importance of Ammon in Hebrew prophetic literature is recommended.

Subject Area
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Milkom and Molech are named in the Hebrew Bible as the gods of Ammon. The people of this kingdom are called "Children of Ammon" or "Ammonites". Ammon maintained its independence from the Assyrian empire through tribute to the Assyrian king, at a time when nearby kingdoms were being raided or conquered. [3] Inscriptions describe the Ammonite king Baasha ben Ruhubi's army fighting alongside Ahab of Israel and Syrian allies against Shalmaneser III at the Battle of Qarqar in 853 BC, possibly as vassals of Hadadezer, the Aramaean king of Damascus. The Ammonites maintained their claim to part of Transjordan, after it was occupied by the Israelites who obtained it from Sihon. Archaeology and history indicate that Ammon flourished during the Neo-Babylonian Empire period. This contradicts the view, dominant for decades, that Transjordan was either destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar II, or suffered a rapid decline following Judah's destruction by that king. Throughout the Bible, the Ammonites and Israelites are portrayed as mutual antagonists. During the Exodus, the Israelites were prohibited by the Ammonites from passing through their lands. The Ammonites maintained their claim to part of Transjordan, after it was occupied by the Israelites who obtained it from Sihon. During the days of Jephthah, the Ammonites occupied the lands east of the River Jordan and started to invade Israelite lands west of the river. The Ammonites presented a serious problem to the Phariscees because many marriages with Ammonite (and Moabite) wives had taken place in the days of Nehemiah (). The men had married women of the various nations without conversion, which made the children not Jewish. The legitimacy of David's claim to royalty was disputed on account of his descent from Ruth, the Moabite. Transjordan in the Bible, an area of land in the Southern Levant lying east of the Jordan River that is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. Perea (region). Oultrejordain. Near East—in the context of modern archaeological and historical scholarship. 07/24/2016 07:56:28 PM UTC. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/B/8f/Semitic_languages.svg.