



# ISRAEL

## FIELD BOOK



Galyn Wiemers Generation Word  
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## **ISRAEL**

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# Ashkelon

12 miles north of Gaza and 32 miles south of Joppa. One of the five leading Philistine cities mentioned in the Bible: Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron Gaza, Gath. Philistines settled on the coastal plain 1200 BC. The name Ashkelon comes from the word “shekel” since Ashkelon was a major trading center located on the international highway (see back pages of this book). It was 150 acres, the largest of the Philistine’s cities and the only one built on the coast due to sand.



In the 1880’s Lady Hester Stanhope began excavation. Lawrence Stager with Harvard University began excavating Ashkelon in 1985. Civilizations beginning with the Neolithic Age (8300-4500 BC) have been uncovered.

**In the Bible: Judges 1:18**, Judah captured, but lost Ashkelon; **Judges 14:19**, Samson killed 30 men from Ashkelon and took their clothes to pay a gambling debt; **1 Samuel 6:17**, provided a gold rat and a gold hemorrhoid along with the other four cities; **2 Samuel 1:20** – David’s lyrics asked that Saul and Jonathan’s death not be announced in Ashkelon’s streets; **Amos 1:8**, Ashkelon is rebuked by Amos for selling Israelites into slavery.



The sloped wall of the rampart called a glacis would have supported a large city wall. Mediterranean Sea in back.



Toni stands by the dark mud bricks of the Philistine gate. The lighter colored bricks are reconstruction.

# Arad

Arad set in the eastern Negev and monitored the road that connected the hill country of Judah to Edom.

Eighteen miles NE of Beersheba. In the Early Bronze Age (3300-2300) Arad was a large, fortified city 30 acres in size. Arad reached its peak 800 years before Abraham with a population of 2,500. At the end of the days of the Judean kings in the Iron Age Arad was a small fortress.



Ruth Amiran and Yohanan Aharoni excavated the city in 1962. The walls from the Early Bronze Age can be seen with the remains of semi-circular towers attached to them. Israel rebuilt the city over the Bronze Age site to protect its border with Edom. Israel's city was basically a courtyard encircled with residential buildings. Solomon built a fortress here. This fortress contains the high place, water system, storehouses and homes. Over 100 ostraca (potsherds with writing) were found here. One said "House of Jehovah" and a second mentions the King of Judah and Edom's threat. The Edomites destroyed Israel's Arad fortress. Excavations at Arad uncovered a complete temple made similar to the Jerusalem temple. This temple would be one of the high places of worship forbidden in Scripture, but still used for a couple hundred years. The altar, the outer court, the holy place and the most holy place can be seen.

**In the Bible: Numbers 21:1-3**, Arad was a Canaanite stronghold that prevented Israel from moving north. The king of Arad was defeated after he attacked Israel near the end of their 40 years in the wilderness. Israel destroyed the local cities and named the area Hormah or "destruction."

**Judges 1:16**, The Kenites, descendants of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, moved from Jericho to Arad.



Two stones (in back of Most Holy Place) and two incense altars (on steps in Holy Place) for Yahweh and Asherah worship



This wall is 10 feet wide and runs for 3,900 feet and is from the Early Bronze Age (3300-2300 BC).

# Arbel (Caves of Arbel)

Elevation 594 feet above sea level and 1283 feet above the Sea of Galilee. The cliff of Arbel overlooks the Sea of Galilee and provides an excellent panorama of the Sea and the plain of Gennesaret. Below the villages on the shore of the Sea of Galilee can be seen.

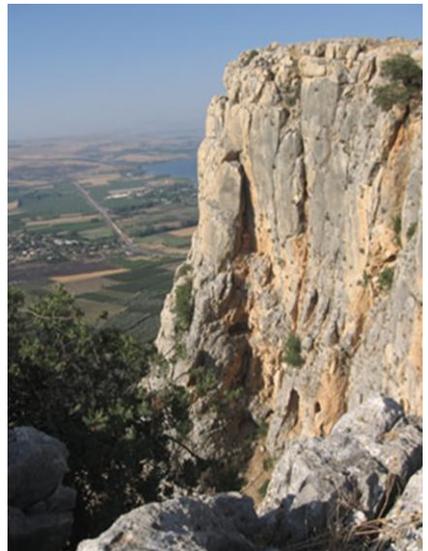


The Syrian General Baccies attacked Jews hiding in these caves in 161 BC during the Maccabean revolt. Herod the Great burned out criminals from these caves around 38 BC when he was first given jurisdiction over Galilee as a young man serving under his father.

At the top on the SW side of the cliff are ruins of a Byzantine village with a synagogue excavated by H. Kohl and C. Watzinger in 1905. These ruins are located in the center of the modern Moshav Arbel and must be entered by foot from a street inside the Moshav. A Moshav is a cooperative agricultural community of individual farms settled by Zionists.



Arbel as seen from the Sea of Galilee looking west. Below: On west side the caves can be seen.



Arbel as seen from the top looking north with the Plain of Gennesaret in the background. The north edge of Sea of Galilee can be seen.

# Avdat

Established by the Nabateans in 100's BC. In 106 AD the Nabatean empire, including Avdat, was placed under Roman rule by Trajan. Nabateans established oasis settlements and a trading network between these settlements between Syria and Arabia from the Euphrates to the Red Sea. Avdat was one of the Nabatean's establishments on the Spice Route.



Avdat peaked during the Byzantine period beginning in 325 AD until Avdat was destroyed by the Persians in 614 AD. The Nabateans established cities in places where there was not enough rain to support a population. But, the Nabateans carefully managed their water supply and grew rich on the trade routes. They channeled all water into cisterns. Avdat has four wine presses used to press the grapes they amazingly grew.

These presses can be seen today along with the channels where the wine flowed into a collection pit.

The Nabateans became Christian when Constantine converted. Remains of two churches can be seen: 1) the North Church from the 300's; 2) Church of St. Theodore from the 400's.



Toni looks over a wall of a wine press she stands in to view the channel and spout that led to the collection pit.



Galyn stands in the North Church where the speaker addressed the congregation in the days of Constantine. The altar is on the platform in the back.



Toni approaches one of the entrances to the city of Avdat.

# Azekah

Azekah guarded the west edge of the Elah Valley. It sets in the Shephelah on a high hill overlooking the Elah Valley guarding the Israelite/Philistine border. Gath is 5.2 miles west of Azekah and Hebron is 16 miles to the southeast..



English archaeologists Frederick Bliss and R.A. Stewart Macalister excavated Azekah in 1898-1900 and uncovered the water system, Bar Kokhba revolt hideouts and the famous lamelech seal impressions on the handles of jars. “Lamelech” (LMLK) refers to the ancient Hebrew word *lmlk* which means “belonging to the king.” (See page 155)

Recent excavation 1 mile east of Azekah at Khirbet Qeiyafa has uncovered a city wall, a typical four-chamber gate and an ostrakon (a piece of broken pottery with an inscription) from the Iron Age including 1000-900 BC.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 10:10-11**, Joshua pursued the Canaanite kings “all the way to Azekah” when they attacked Gibeon. A hailstorm helped destroy these Canaanite/Amorite kings; **Joshua 15:35**, Azekah is allotted to Judah; **1 Samuel 17:1**, David killed Goliath in the Elah Valley with the Philistines army “between Socoh and Azekiah”; **2 Chronicles 11:9**, Rehoboam fortified Azekah; **Jeremiah 34:7**, Azekah along with Lachish and Jerusalem, was one of the last three cities to fall to Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC.



View from Azekah looking into the Valley of Elah where David killed Goliath.



Toni holds a card in Azekah to identify locations mentioned in 1 Samuel 17:1 (David vs. Goliath)

# Beersheba

This is the southern edge of the land of Israel in the OT. The Bible describes the land of Israel as being “from Dan to Beersheba” (Jd. 20:1; 1 Sam.3:20; 2 Sam. 3:10, 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25). Underground dwellings from Neolithic and Chalcolithic eras are SW of the city along the wadi. Abraham settled near Beersheba. Beersheba



was under constant attacks from the Philistines and Amalekites until David secured the land. Egyptian pharaoh Sheshonq destroyed it in 925 BC. A four horned altar made of forbidden cut stones was discovered from around 700-800 BC. T Sennacherib complete destroyed the city around 701 BC. Archaeology has revealed a city gate with three pillars and two guard posts on each side. A deep well has been found and dated from the 1100's BC and could be the well Abraham dug. It does lay outside the city walls. Once inside the city there is an open court yard with streets that split off into the city. There are three storehouses similar to those at Hazor and Megiddo.

