

Background



Petra

Traveled to today by way of the King's Highway, Petra was established sometime around the 6th century BC by the Nabataeans (a nomadic tribe settling in the area and establishing a commercial empire). Herod the Great tried to conquer the Nabataean Capital city of Petra; however, Petra remained in the control of the Nabataeans until sometime around 100 AD when it was eventually overtaken by the Romans. Evidence of Roman life in Petra can still be seen to this day. After the Romans moved on, some others inhabited Petra during the Byzantine period. The crusaders also built structures here during the 12th century.

Petra is a formidable rock fortress located about 4 hours south of Amman on the edge of a mountainous region in Jordan. This rock structure and its unique features make it a red colored sandstone city of natural protection against enemies. Within Petra are carved tombs, temples, and a treasury, along with many other sites of interest:

- **The Siq (Canyon)** is the entrance to the site. Nabataean tombs can be seen carved into the rock of this stone "canyon." There are steep cliffs on the left and right winding down this path. Before the Siq is a tunnel used to divert water from flooding the canyon path. Also along the path can be seen a series of channels designed to bring water into the city as well as a Roman road visible at various places along the path. A few places along the Siq are very narrow. As one approaches the end of the rock canyon, through the cleft of the rock can be seen the Khazneh.
- **The Khazneh (Treasury)** is, by far, the most famous of the structures in this rock fortress city. Use in films and pictured in several books, it is said to have been a hiding place for treasure. From within the treasury looking out through the entrance, the Siq can clearly be seen.
- **The Marketplace** is the broad place from the Treasury that leads to the main street with traces of Roman architecture. This is the "Wadi Musa" (or "Valley of Moses"). There are remnants of a theater, paved Roman streets, and columns.
- **The Roman Theater** was a symbol of Roman construction and life. The theater was a place of gathering and oratory performances.
- **Various Tombs** are located throughout Petra. Some are from the time of the Nabataeans, some from Roman times. There are Corinthian tombs, Byzantine tombs, tombs for royalty, as well as others.

Petra is referred to in the Bible as:

[2 Kings 14:7](#) ("Sela")

[Isaiah 16:1](#) ("Sela")

[Judges 1:36](#) ("the rock")

[2 Chronicles 25:12](#) ("top of the rock")

[Obadiah 3](#) (alluded to "clefts of the rock")

[Jeremiah 49:16](#) ("clefts of the rock")

[2 Corinthians 11:32-33](#) (Paul mentions one of their kings)

There are many who believe that Petra will be the place "in the wilderness" and "in the mountains" where God will protect a fleeing remnant of Israel during the future.

[Daniel 11:41](#)

[Revelation 12:14-16](#)

[Daniel 9:27](#)

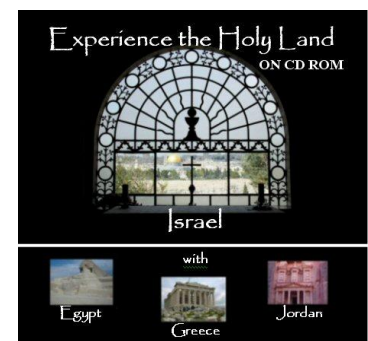
[Matthew 24:15-22](#)

[Luke 21:20-24](#)

[Zechariah 13:8-9](#)

[Micah 2:12](#)

[Isaiah 26:20-21](#)



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