

The peak of Mt. Hermon, 9,200 feet above sea level, bears snow year round. It is the southernmost peak of the Anti-Lebanese mountains. In Arabic the name is therefore Jebel et-Talj, or "Mountain of Snow." Mt. Hermon marks the northern limit of the conquests of Joshua east of the Jordan and of the early Israelite expansion (Joshua 11:17; Judges 3:3; Deuteronomy 3:8, 4:48). Mt. Hermon towers above the Valley of the Lebanon (Joshua 11:17) and dominates the land of Mizpah where the Hivites lived (Joshua 11:3-9). According to Deuteronomy 3:9 the inhabitants of Sidon called Mt. Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites called it Senir. The name "Senir" is known in the Egyptian execration texts (curses) and in certain 16th-century B.C.E. documents from ancient Ugarit in Syria. Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria, the king to whom Israel paid tribute in the eighth century B.C.E. (2 Chronicles 28:21), knew the mountain as Saniru. A sanctuary of Baal-Hermon was built here (Judges 3:3; 1 Chronicles 5:23). In the Roman period, a temple was built on Mt. Hermon, perhaps to Zeus. The scant remains of this temple can be viewed today near the snow line.