**In the Bible:** **Genesis 21:14**, Hagar and Ishmael wander in the wilderness of Beersheba; **Genesis 21:25-34**, Abraham paid seven ewe lambs and took an oath with Abimelech for ownership of a well he had dug. It was called “well of the oath” or “well of seven” which is “Beersheba.” **Genesis 26:26-33**, Isaac argued with Abimelech concerning a well. Isaac then dug a well that same day and named it “Beersheba.” **Genesis 28:10**, Jacob stole the birthright while his family camped at Beersheba. **Genesis 46:1-7**, Jacob stopped to offer sacrifices at Beersheba before leaving the land for Egypt. **Joshua 15:28; 19:2**, Beersheba was in Judah’s land, but given to Simeon. **1 Samuel 8:1-2**, Samuel’s sons judged Israel in Beersheba. **1 Kings 19:1-4**, Elijah stopped at Beersheba when he fled Jezebel and left his servant here. **2 Kings 24:8**, King Josiah tore down Beersheba’s high place. **Nehemiah 11:27**, returning captives resettled Beersheba.



An exact replica of the four-horned altar discovered by Yohanan Aharoni (1919-1976). Original at Israel Museum in Jerusalem



Toni descends into an ancient water cistern in Beer Sheba

# Besor (Wadi Besor)

This wadi drains into the Mediterranean Sea near Gaza. This is the southern border of the Negev and northern border of the Wilderness of Zin. Wadi Besor, or Nahal Besor, is one of two major wadis that drains western Negev into to sea. There are seven major ancient cities located along this source of water.



**In the Bible:** 1 Samuel 30:9-10, David left 200 weary men here while he took 400 others in pursuit of the Amalekites who had raided cities in the Negev including David's city of Ziklag.



Besor, a sign along the road identifies the Wadi Besor.



Wadi Besor will fill up with flowing water when it rains.

# Bet-Guvrin (Mareshah)

Archaeological excavations began in 1900 by Bliss and Macalister of the British Palestine Exploration Fund. Since that time there have been major excavations in 1902 of the burial caves; surveys in the 1960-1970's; and the Department of Antiquities began excavation in the 1980's.



**In the Bible:** **Joshua 15:44**, Maresha is mentioned as one of the cities of Judah; **2 Chronicles 11:5-9**, After Shishak's invasion Rehoboam "built cities for defense in Judah...and Gath, and Maresha and Ziph."

**2 Chronicles 8:8-10**, Zerah, king of northern Israel, attacked Judah and was defeated by King Asa near Maresha;

**History:** After Israel was deported to Babylon the area was settled by Edomites. People from Sidon settled here in the 300's and the Greeks and Hellenistic culture followed. John Hyrcanus I of the Hasmonean line conquered Maresha in 113 BC, destroyed the city and converted the people to Judaism. The Parthian's destroyed it totally in 40 BC. At that time Bet Guvrin became the major city and is referred to in 68 AD by Josephus as being conquered by Vespasian.

**Sites to see here:** 1) Northern Burial Site from 200 BC; 2) Water Cistern from 200 BC converted to raise pigeons, but visited by Polish soldiers in 1943 who left their names; 3) Columbarium for raising pigeons for food, fertilizer and rituals; 4) Bath Cave with 20 baths hewn in 200's BC; 5) Oil Press Cave; 6) Hellenistic House; 7) Water Cisterns; 8) North Western Tower of Acropolis that covers a wall from the Judean Kingdom.; 9) Sidonian Burial Caves with restored drawings and inscriptions; 10) Church of St. Anne an original Byzantine church rebuilt by the Crusaders.; 11) Bell shaped caves which are the remains of 800 little quarries to extract marble.



Sidonian Burial Caves from 200 BC with gabled niches for the dead.



Inscriptions and paintings show life and art from 2,200 years ago.

# Bethany

Bethany is a village on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives. There are several places named Bethany including the site where John the Baptist baptized on the other side of the Jordan to the east. This Bethany is 2 miles east of Jerusalem. Jesus stayed here in Bethany when visiting Jerusalem (Mt.21:17; Mk.11:11; Lk.10:38) at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.



Today Bethany is a Muslim and Christian Arab village of about 3,600 people. In the Old Testament it is called Ananiah (Nehemiah 11:32) in the land of Benjamin, but is called “Beth Ananiah”, or “Bethany” in the New Testament. Eusebius the church historian from around 350 AD and the Bordeaux pilgrim who visited Jerusalem in 333 AD mention the tomb of Lazarus. This site was called the Lazarium by Egeria, the pilgrim, in 381 when she wrote:

*“At 1:00 everyone arrives at the Lazarium, which is Bethany... by the time they arrive there, so many people have collected that they fill not only the Lazarium itself, but all the fields around.”*

In 490 Jerome visited the Lazarium which was later destroyed by an earthquake, but replaced by a church before 518 which survived until the Crusaders. In 1143 the Crusader King Fulk built a convent and repaired the old church left from 500 AD and added a new west church. When the Crusaders fell in 1187 the West church was destroyed, but the tomb and the barrel vault that held the tomb survived. The old church from 500 AD was damaged but survived. Greek monks are reported to be seen taking care of the tomb/chapel in 1347. A mosque was built on the site in 1384, and in 1500's a mosque was built in the vault where the tomb was located. Christians cut a new entrance into the vault to access the tomb at this time. In 1952 a new church was built over the old 500 AD church. This new church covers the west end of the 500 AD church where some of the original mosaic floor is seen and part of the west façade with its 3 doorways. Part of the apse of the Lazarium can still be seen beneath trap doors.

**In the Bible:** John 11:1, Marry, Martha and Lazarus lived in Bethany; Matthew 26:6-13, John 12:1-8, Jesus is anointed by Mary at the house of Simon the leper; Mark 11:1-11, Disciples get Jesus a donkey between Bethany and Bethphage; Matthew 21:18, Jesus curses fig tree near here; Luke 24:50-53, Jesus ascends to heaven from the mount of Lives near “the vicinity of Bethany.”

- Pictures needs to be taken and placed here -

# Bethlehem

A small village setting in rock 2,500 ft. above sea level east of the main road that ran through Judean Hill Country. Average annual rainfall allowed good agricultural growth of grain. The name Bethlehem means “house of bread.” It bordered the Judean Wilderness to the east which provided pasture for sheep and goats. It was surrounded by vineyards and trees (almond, fig).



Boaz owned fields here and married Ruth who gave him Obed, David's grandfather. Today Bethlehem encircles the site of Christ's birth with a population of around 22,000 plus suburbs. In 135 AD Hadrian built a pagan shrine over a grotto honoring place of Jesus' birth. Instead of eradicating the memory of Jewish Messiah, Hadrians' actions marked the location for the Byzantine's to build the Church of the Nativity in 326 AD. The church had 3 entrances (2 are blocked today). The remaining Byzantine door is also blocked, but the original outline of 326 is still visible with only a small entrance that prevents looters on horseback. Inside is a long corridor with 4 rows of 10 pink limestone columns 19.5 feet tall under 11 arched windows with Crusader mosaics from 1100's AD. The cave of Jesus' birth can be accessed under the altar down stairs on either side. A recess in the wall of the cave has a silver star on the floor marking the place of Jesus' birth.

**In the Bible:** **Gn.35:16**, Rachel buried near Bethlehem; **Ruth**, account of Ruth/Boaz during harvest; **1 Sm.16:1; 17:12**, David born, anointed here, pastures sheep in Judean Wilderness; **2 Sm.23:13-17**, David desires water from Bethlehem well during battle; **Mic.5:2**, Messiah to be born here **Lk.2:1**



Mosaic floor from 325 in Church of the Nativity, the oldest surviving church. It was not destroyed in 614 by Persians.



19.5' polished limestone columns of 325 AD with corinthian capitals covered with frescoes (pigment melted into wax) of the Apostles by Crusaders in 1100 AD

# Bethsaida

Bethsaida means “house of fishing.” It is located on the north shore of Galilee which has receded over time. Herod Philip the Tetrarch rebuilt Bethsaida and called it Julia after Caesar Augustus’ daughter. It was situated in the fertile delta of the upper Jordan River right on the north shore of the Sea at the cross roads of the major trade routes that ran:



- north to Caesarea Philippi and on to Damascus
- South to Gadara and Gilead
- East to Aram
- West to Capernaum, Genneserat, Magdala to the main route (Via Maris) which went south through the land of Israel towards Egypt

In the Old Testament during the Iron Age Bethsaida was in the land of Geshur and bordered on the tribe of Asher’s east side. Due to the trade location, the fishing industry and the fertile soil there are many ancient villages and sites near Bethsaida so it was a difficult to identify as a biblical site. A large Iron Age gate that led to a paved square in front of a huge palace has been discovered here which would make this fortified city (20 acres) the site of the capital city of Geshur known as Zer (Zed). It was destroyed by Tiglath-Pileser in 734 BC, but Josephus writes that it was rebuilt in the 200’s BC and he calls it Bethsaida. It was given to Herod Philip in 30 AD who fortified it, called it Julia and was buried there in 34 AD.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 13:11-13**, the Geshurites and Maachathites dwelt among Israel; **2 Samuel 3:3**, David’s wife Maacha, the mother of Absalom, was from here; **2 Samuel 13:37-38**, Absalom fled to stay with his father Talmi and Grandfather Ammihud, king of Geshur, for three years; **2 Kings 15:29**, Destroyed in Pekah’s day by Tiglathpileser; **Matthew 11:20-22**, Jesus rebukes Bethsaida; **Mark 8:22-26**, Blind man healed outside of Bethsaida; **Luke 9:10-17**, five thousand fed near Bethsaida; **John 1:44**, Bethsaida is the hometown of Peter, Andrew and Philip..



