

teries of the Bible, and one which took Dr. Glueck years to solve, was that of King Solomon's Mines. The passage in *Deuteronomy* 8:9 reads: "... for the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land . . . , whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou canst dig copper."

Engineers scanning the hills of Palestine were dubious. Copper vessels had been found, but no evidence that copper had been mined in the Holy Land. This was puzzling because they knew that copper and iron had played a vital part in building Solomon's glittering empire. But to Dr. Glueck, finding the mines was simply a matter of looking in the right place. From his knowledge of the Bible, he concluded the most likely spot would be the Wadi Arabah, the great rift between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqabah, which is the eastern arm of the Red Sea.

It occurred to him that present-day water holes could be clues to the missing mines, so he decided to explore every water hole in the Wadi Arabah. It was a brilliantly correct hunch. Buried under the sands, around or near one water hole after another, he came upon great piles of slag, smelting furnaces and miners' huts. He then discovered others in waterless regions in the same area.

Following the literal description in the Bible that Ezion-Geber was located "on the shore of the Red Sea beside Elath in the land of

Edom," he discovered and excavated Solomon's port city. It was exactly where the Bible said it was. No one previously had thought to heed the literal statement of its location.

For the last three years, Dr. Glueck has been engaged in what he believes may be his greatest adventure. He found himself challenged by a region which seemed to have no promise for an archeologist—the Negev, the great empty desert region of Southern Israel. In this area Abraham had once dwelt. Through it, too, the children of Israel had passed. Yet competent experts were sure there would be no traces of these early sojourners.

Besides the probable futility of searching in such a place, there was another reason why Dr. Glueck was urged not to go. He was warned that the Negev was a disputed region, through which Arab raiders prowled: he would be in danger there. The prospect did not deter the determined archeologist. His assistants would go armed, he said, and he himself would carry a rifle.

From a base of operations at Sde Boker, south of Beersheba, Dr. Glueck set out to explore this stark, desert land, his expeditions sponsored by the Louis Rabinowitz Foundation and Hebrew Union College. Soon he was finding pottery and terraces and intricate systems of water conservation and ruins of dozens of ancient stone villages and towns—evidences of



flourishing civilizations that had once inhabited the Negev.

Here, for instance, had dwelt the Nabateans, a Semite people speaking Aramaic, the language that Jesus spoke, but who also learned to use Greek and Latin. Dr. Glueck marvelled at their accomplishments such as a water course that wound around four mountains to reach fields in need of irrigation. But his greatest thrill came when he picked up pieces of pottery that had once comprised a jug with pierced-ear handles. For here were the remains of a utensil nearly 4,000 years old. An entire ancient town came to light, becoming perhaps the oldest link in the Negev with Bible history—an echo from the remote past chronicled in *Genesis*. Along the streets of this town, Abraham himself may have walked!

As he discovered one site after another, Dr. Glueck pieced together another ancient Biblical story. In *Genesis* 14 is an account of Chedorlaomer, an ancient King of Elam, who "smote the land." Depicting him as a mighty warrior, the Bible account indicated that he destroyed city after city, from Syria through Transjordan across the Negev and into Sinai. It was entirely improbable, scholars had always said. Yet now, as Dr. Glueck explored successive sites, ancient dwelling places appeared—a clear trail of them, through the Negev. And every one

of those which he identified by their pottery as being of Abraham's time had evidently fallen in the path of Chedorlaomer's destructive raids!

Though Dr. Glueck does not think of this discovery as being greatly important in itself, he sees it as stirring new evidence of historical accuracy in the Bible, even in ancient events heretofore discounted. "Here is vivid indication of the remarkable historical memory recorded in the Bible," he says. "The story of this invasion must have been written down at least 1,000 years after it happened—yet I have seen the truth of it in the Negev ruins."

Dr. Glueck feels that all he and his colleagues have done only scratches the surface of the great work that remains to be accomplished in Biblical lands. He estimates that merely excavating and studying the sites of the hundreds of cities he himself has discovered would keep scores of archeologists busy for a century. Yet whole great regions remain to be searched with the patience needed to make them yield their stories.

Even though, in his lifetime, Dr. Glueck can uncover only a fraction of the riches still hidden beneath the sands and stones of Bible lands, his work has lighted the way for future scholars seeking, as he has done, to illuminate ancient history as told in the Bible.

"Reprinted by American Christian Palestine Committee, 471 Park Avenue, New York 22, with permission of CORONET magazine".