

Ancient long distance travelers were dependent upon having adequate water during their journeys, which could take days or months. This was especially true when traveling through deserts. In the case of caravans of animals carrying heavy loads, the need of large amounts of water was extremely important. That made the oasis of Tema a popular and indispensable stop for Sabeen traders traversing across the major north-south in the Arabian desert. Notice the Bible's passing reference to the oasis of Tema:



The Bible refers to the oasis of Tema accurately.

**“The caravans of Tema look for water, the traveling merchants of Sheba look in hope. They are distressed, because they had been confident; they arrive there, only to be disappointed”—Job 6:19,20 NIV**

The Bible's reference in Job to Tema is to the modern Tayma, or Taima, an oasis, about 250 miles (402 KM) southeast of Ezion-Geber, sat at the crossroads of two major caravan routes, one north-south, the other east-west. Camels could travel up to a week without water, but sooner or later they had to have water. If a caravan needing water came to a watering hole, or oasis, and, for some reason, found it dry, disaster loomed. Their hopes of finding water were dashed, and found themselves in dire straits , facing the prospect of dying of thirst.

Job was likely familiar with the caravans of Sheba, as well as the oasis of Tema, either with firsthand experience himself, or through accurate reports.. His wealth (**Job 1:3**) may have afforded him opportunity to trade with the caravans of Sheba, or he may have organized his own caravans which through the oasis of Tema. Job may have even passed through, or traveled to, Tema himself, since he lived **“in the land of Uz” (Job 1:1)**, Uz was likely near

Edom in northern Arabia. Edom was about 300 miles northwest of Tema.

How was Job using the oasis of Tema (**Job 6:19,20**) to illustrate something? Let's see:

**“Job’s three friends . . . met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him”—Job 2 :11 NIV**

Is this what they did? No, their discouraging words to Job were so harsh and unkind that he called them **“miserable comforters” (Job 16:2 NIV)**.

**“Anyone who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty”—Job 6:14 NIV**

Job here described his disappointment over the lack of compassion and cutting remarks of his “friends”. The point of his figure of speech using caravans arriving at the oasis of Tema only to find it dry, was that he expected his “friends” would comfort him rather than hurt and attack him, saying, in effect, that his friends were “all dried up”. So Job told his “friends”, **“Now you too have proved to be of no help” (Job 6:21 NIV)**.

The oasis of Tema was a vital water source for many travelers and caravans, just as the Bible implies. It was, and is, a real place. Contrast this with places mentioned in the Book of Mormon, which have zero evidence of ever having existed. As Jesus said, Bible **“Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35 NKJV)**, whereas the Book of Mormon is like **“broken cisterns that cannot hold water” (Jeremiah 2:13 NIV)**, of truth, that is.