The Fisherman’s House from the NT times is marked along with the winemaker’s house , etc.



Need to get better pictures of Bethsaida. Here is a photo of Galyn looking through some rocks in Bethsaida. (Photo by Toni.)

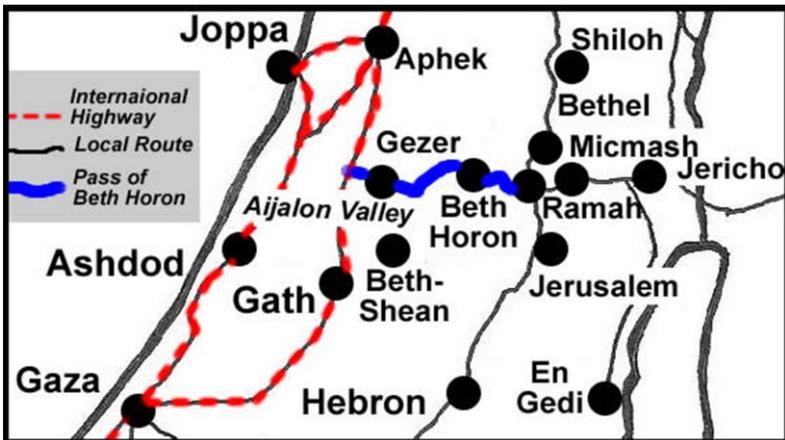
# Beth Horon

Beth Horon is the name of two adjacent towns 2 miles apart: Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon. They are 10 miles NW of Jerusalem and 23 miles SE of Joppa. Both were located on the strategically important Gibeon to Aijalon road. They protected the way into the hill country from the Coastal Plain through the Valley of Aijalon.



The road that ascends through the Valley of Aijalon known as the “Pass of Beth Horon” or “Ascent of Beth Horon, becomes narrow and rocky as it nears Lower Beth Horon. The elevation between Lower and Upper Beth Horon changes 800 feet in less than two miles. (1,240 feet to 2,022 feet) In 166 BC Judas Maccabaeus fought the Seleucid forces for General Seron at the Battle of Beth Horon. Seron was defeated as he tried to march his troops in phalanx formation on the steep incline of the Beth Horon pass and the Maccabean forces used the terrain to their advantage and set ambushes to defeat the Seleucid troops.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 16:5; 21:22**, Benjamin/Ephraim border passed along Lower and Upper Beth Horon which belonged to Ephraim; **2 Chronicles 8:5; 1 Kings 9:17**, Solomon built Upper and Lower Beth Horon by fortifying them with walls, gates and bars; **Joshua 21:22; 1 Chronicles 6:53**, Beth Horon is a city for the Levites; **Joshua 10:10**, Joshua slew the kings of the Amorites at Gibeon and chased them by the way of the “Ascent of Beth Horon”; **1 Samuel 13:17-18**, While Saul and Jonathan were in Gibeah the Philistines camped at Micmash and sent raiding parties out, one went to Beth Horon to hold the pass.



# Beth Shean (Scythopolis)

Civilization first settled at Beth Shean 4000 BC south of the Harod River in the fertile soil, with springs of water on the cross roads of trade where the Jezreel/Jordan Valleys meet..

Egypt ruled in Beth Shean when it was a Canaanite city 1500-1100 BC. Joshua did not take Beth Shean (Judges 1:27) and the Philistines displayed the bodies of Saul and his sons on their city walls (1 Sam.31:10).



Not until David took Beth Shean (along with Megiddo and Ta'anach) did Israel occupy the city. Solomon made it an administrative center (1 Kg.4:7). Tiglath-Pileser destroyed the city in 732 BC. The remains of this OT city can be seen in the tel setting next to the Greek/Roman city called Scythopolis that was built in its place during the Hellenistic period. The Hasmoneans took the city in 107 BC. The Gentiles were exiled and it became a Jewish community. Rome took the city in 63 BC and Beth Shean (Scythopolis) became one of the ten citeis of the Decapolis and the predominant city in northern Israel. Rome executed the Jewish residents in 66 AD at the beginning of the Jewish revolt. From that time on into the Byzantine period Beth Shean was a mixed culture of Greeks, Jews and Christians growing to a population of 30,000-40,000. The city was Christianized but the Arab conquest slowed its growth. An earthquake in 749 AD leveled the city. The devastation of this earthquake can still be seen today. Some of the sites visible today are: 1) Theater, 2) Bathhouse, 3) "Palladius Street", a colonnaded street, 4) Sigma, a semicircular concourse surrounded by rooms, 5) Agora, 6) Roman Temple, 7) Northern Street, a colonnaded street leading to the NW city gate, 8) Nymphaeum, 9) Public lavatories (bathrooms), 10) Valley Street and the Truncated Bridge, 11) Amphitheater, 12) Tel Beth Shean from the OT



In the background is the Tel of OT Beth Shean. In front are the theater and the colonnaded streets of Scythopolis



Pillars in the corner of the front of the theater.

# Beth Shemesh

Beth Shemesh (“house of the sun”) is a city assigned to the Levites that sets on the east edge of the Sorek Valley on the volatile Israel/Philistia border. It was a buffer between the Philistine Plain and the Hill Country of Judah. Beth Shemesh sets 12 miles west of Jerusalem. There is a seven acre tel that has been excavated by several archaeologists.



Excavations have revealed “squares” on the north side of Tel Beth Shemesh and several cisterns. Early excavations in 1911-1912 were done by D. Mackenzie for the Palestine Exploration Fund and E. Grant in 1928-1933. They exposed several cities from the Bronze and Iron Ages. From 1990-2000 Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University found remains from the Iron Age, or the time of the Judges and the Kings of Israel from 1100-600 BC. They uncovered a large two-storied house of a wealthy individual in the northern part of the tel. The house had one room floor paved with river pebbles. Other houses supported by wooden columns on stone bases were found. Also found were grindstones, clay ovens. The pottery and building was Canaanite style, but the diet was clearly Jewish showing that culture on this border town was mixed.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 15:10**, on Philistine border; **Joshua 19:40-48**, allotted to the tribe of Dan; **Joshua 21:16**, one of the forty-eight cities of the Levites; **Judges 13-16**, Samson lived in the Sorek Valley by Beth Shemesh in Zorah, Eshtaol and Timnah; **1 Samuel 6:7-21**, The cart with the Ark from the Philistines went up the Sorek Valley to Beth Shemesh; **2 Kings 14:11-14**, King Jehoash (Israel) defeated King Amaziah (Judah) at Beth Shemesh and then went on to tear down sections of Jerusalem’s walls; **2 Chronicles 28:16-18**, Philistines capture Beth Shemesh from King Ahaz (Isaiah’s Day). Ahaz then goes to Assyria for help.



Toni holds a card on Tel Beth Shemesh that identifies the Sorek Valley that runs directly into Philistia.



Galyn sits on an arch in Beth Shemesh from the time of Judah’s king 800 BC.

# Caesarea

A Phoenician Port called Strato's Tower before 22 BC when Herod the Great renovated it and called it Caesarea. Caesarea served as the governmental seat for Rome for 500 years. Roman procurators made Caesarea their home. Herod created the first man made port by building underwater walls with cemented blocks filled with masses of rubble.



This harbor was called Sebastos (Greek for *augustus* or *great*). A massive lighthouse sat on the corner of the harbor walls that was modeled after one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World in Alexandria. The city was a typical Roman city with grid street layout, efficient sewer system, public buildings and public entertainment, a grandiose palace in the sea. Pontius Pilate's name was found on an inscription here saying he was "perfect of Judah." Herod the Great built the theater and aqueduct. The walls and gates built by the Crusaders can be seen today in the harbor.



An inscription dedicating something Pilate built in Caesarea to Emperor Tiberius. It reads: "TIBERIUM... PONTIUS PILATE, PREFECT OF JUDEA..."

**In the Bible:** **Act 8:40; 21:8-9**, Philip preached here, settled here and raised four daughters here. **Acts 10**, Peter came here to preach in Cornelius' house; **Acts 12:19-24**, God strikes Herod Agrippa I here; **Acts 9:30; 18:22; 21:8-16**, Paul visits Caesarea three times; **Acts 23:23-27:2**, Paul in prison for 2 years in Caesarea.



Photo taken from the theater looking towards the palace on the sea.



Aqueduct in Caesarea.

# Caesarea Philippi

Worship site for Pan, so called Pnias before Herod Philip rebuilt it in 2 BC and renamed it Caesarea. It became known as Philip's Caesarea to distinguish it from his father's Caesarea on the sea. 25 miles north of the Seas of Galilee, and 50 miles SW of Damascus, it sits at the base of Mt. Hermon where it serves as one of five headwaters of the Jordan River producing 5,000 gal./sec in winter.



Antiochus III the Great defeated Egypt at Pnias in 197 BC. The Syrians then took control of the area and Antiochus Epiphanes used it to move into control of Judea which resulted in the Maccabean Revolt.

