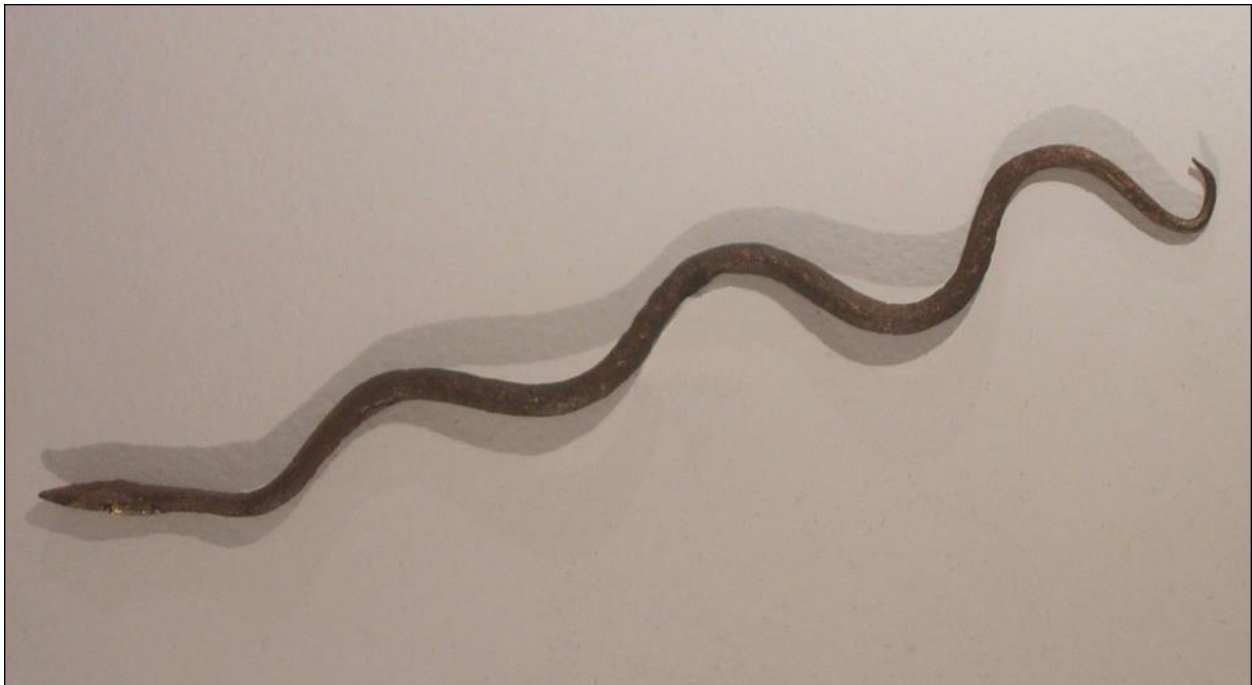


TIMNA & EILAT

Timna. The Timna Valley is about twenty miles north of the Gulf of Aqabah and the city Eilat. The copper mining in this area goes back to 4000 B.C. The Egyptians capitalized on copper mining, and they established a trade route through the Timna Valley. Later, the Midianites also got involved in mineral excavation. Mining techniques are described in Job 28, and verse 2 of that text mentions copper. According to Deuteronomy 8:9, the Israelites would be able to dig copper out of the hills of the Promised Land. During the Wilderness Wandering, which took Israel near Timna, Moses was commanded by God to make a bronze serpent on a pole for the healing of the people (Num. 21:8). Unfortunately, this image came to be worshiped as an idol; it was known as Nehushtan (2 Kings 18:4). A copper serpent was found at Timna, and it is on display at the Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv (along with other artifacts from the area).



Copper Serpent
(Eretz Israel Museum, Tel Aviv)

Beno Rothenberg reportedly discovered 10,000 copper mines and smelting camps at Timna. (For photos, see www.biblewalks.com/sites/Timna.html.) Another interesting find is the Temple of Hathor, an Egyptian shrine built during the reign of Pharaoh Seti I. Hathor was the goddess of mining.



Temple of Hathor

There is a detailed model of the tabernacle located at Timna. (For photos, see www.bibleplaces.com/tabernacle.htm.) Visitors can walk around the courtyard and see the altar and the bronze basin. They can walk inside the holy place and see the lampstand, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. The most holy place contains the ark of the covenant. A representation of the high priest (Aaron) in his divinely-ordained garments is also on display. The tabernacle was assembled and disassembled many times by the Levites throughout the Wilderness Wandering. The Kohathites carried the sacred furniture on poles, the Gershonites moved the curtains, and the Merarites transported the framework (Num. 4:1-33).

Today, the Timna Valley is known for family fun with paddleboats, bicycles, hiking, rappelling, rock climbing, and a souvenir shop.

Eilat. Eilat is the southernmost city in Israel, located in the Negev Desert on the northern tip of the right arm of the Red Sea (the Gulf of Aqaba). Eilat, or Elath, is mentioned several times in the Old Testament. During the Wilderness Wandering, the Israelites “turned from the Arabah road, which comes up from Elath and Ezion Geber” (Deut. 2:8). Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion Geber near Elath, and his crews brought gold back from Ophir (1 Kings 9:26-28;

2 Chron. 8:17-18). King Azariah of Judah built Elath and restored it to Judah (2 Kings 14:22). Later, King Rezin overtook Elath for Aram, clearing it of Judeans (2 Kings 16:6).

Today, Eilat has a population of over 50,000 people. There is very little rainfall (about one to two inches per year) and the temperature is hot, with 360 sunny days per year. It is a busy port and popular resort, known for its beaches, nightlife, and desert landscapes.