

## What is the significance of Tekoa in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Tekoa-in-the-Bible.html>

Tekoa/Tekoah was a small town in Judah, about 12 miles south of Jerusalem and about 5 miles south of Bethlehem. It is mentioned several times in the Old Testament.

The name Tekoa appears twice in the genealogies in 1 Chronicles: "After Hezron died in Caleb Ephrathah, Abijah the wife of Hezron bore him Ashhur the father of Tekoa" (1 Chronicles 2:24). Then, "Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah" (1 Chronicles 4:5). A cursory reading might give the impression that Tekoa is the name of an individual. However, Tekoa is not mentioned again in the genealogies. In fact, Ashhur, "the father of Tekoa," has several children, and none of them are named Tekoa: "Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah. Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni and Haahashtari. These were the descendants of Naarah. The sons of Helah: Zereth, Zohar, Ethnan, and Koz" (1 Chronicles 4:5-8). For this reason, it is most likely that Ashhur is the "father of Tekoa" in the sense that he founded the town of Tekoa; the Tekoa in the genealogy is not a person but a place. (Tekoa, however, is a name in use in Modern Hebrew for either boys or girls.)

Other mentions of the town of Tekoa occur in the following places:

In 2 Samuel 14, when Joab is trying to get David to bring Absalom back from exile, he summons a wise woman from Tekoa to approach the king with a story that ultimately convinces David to do what Joab wants. Tekoa is mentioned in this chapter in verses 2, 4, and 9.

Both 2 Samuel 23:26 and 1 Chronicles 11:28 list "Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa" as one of

David's mighty men.

Second Chronicles 11:6 lists Tekoa as one of the cities that Rehoboam fortified for defense.

In 2 Chronicles 20 Jehosaphat leads the armies of Judah against Moab and Ammon, but he was simply to lead them in praise and let the Lord fight the battle. "Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, 'Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful'" (verse 20). The Desert of Tekoa would have been the arid place around the town Tekoa.

Tekoa is perhaps best known as the hometown of the prophet Amos. His prophecy begins this way: "The words of Amos, one of the shepherds of Tekoa—the vision he saw concerning Israel two years before the earthquake, when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash was king of Israel" (Amos 1:1). Tekoa is in the southern kingdom of Judah, but Amos was sent to prophesy to the northern kingdom of Israel. Amos prophesied against many of Israel's neighbors but finally against Israel as well, showing that her behavior was no better than that of her pagan neighbors.

Later, Jeremiah prophesied the fall of Jerusalem, mentioning Tekoa in the process: "Flee for safety, people of Benjamin! Flee from Jerusalem! Sound the trumpet in Tekoa! Raise the signal over Beth Hakkerem! For disaster looms out of the north, even terrible destruction" (Jeremiah 6:1). This warning may have been more poignant if Tekoa was still part of the defensive city network established by Rehoboam. (The word Tekoa literally means "trumpet," so Jeremiah is using a play on words.)

Nehemiah 3:5 and 27 report that men of Tekoa helped to repair the wall of Jerusalem, although the nobles from there refused to help.

Tekoa was not a major city, but it is mentioned several times in conjunction with some significant episodes in the history of Israel and Judah.