Herod the Great had built a temple to Caesar near this spring in the Golan Heights and Philip his son made it the capital of his kingdom in 2 BC after his father died. Philip built a palace there that became a luxurious palace for Agrippa II. With the rise of Christianity in the Byzantine period pagan worship of Pan ended and the temples were abandoned, but the city continued to prosper and the royal palace became a public bath house.

**In the Bible: Matthew 16:13; Mark 8:27**, the furthest Jesus traveled north was here. Peter confessed Jesus was the Son of God. Transfiguration occurred up on Mount Hermon at this time.



In Jesus time a temple stood in front of this cave that served as the inner sanctuary. In the cave was a very deep pool believed to be the gates to Hades. Sacrifices were thrown into the waters. If the victims disappeared in the water this was a sign the god had accepted the offering, but if blood appeared in the nearby springs it had been rejected.



Five niches in the rock formation held images in front of a platform shrine.

One Greek inscriptions reads:  
*“For Pan and the nymphs, Victor son of Lysimachos with his children dedicated a likeness in stone of Hermes, child of Maia, son of Zeus, having vowed it, the year 150.”*

# Capernaum

Capernaum sat on the International Highway running from Egypt to Babylon. Capernaum controlled trade along this route and would have added tax and tolls to travelers, traders and merchandise coming and going. This combined with the fishing industry and the industrial park's manufacturing of equipment such as grinding stones and olive presses from basalt stone made Capernaum rich.



The Bible mentions Capernaum 16 times presenting it as an important, large and wealthy city that was the base for:

- 1) Roman troops and their centurion who helped pay for the synagogue that Jesus taught in and whose NT foundation can still be seen today. (Mt.8:5-9)
- 2) Customs station where Matthew worked to collect taxes on goods coming from Damascus/Mesopotamia heading to Egypt and vice versa. (Matt.9:9)
- 3) High officer of the king (John 4:46)
- 4) Peter's home and family (Mark 1:21; Luke 4:31)
- 5) Jesus ministry headquarters (Matthew 4:13-16)

Christians helped build the synagogue seen today on the NT foundation in 300-400 AD for their Jewish neighbors while they worshiped at a church built over Peter's house. But, both were destroyed in the 600's by Arabs..

**In the Bible: Matthew 4:13-16**, Jesus moved to Capernaum; **Matthew 4:18; Mark 1:16**, Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, John to be disciples near here; **Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14**, Jesus called Matthew from the office of the tax house; **Mark 1:21; Luke 4:31**, Jesus taught in this synagogue; Jesus ate at Peter's house in Capernaum; healed Peter's mother-in-law; **Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10**, Jesus healed centurion's servant; **Matthew 9:1; Mark 2:1; Luke 5:17**, a roof was removed and a paralyzed man was lowered to Jesus; **Matthew 9:18; Mark 5; Luke 8:40**, Jairus' daughter was raised and a woman healed of bleeding; **John 4:46**, Jesus healed nobleman's son; **Matthew 9:27; 12:22; Mark 3:20; Luke 11:14**, Jesus healed two blind men and one mute demoniac.



This is the lintel of the entrance to the synagogue whose foundation dates to NT days when Jesus preached here.



The industrial park in Capernaum produced basalt equipment such as grinders and olive presses. Here equipment remains can be seen.

# Carmel (Mount Carmel)

This is a 13 mile long mountain range where the air from the sea rises quickly over the mountain to condense into moisture all year long, thus making this mountain range green with vegetation. This was often the site of altars for a variety of religions including Baal. It was the south border of Asher



In the past this Mountain directed the flow of caravans and armies by directing them into the through the Jezreel Valley. Mt. Carmel sets on the International Highway called Via Maris. There are three passes for armies and travelers to pass:

- 1) **Jokneam Pass** - sets to the north and is the most difficult and most out of the way. It is the least used.
- 2) **Megiddo Pass** – it is central, most direct, the shortest of the tree options and most desirable to travel by.
- 3) **Dothan-Taanaach Pass** – sets south of Megiddo, the travelers, caravans and armies came out of the mountain to the southeast end of the Jezreel Valley. This position then easily led them to use the Beth Shean valley up the Jordan Rift and onto Damascus.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 19:26**, South border of Asher; **Song of Solomon 7:5**, bride's head compared to Carmel's summit; **1 Kings 18:19-39**, Elijah verse Baal Prophets; **Isaiah 35:2**, Carmel represents beauty, fruitfulness, majesty, glory; **Isaiah 33:9**; **Amos 1:2; 9:3**; **Nahum 1:4**, a withered Carmel is a sign of God's wrath on the land; **Jeremiah 46:18**, Nebuchadnezzar's glory compared to Carmel.



A view from Mt. Carmel looking east. Megiddo Valley is barely seen in top left  
Elijah's altar would have been in this general area.

# Dan

Dan (Canaanite's Laish) is the northern extent of Israel in the Old Testament. The phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" meant all of Israel from the north to the south. Dan has an abundant supply of water including the Dan Spring that is the largest of four sources of water (Banias, Lyon and Hasbani Springs) that meet to form the Jordan River that feeds into the Sea of Galilee.



The **Dan Inscription** is an ancient inscription mentioning the House of David. It was found by Avraham Biran near the Iron Age gate and likely written by Hazael of Damascus in 840 BC who erected it near the gate when he took the city. The Aramean king wrote that he killed both Israel's and Judah's king (similar to 2 Kings 9) and refers to Judah's king as the House of David indicating that David's royal line was still ruling in 840 BC, 160 years after David. This is the oldest contemporary textual reference to the Davidic line of kings and gives historical support for the existence of David.

**Be sure to see** these features:

1. Middle Bronze Age Gate from 1800 BC made of mud bricks with four chambers and three sets of piers preserved under a rampart of soil
2. Iron Age Gate built in the 800's BC by Ahab
3. Podium for King to sit on his throne by the gate or for the local.
4. High Place of Jeroboam along with evidence of a four-horned altar, 3 iron shovels, a small altar and an iron incense holder have been found.

**In the Bible:** **Gen. 14:13-16**, Abram left Hebron to go to Dan in order to rescue Lot. **Judges 18**, tribe of Dan left its allotted inheritance by the Philistines and moved to this northern location.; **1 Kings 12:26-33**, Jeroboam set up one of his two golden calf idols in Dan to keep his people of Israel from going to Jerusalem in Judah to worship.



Jeroboam's high place where the Gold Calf stood (middle) under a roof with an altar (left) in front of it.



Podium for the city ruler to sit by the gate of the city. Posts stood in the round sockets to hold a canopy.

# Dead Sea

The Dead Sea is 75 miles long and 11 miles wide. It is the lowest point on earth at 1,350 feet below sea level. The northern 2/3 is very deep (1,200 feet), but the southern section is very shallow (less than 20 feet). A piece of land called the Lisan Peninsula projects from the east side dividing the northern 2/3 from the shallow southern 1/3. ("lisan" is Arabic tongue)



due to the high level of minerals (or, salt) left behind the 7 million tons of water that evaporate each day. The Dead Sea is 10 times saltier than the ocean. A large factory on the southwest shore employs 1,600 people to extract the valuable mineral potash which is used to produce fertilizer. In ancient times people, including King Herod, would soak in the water for healing. Aristotle wrote of it and Cleopatra sought to extract its medical value. Today cosmetics and herbal products are produced from the minerals. All year long the Dead Sea has sunny skies and dry air. The Dead Sea water level is decreasing because of irrigation of water out of the Jordan River before it reaches the Sea. The southern 1/3 is often dry unless the company called the Dead Sea Works uses a canal to keep water flowing into the southern 1/3 so they can convert the minerals in their plant.

**In the Bible:** It is called the Salt Sea in **Num. 34:3, 12**; the Sea in **Ez. 47:8**; Eastern Sea in **Joel 2:20**; and Lake Asphaltitus in NT times. **Num. 34:3, 12**, Salt Sea is Israel's east border; **1 Sam.22:3-5**, David took his family to Moab by crossing the Dead Sea on the Lisan, possibly in a dry year; **2 Chr. 20**, Ammon, Moab, Edom cross on the Lisan from the east to surprise attack Jehoshaphat; **Joel 2:20**, God promises to drive the locusts into the Eastern and Western Sea (Dead and Mediterranean Sea); **Jeremiah 17:6**, trust in man is like a bush planted by the Dead Sea; **Ez. 47:8-11**, in the future the Dead Sea will become fresh and fishermen will line its banks.



Floating effortlessly since high mineral content increases the density which creates extraordinary buoyancy.



A view across the Dead Sea from the SW to see the eastern shore in the country of Jordan on the other side.

# Elah Valley

This is the valley where David killed Goliath. It stretches from the land of Judah to the land of the Philistines. "Elah" in Hebrew means terebinth tree which is a large tree that still grows there. The Elah Valley is one of five major valleys running through the foothills that are found between the Coastal Plain and the hill country of Judah. The valley begins east of Gath



And ends at a ridge that rises into Bethlehem. Socoh and Azekah are two main towns here. In 2008 the fortified city of Khirbet Qeiyafa from 1000-900 BC was excavated by Yosef Garfinkel. **Khirbet Qeiyafa** overlooks the valley between Azekah and Socoh about 6 miles from Gath. A four-chambered gate, casemate walls, a couple of buildings and an ostracon (broken pottery with writing) have been found. The ostracon was found in a building near the city gate with five lines of text made up of 50 letters that dates from the time of the book of 1 Samuel using proto-Canaanite script, but written in Hebrew. It appears to be an administrative document from the days of King Saul and refers to the end of the corrupt days of the judges and to the establishment of the Israelite's king by Samuel and the leaders in an attempt to save their society (1 Sam. 8-9). It says:

- "Do not oppress, and serve God...despoiled him/her.
- "The judge and the widow wept; he had the power
- "over the resident alien and the child, he eliminated them together.
- "The men and the chiefs/officers have established a king.
- "He marked 60 servants among the communities.

This text sounds like 1 Sam. 8:1-6, "When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges...They turned aside after dishonest...and perverted justice...he elders of Israel...they said...'appoint a king to lead us.'...And the Lord told him: 'Listen to all that the people are saying to you.'"

**In the Bible: 1 Samuel 17:2. 19: 21:9.** David kills Goliath.



The stream bed or wadi that runs through the Elah Valley where David met the Philistines and Goliath.

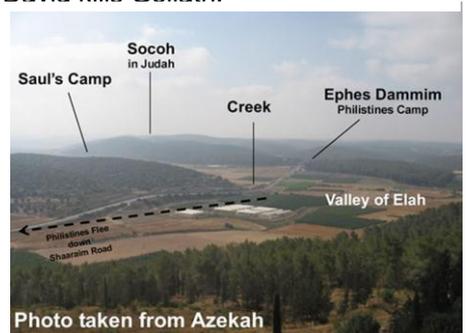


Photo taken from Azekah

The Elah Valley

# En Gedi

En Gedi is an oasis in the Judean Wilderness on the shore of the Dead Sea. En Gedi means “spring of the wild goats.” It has a warm climate, abundant water supply, fragrant vegetation, date palm trees and several water falls. En Gedi is a fresh water spring (one of two in the area) even though it is on the coast of the Dead Sea.

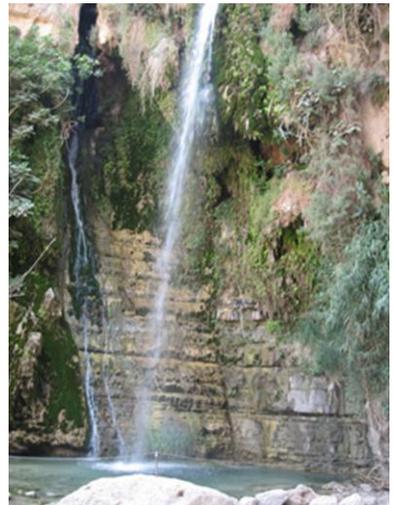


Due to its temperate climate and fresh water supply En Gedi has always attracted settlements. The earliest is from the Chalcolithic Period (4000 BC). A temple from that time has been discovered. A cave of treasure from this time period was found 6 miles south in the Nahal Mishmar. It is believed that these copper articles came from this Chalcolithic temple in En Gedi.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 15:62**, En Gedi allotted to Judah; **1 Sam. 23:29**, David hid in a cave at En Gedi; **1 Sam. 24**, Saul ‘relieved’ himself in a cave at En Gedi and David snuck in and cut his garment; **Ps. 57** and **142**, David may have written these two Psalms at En Gedi; **Song of Solomon 1:14**, the woman compares her beloved to a cluster of henna blossoms from En Gedi; **Ezekiel 47:10**, fishermen will line the Dead Sea shore from En Gedi to En Eglaim in the future



Toni in the water by a waterfall at En Gedi



Another waterfall higher up at En Gedi

# En Gev

En Gev is a kibbutz on the southeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. The kibbutz here was founded in 1937 as one of 52 “wall and tower” settlements (or, “tower and stockade”) by Zionist settlers while the Arab’s revolted. The goal of this movement was to populate the portions of land purchased by the Jewish authorities (Jewish National Fund.)



En Gev (or, Ein Gev) originally sat on the Syrian border and was bombed in 1948 and other wars. When Israel took the Golan Heights in the 1967 Six-Day War En Gev was made secure.



The Sea of Galilee on the shore of En Gev at sunset.

# En Harod

This is the spring where Gideon and his troops camped before their battle with the Midianites. (Judges 7) It was at this stream that Gideon sent home the men who were afraid and then divided those remaining to a mere 300 based on how they drank from this spring. Saul also may have camped here when he visited En Dor the night before his death. (1 Sm.29:1)



This spring at En Harod is located at the base of Mount Gilboa on the southeast side of the Jezreel Valley.

## In the Bible:

**Judges 7:1, 4, 6,** *“Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod... So Gideon took the men down to the water There the Lord told him, ‘Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink.’ Three hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths.”*

**1 Samuel 29:1,** Saul and Israel camped by the spring in Jezreel.



The cave from where the waters emerge.



Galyn demonstrates the proper method of drinking from the stream used by Gideon to reduce his troops to a mere 300 men.

# Galilee (Sea of Galilee)

The Sea of Galilee (Yam Kinneret) is a large lake 13 miles long; 7.5 miles wide in the north; 130-155 feet deep; 32 miles in circumference. The Sea receives 75% of its water from the Jordan River springs near Mt. Hermon in the north, but the rest comes from rainfall and springs. The climate is temperate year-round due to being 700 feet below sea level, the lowest fresh water lake on earth.



Average temperatures are 88 F. in late summer and 57 F. in January. Sudden and deadly storms, as recorded in the Gospels, are the result of the Sea of Galilee setting in a basin giving off warm air that combines with the colder air masses from the steep hills that surround the water. Sometimes the winds come over the hills on the west side, but the most deadly winds come from the east over the Golan Heights.

Eighteen species of fish are natural to the Sea, but there are up to thirty-five species living there today. Three types of fish are commonly recognized:

- Sardines, a daily food in NT. Seem to be the “two small fish” at feeding of the 5,000. Thousands of these are caught each night in modern times.
- Barbels or Catfish a scaleless and so unclean fish. May be the ‘bad’ fish Jesus referred to as being thrown aside in Matthew 13:48.
- Musht, or “St. Peter’s Fish,” can be as long as 18 inches.

**In the Bible:** **Num. 34:11**, mountains on east shore were eastern boundary of the land of Israel; **Lk.5:4**, first large catch of fish by disciples with Jesus; **Mt.8:1**, Jesus heals leper; **Mk.4:35-41**, Jesus calms storm; **Lk.8:26-39**, Demons drive pigs into Sea; **Jn.6:16**, Jesus walks on water; **Mt. 18:1**, better to tie a millstone around your neck; **Jn. 21**, Jesus meets disciples here after resurrection; **Jn. 21:6**, second large catch of fish.



The north/northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee.

# Gath

Gath is 'gat' in Hebrew ('winepress'). The fertile soil resulted in vineyards and the production of olives. Gath was Goliath's home town. It is one of the five Philistine cities (Gaza, Ekron, Ashkelon, Ashdod) Excavation in Gath began in 1887 and continues today. Aramean king Hazael's 1 ½ mile moat built while besieging the city in 811 BC has been uncovered.



2 Kings 12:17-18 mentions this siege, *“About that time Hazael king of Aram went up and attacked Gath and captured it. Then he turned to attack Jerusalem.”* But, Judah's king Joash took the gold from the temple and the palace and sent them to Hazael who then withdrew from Jerusalem.”

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 11:22**, Anakites (Giants) were destroyed in the hill country of Judah but remained in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. **1 Sam.5:8**, the ark of God was sent to Gath from Ashdod and from Gath to Ekron. **1 Samuel 17:4** and **27:3**, Goliath is from Gath. **1 Sam. 21:10**, David goes to Achish the Philistine king in Gath. **2 Sam 1:20**, David writes a lament of Saul's death saying, 'Tell it not in Gath.' **2 Sam15:18**, men from Gath served David; **1 Kings 2:39-41**, Shimei left Solomon to go to Gath to look for his slaves, but is executed upon returning to Jerusalem; **2 Kings 12:17**, Hazael fights against Gath; **1 Chron. 18:1**, David takes Gath from the poser of the Philistines; **2 Chron.11:8**, Rehoboam built several cities into fortified cities of Judah including Gath; **2 Chron.26:6**, King Uzziah of Judah fought Gath and tore down their walls; **Amos 6:2**, a destroyed Gath is used as a prophetic example;

# Gezer

Located on the northern edge of the Shephelah. It was strategically positioned at a junction on the international coastal highway and the road into Jerusalem through the Aijalon Valley. Thutmose III (1477 BC, Moses step-brother) destroyed the Canaanite city with fire. The Tell Amarna letters from the 1300's BC include 10 letters from the kings of Gezer to the Egyptian pharaoh.



Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to live in Gezer. Around 980 BC the Egyptians destroyed Gezer and the Pharaoh gave it to King Solomon as a wedding gift. (1 Kings 9:16) Solomon then rebuilt the city. In 924 BC Shishak fought Rehoboam and destroyed Gezer. (1 Kings 14:25) Archaeology began in the early 1900's and Gezer has been extensively excavated. The Gezer calendar, a plaque with a text listing the months and the agricultural seasons, was found here. Solomon's wall and gateway were identified by Yigael Yadin. Also uncovered and sound be seen are:

- the 23 foot diameter Canaanite Water Shaft slanting for 150 feet to connect a spring with the city from 1800 BC and similar to Warren's Shaft,
- a 52 foot wide tower with its large defensive wall,
- a middle bronze age gate (constructed about 1650 BC) connected to a 13 foot wide wall with at least 25 towers (destroyed by Thutmose III)
- eight monumental megaliths.
- Nine inscribed boundary stones
- Solomon's Six Chambered Gate

## In the Bible: Judges 1:18, Judah



Solomon's Six Chamber Gate similar to the ones he had built at Hazor and Megiddo.



Some of the 10 Canaanite stones from a covenant/treaty ceremony from 1500 BC

# Geba

Geba sets southwest of Michmash in the land of Benjamin. Today's village of Jaba is located on the ancient site of Geba so the ancient site has not be excavated. Geba was a Levitical city.



## MORE

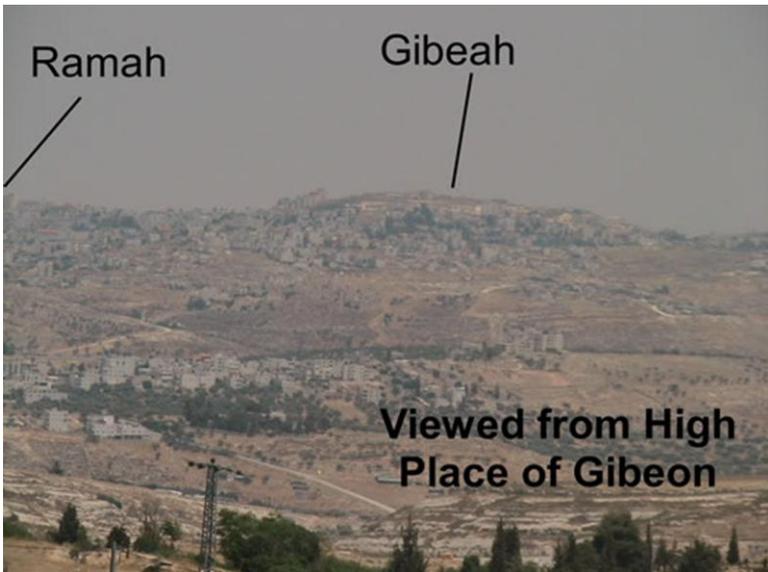
**In the Bible:** **1 Kings 15:25**, Asa fortified Geba during his war with northern Israel's king Baasha; **2 Kings 23:8**, Josiah destroyed the high places of Judah "from Geba to Beersheba" which means Geba was the on the northern border of Judah; **1 Samuel 13:16; 14:5**, Geba served as a base for Israel's military during King Saul's wars with the Philistines; **Isaiah 10:29**, Assyrian troops stopped here for the night while invading Judah.

# Gibeah of Saul

Gibeah of Saul was 3 miles north of Jerusalem. The war described in the book of Judges between the eleven tribes of Israel with the tribe of Benjamin began because of Gibeah's immortality. Saul was from Gibeah.



**In the Bible:** **Jos.18:28**, Gibeah in Behmamins' land; **Jud.19:10-26**, Men of Gibeah rape and murder a Levites' concubine; **1Sm.10:26;11:4**, Saul comes from Gibeah; **1 Sm.13:2,15;14:2,16**, Saul's military forces stationed near Gibeah; **2 Sm.21:4-9**, Gibeonites were given permission by David to kill 7 sons of Saul in Gibeah to avenge Saul's sin against them; **Is.10:31**; **Hosea 5:8**, citizens of Gibeah fled when Assyrians invade in 701 BC.



Gibeah of Saul viewed from the High Place of Gebeon or the Gibeah of God.

# Gibeah (Gibeon) of God (High Place)

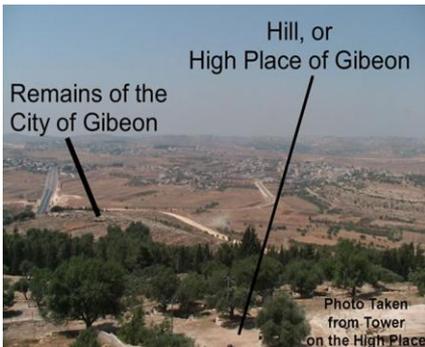
Also called Nabi Samwil which means “prophet Samuel” since tradition says that Samuel’s tomb is here inside a mosque. The Bible records that Samuel was buried in his hometown of Ramah. It is a high mountain 2,919 feet above sea level (half a mile) 2.5 miles north of Jerusalem. Byzantines built a monastery here to serve pilgrims visiting the Holy Land.



This was the site that the Crusaders first viewed Jerusalem in 1099 AD, so they called this ancient high place the “Mountain of Joy.”

**In the Bible:** **1 Kings 3:4**, **2Ch.1:2-6**, Solomon goes to Gibeon to offer sacrifices at this most important high place and the Lord appeared to him in a dream. Solomon asks for wisdom; **1Chr.21:29**, The tabernacle and the bronze altar were here after they were salvaged from the Philistines destruction at Shiloh for is says,

- “The tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses had made in the desert, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time on the **high place at Gibeon**. David could not go before it to inquire of God, because he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the Lord.” (**1Ch.21:29**)
- “After David had constructed buildings for himself in the City of David, he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it (1 Chr.15:1) ...”David left Asaph and his associates before the ark of the covenant of the Lord (in Jerusalem) to minister there regularly, according to each day’s requirements.” (**1Chr.16:37**)
- “David left Zadok the priest and his fellow priests before the tabernacle of the Lord at **the high place in Gibeon** to present burnt offerings to the Lord on the altar of burnt offering regularly, morning and evening, in accordance with everything written in the Law.” (**1 Chr.16:39-40**)



A view looking north at Gibeon from the High Place of Gibeon. Canaanites from here traveled a few miles east to make a treaty with Joshua.



A view looking south from the High Place of Gibeon. Jerusalem, the Temple Mount, Mt. of Olives are visible.

# Gibeon

This is the home of the Hivites or the Gibeonites, who deceived Joshua. James Pritchard excavated Gibeon (1956-62) finding 63 wine cellars from 600-700 BC. He also located a stepped tunnel with 93 steps leading to a water spring. Also excavated was a shaft 40 feet in diameter and 35 feet deep which may be “the Pool of Gibeon” mentioned in 2 Samuels 2

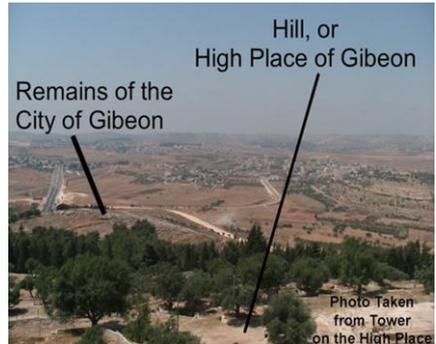


men of David and General Joab (Judah) met General Abner’s men (Israel). Gibeon sets on the main road that connects the coastal plain with the Hill Country.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 9**, Gibeonites deceive Joshua; **2 Samuel 2:12**, “Abner son of Ner, together with the men of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, left Mahanaim and went to Gibeon. Joab son of Zeruiah and David’s men went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. One group sat down on one side of the pool and one group on the other side. Then Abner said to Joab, ‘Let’s have some of the young men get up and fight hand to hand in front of us.’ “ **Jeremiah 28:1**, The false prophet Haniah who opposed Jeremiah was from Gibeon; **Jeremiah 41:11-12**, Jeremiah was delivered from Babylonian captivity at the Pool of Gibeon; **Neh.3:7; 7:25**, 95 men return to Gibeon from Babylon and help rebuild Jerusalem’s walls.



Galyn looks down on Gibeon from the the High Place of Gibeon which sets to the south of Gibeon.



A view of the location of ancient Gibeon.

# Hazor

Sets on the international highway from Israel through Syria to Babylon. Fertile soil and trade route location combined with being the northern fortification made Hazor very powerful and populated (20,000) with economic and military significance. First settled in 2500 BC in upper city, but grew to include the lower city by 1700's before destroyed by Joshua in 1400 BC.



The tel consists of upper city with acropolis and lower fortified city to the north. Hazor mentioned in archives of Mari on Euphrates in 1700 BC and in Egyptian writing in 1800's. Pharaoh's of 1300-1400 BC mention Hazor often. Bible's first mention of Hazor is King Jabin leading Hazor's military in coalition vs. Joshua who burns the city. In Judges the upper city had been resettled and threatened Deborah. In 960 Solomon fortified Hazor and built the six chamber gate seen today. In 800's King Ahab doubled the size and added citadel, storehouse and water system. After continuous attacks by Arameans the city finally fell to Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria in 732 BC. Yigael Yadin excavated from 1955-58 and 1968-69 to reveal: **1) Solomon's Gate and Casemate walls; 2) Canaanite temple under Solomon's Gate accessed through a staircase to the south of gate; 3) Canaanite Palace with courtyard platform, 2 bases for columns, main entrance, throne room with rooms on 3 sides all destroyed by intense fire of Joshua; 4) Water system from Ahab dug as a square shaft through layers of settlements and bedrock to reach water 131 feet below street level accessed by descending 80 steps cut in the wall of the shaft. Accessible today on a modern metal staircase. 5) Canaanite temple; 6) Canaanite Gates; 7) Museum open at site**  
**In the Bible: Josh.11:10**, Hazor is "head of all those kingdoms" of Canaanites; **Jud.4:2**, Jabin, the king of Hazor, is King of all of Canaan; **2 Kg.9:15**, Solomon fortifies Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer; **2 Kg.15:29**, Tiglath-Pileser destroys Hazor in 732 BC.



Solomon's 6-chamber gates at Hazor.



Lower City

# Herodion (Herodium)

Located 7.5 miles south of Jerusalem  
 The Herodion is a 197 foot high artificial mountain shaped like a cone to hold a 98 foot high fortress/palace 7 stories high 2,500 feet above sea level built 23-20 BC. An administrative center called Lower Herodion is set at its base. Upper Herodion included: 1) a circular fortress, 2) an elaborate palace, 3) two walls 8 feet apart



with 4 towers, 4) two stories underground with barrel-vaulted ceilings, 5) Cisterns filled with rainwater, 6) Herod's palace with colored tiles and mosaics on the floor, 7) a garden surrounded by porticos with columns with Corinthian capitals, 8) a bathhouse with earliest domed roof built in Israel. Of the four towers the eastern tower was the largest (60 ft. diameter). Lower Herodion was below on a 38 acre plain to the north built around the center piece of a large pool (230 by 150 ft. and 10 ft. deep) used for swimming and boating and filled with water from an aqueduct coming from Solomon's pools to the west near Bethlehem (Artas). The pool had a 50 ft. diameter circular colonnaded pavilion in the center and was surrounded by 1) buildings, 2) gardens, 3) porticos with Ionic capitals, 4) large reception halls with pilasters and frescos. Josephus wrote that there were 200 white marble steps up the side of the Herodion. Jewish zealots built a synagogue and ritual baths in 66 BC and Jewish rebels of the Bar Kochba revolt cut tunnels and hidden openings for sneak attacks in 132 AD. Byzantine monks built churches here. In 1962 excavation began on Upper Herodion and Ehud Netzer began to excavate Lower Herodion in 1972 until recently when a protective railing gave way at Herodion and Netzer fell to his death in 2010. Josephus records that Herod the Great was buried here, and in 2007 Ehud Netzer found Herod's tomb.



The sides of Herodion were covered with flat stone like armor all the way around from the bottom to the top.



Above: Herodion; Below: Pool



# Jericho

Jericho is the lowest city on earth at 846 feet below sea level and the oldest whose occupation began in 10,000 BC. It is built around a powerful spring of water producing 1,000 gallons/ minute. This spring has always caused an oasis to grow in this desert/wilderness and the water still flows today being used to irrigate Jericho. Occupation ended in 586 BC.



Jericho became a private estate of the reigning ruler in Alexander's day (336 BC). With no real city growth, the Syrians built it up as a defensive fort in 100's BC. Herod leased it from Cleopatra who received it from Mark Antony. Octavian (Caesar Augustus) gave it to Herod the Great who built a palace, hippodrome/ theatre. Herod Archelaus built a village for his date plantation workers. Vespasian moved siege equipment up roads that Rome built to attack Jerusalem from Jericho. Byzantines settled Jericho. Muslims of the Umayyad dynasty built a luxury hunting palace there in 700 w/ mosaics still visible. Crusaders took Jericho but when they were defeated by Saladin in 1187 AD Jericho was abandoned and overrun by Bedouin raiders which left it a miserable village overrun by the desert. After WWI order was restored.

**In the Bible:** Nu.22:1;26:3;26:63;31:12,etc.Deut.32:49;34:1;34:3; Jericho used to locate Israel's position; Jos.2:1,2,3;3:16;4:13,19;5:10,13, Joshua approaches Jericho; 6:1,2,25, Joshua destroys Jericho; Jos.6:26, curses the man who rebuilds Jericho; 7:2, 8:2, Ai; 9:3, Gibeonites; 10:1,28,30, example; 2 Sam.10:5, David's men wait here until beards grow; 1 Kg.16:34, Hiel build Jericho; 2 Kg. 2:4-5, Elisha told to stay; 2Kg.25:5;Jr.39:5;52:8, Zedekiah captured; Ezr.2:34, 345 men of Jericho return; Neh.3:2, build wall; Mt.20:29; Mk.10:46; Lk.18:35;19:1, Jesus walks through on way to Jerusalem. heals blind. eats with Zacchaeus: Lk.10:30. Good Samaritan.



The retaining wall (revetment wall) that supported a taller mud brick wall that collapsed when Joshua arrived. To the left are walls of homes (such as Rahab's) built against this city wall



Tower from 8,000 BC; 28 ft. dia; 25 ft. high; There is an interior staircase in center under square grid. Excavated by Kathleen Kenyon.

# Jezreel

On the northwest edge of Mount Gilboa, Jezreel overlooks the Valley that took its name. Built as a fortress in Omri's day in the 800's BC, King Ahab had a palace in Jezreel and some believe it was a cavalry base for King Ahab's military. A view from the city and its position helped command the highway through the Jezreel Valley from Megiddo and Beth Shean.



It was a small village in the early Bronze Age (2700 BC). In 1987 a bulldozer accidentally uncovered ancient structures and David Ussishkin and John Woodhead led the excavation from 1990-1996. They uncovered four towers and a casemate wall around the fortress built with ashlar and boulders. The fortress covered 11 acres and was surrounded by a 20 ft. deep moat on 3 sides.

**In the Bible:** **Jos.19:18**, Jezreel is in Issachar; **1 Kg.18:45-46**, Elijah outran Ahab's chariot from Mt. Carmel to Jezreel; **1 Kg.21:1-24**, Naboth lost his life and his vineyard in Jezreel to Ahab; **2 Kg.8:28-29;9:14-37**, Jehu drove his chariot to Jezreel from the Jordan Valley and killed the King of Israel, the king of Judah (Jehoram) and the Queen Mother (Jezebel); **2 Kg.19:1-11**; **Hosea 1:4**, Jehu killed all Ahab's descendants at Jezreel and the prophet Hosea condemned him.

# Jezreel Valley

A triangle shaped valley 20 miles long and 14 miles wide on the east end. The International Highway from Egypt to Mesopotamia passed through this Vvalley and intersected the main road that ran from the Jordan Valley through Beth Shean to the Mediterranean Sea. Many important cities, mountains and events are located here: Mount Carmel, Mount



Gilboa, Mount Tabor, Mount Moreh, Jezreel, Megiddo, Beth Shan, Nain, Nazareth and more. See a list of the great battles of history fought in the Jezreel Valley on page 157 of this book.

**In the Bible Jos.17:16**, allotted to the tribe of Manasseh, but the inhabitants had iron chariots; **Jud.6:33-37; 7:1-25**, Gideon defeats the Midianites here after camping on Mount Gilboa while the Midianites camped on the Hill of Moreh; **1 Sam.29:1; 31:1-8**, Saul was killed on the SE end of the Valley on Mount Gilboa; **1 Kings 4:12**, Solomon places three cities of the Jezreel Valley (Beth Shean, Megiddo and Jezreel) under the leadership of Baana; **1 Kings 18:45-19:2**, Elijah outrun’s Ahab’s chariot to Jezreel by running across the Jezreel Valley; **2 Kings4:8-37**, Elisha raises the Shunammite son back to life in Shunem in the Jezreel Valley; **2 Kings 9:14-37**, Jehu kills Joram, Ahaziah and Jezebel in Jezreel in the Valley; **2 Kings 23:29-30**, King Josiah is fatally wounded here trying to stop Pharaoh Neco from assisting the Assyrian army versus the Babylonians; **Zech.12:11**, weeping will be great like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo; **Luke 7:11-17**, Jesus raises the son of a woman from Nain back to life in the Jezreel Valley on the north edge of the Hill of Moreh; **Revelation 16:13-14, 16**, the location of a future battle known as Armageddon (Har Megiddo, “Hill of Megiddo”)



# Joppa (Jaffa, Tel Aviv)

This is the modern city of Tel Aviv. The first settlements in Jaffa and by the Yarkon river are in the Stone Age (5000 BC) Jaffa is mentioned in writing for the first time in 1468 BC when Thutmose III captured it. Any importance Joffa had was forfeited when Herod the Great built a new seaport at Caesarea by the sea. As Caesarea deteriorate with time the



importance of Joffa was restored. The modern city of Tel Aviv was founded in 1909 when 60 Jewish families moved out of Jaffa to the north side to settle in the sand dunes. In 1921 this settlement became independent and grew uncontrollably into the confusing urban sprawl of today. Immigrants began to pour into Israel up to 1948 and continued through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are two archaeological sites in Tel Aviv: 1) an excavation across from St. Peter's Church in a restored Turkish bathhouse called the Antiquities Museum of Tel Aviv-Yafo; 2) A archaeological site on the north side of the Yarkon River uncovered a settlement of the Philistines from 1100 BC with Philistines temples, Iron Age houses. Also, the Eretz Israel Museum.

**In the Bible:** **Joshua 19:46-47**, allotted to the tribe of Dan, but they failed to take it and they moved north; **2 Chr.2:16**, Joppa was an important seaport for Solomon. The cedars from Lebanon were floated down from Phoenicia to Joppa and then transported to Jerusalem for building the palace and temple; **Johan 1:3**, Jonah sailed from Joppa to Tarshish; **Ezra 3:7**, Cedars from Lebanon were floated to Joppa for the exiles to rebuild the temple; **Acts 9:36-43**, Peter raises Dorcas to life here; **Acts 10**, Peter has a vision in the house of Simon the tanner that leads Peter to the house of Cornelius in Caesarea.



EL AL airplane wing at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv (Joppa)



Road sign on Highway 1 showing lanes for Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in Hebrew, Arabic and English

# Jordan River

The Jordan River covers a distance of 65 miles, but the winding path it takes to flow is a 200 mile course. The water originates from melting snow in Mt. Hermon. The name Jordan means “go down.” The Jordan River valley has not been settled and is covered with heavy vegetation that is filled with animal life. The Jordan River today is less than 50 feet wide since much of the water is pumped away for irrigation in Israel and in Jordan.



Its deepest point is 17 feet. The river flows through the Jordan Rift Valley and supports 22 various species of fish. It can be divided into three sections: 1) From its many sources feeding water (Lyon in Lebanon, Hasbany in Mt. Hermon, Leddan in Dan, Baniyas in Mt. Hermon) to Lake Huleh; 2) From Lake Huleh to Sea of Galilee 10 miles; 3) From Sea of Galilee into the Dead Sea 65 miles. Between Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea 2 major tributaries enter it from the east: 1) Yarmouk River; 2) Jabbok River.

**In the Bible:** **Gn.13:10**, Lot chose the plain well watered by the Jordan; **Num.34:10-12**, the eastern border of Israel; **Num.22:1**, Israel camps by Jordan on Moab’s plains before entering land; **Jos.3:1-4:18**, Israel crosses Jordan; **Jud.3:28**, Ehud seized control of the fords to cut off Moab’s escape; **Jud.7:24-25**, Gideon seized control of the Jordan to cut off Midianites escape; **Jud.12:1**, Jephthah seized control of the Jordan to kill Ephraim’s soldiers trying to escape; **1 Sm.31:7**, Israel flees across Jordan after Saul dies; **2 Sm.17:15**, David flees across the Jordan from Absalom; **2 Kg.2:7**, Elijah and Elisha cross Jordan on dry ground; **2 Kg.5:3**, Syrian general Naaman healed in Jordan; **2 Kgs.6:3**, Elisha makes ax head float; **Ps.114:3** and **Mic.6:5** recall God stopping the Jordan; **Jer.12:5**, Jeremiah rebuke and challenged to run through Jordan’s thickets; **Ez.47:18**, future border; **Mt.3:5**; **Mk.1:5**; **Jn.1:28**, John Baptizes; **Mt.3:13**; **Mk1:9**, Jesus baptized; **Jn.10:40**, Jesus crosses Jordan .



The Jordan River



The Jordan River

# Judean Hill Country

This area extends from Jerusalem 40 miles south to Khirbet Ira and is 11-14 miles wide. The Shephelah is on its west and the Judean Wilderness is to its east. This area is the continuation of the mountain spine that begins at Mt. Carmel and Mt. Gilboa and ends at the beginning of the Negev. The rock surface is Cenomanian limestone like the hills of Benjamin and Ephraim.



The ridge that serves as the watershed and the main road from Jerusalem to Hebron splits into two ridges/roads at Hebron. Since Hebron sits at this junction that joins 2 ridges/roads coming from the south, Hebron is the natural meeting place of the southern portion of the Hill Country with the rest of Judah. Hebron served as the: 1) location of the central government of the hill country; 2) meeting place of merchants from the Negev and trade routes; 3) military protection against southern invaders for Judah. The Hill Country between Bethlehem and Hebron also received plenty of rain to produce crops (wheat, barley, olives, grapes, pomegranates, fruits) that could be traded for goods coming out of the southern regions (sheep, donkeys, camels, leather goods)

**In the Bible: Joshua 15**, allotted to tribe of Judah.



The Hill Country of Judea.

# Judean Wilderness

Extends from N. of Jerusalem to S. end of Dead Sea and is 60 miles long, 10-20 miles wide between the Hill Country and the Rift Valley. In this 10-20 mile distance the land drops 3,700 feet to the lowest point on earth. Some places 4,300 4,300 ft. in 10 miles. Average rainfall is 8 in/yr, or 4 in/yr. near the Dead Sea. Made up of Senonian rock chalk, marl and flint which hardens when wet and water runs off into the Sea.



**In the Bible** **Jos.7:24**, Achan stoned in Valley of Achor; **Jos.10:7**, Joshua marches through Judean Wilderness at night from Gilgal to Gibeon; **Jos.15:61**, allotted to Judah; **Jud.20:47**, 600 Benjamites fled to the rock of Rimmon in wilderness; **1Sm. 23:15**, David hid in Desert of Ziph; **1Sm.24:1**, David spared Saul's life in Desert of En Gedi; **1Sm.25:1**, In Desert of Maon, Nabal refused to help David; **1Sm.26:1**, In Desert of Ziph David spared Saul; **2Sm.16:5**, Shimei cursed David; **Song of So.3:6**, daughters of Jerusalem watch Solomon coming from desert for his wedding; **2Chr.20:1**, Jehoshaphat led people into the Desert of Tekoa to face invaders; **Is.40:1**, Isaiah foretold of a time when a voice of one crying in the wilderness would announce the Messiah; **Hosea 2:14**, Hosea predicted a time when God would bring Israel into the desert for a second exodus and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope; **Jer.17:5**, those who trust men are like a bush in the wasteland; **Jer.39:4**, Zedekiah fled from Jerusalem through the Judean Wilderness to the Jordan Valley and was captured; **Ez.47:8**, Ezekiel saw a time when living water would flow here. **Mt.3:1; Mk.1:4; Lk.3:2**, John begins his ministry in the Desert of Judea; **Mt.4:1; Mk.1:12; Lk.4:1**, Jesus tempted in this wilderness; **Lk.10:25**, parable of good Samaritan set here; **Jn.11:54**, Jesus withdrew to the desert to village called Ephraim.



The Judean Wilderness



Galyn in the Judean Wilderness

# Korazin (Korazim, Chorazin)

Jesus condemned this city along with Bethsaida and Capernaum. According to Mt.11:20-24, Jesus visited here and performed miracles here. It is known for producing good wheat. The city is 2 miles NW of Capernaum and was divided into five quarters. The central quarter held a synagogue, the remains of 3 large buildings and a paved square.



The ground that the city is built on is basalt and so the building stones are also made of the hard black basalt stone. Excavation began in the early 1900's and the Hebrew University continued work in the 1920's. Since then excavation and restoration activities took place in 1962, '65, '80 and '83. The excavation revealed buildings from the 100-300 AD, but very little from the time of Jesus. It appears that the earliest settlers were from Jesus day in the first century. It was clearly a Jewish community during those years (100-300 AD), but was destroyed by 314 AD according to Eusebius the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. It is mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud written in 500 AD when much of the city was restored and the original buildings and synagogues were repaired.

**In the Bible: Matthew 11:20-24**, “Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. ‘Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago...No, you will go down to the depths.’ ”



This synagogue is from 100-200 AD. It was excavated in 1926 by J. Ory.



“Seat of Moses” found in 1920s with an Aramaic inscription (Mt.23:2-3)

# Lachish (Lakhish)

Lachish was a strategic palace, fortress city in the Shephelah Hills overlooking the coastal plain to the west, Azekah to the north and Judean Hills to the east. Canaanites had settled here by 3,000 BC. When Joshua entered the land in 1400 BC the king of Lachish joined a coalition of 5 kings defeated at Gibeon. Joshua moved toward Lachish and took it in a



matter of days during his central campaign. Archaeology has shown that Lachish was not fortified at this time. Later the city became a fortification for Judah when Rehoboam made it his southern fort in a line of cities protecting invasion from the West. Lachish became the most important city in Judah next to Jerusalem and was built up with a palace/fort on a podium behind a double line of walls on the hill where it stood. It fell to Sennacherib in 701 BC. His palace in Nineveh depicts the battle in carved reliefs that covered his wall. These can still be seen today. In 587 Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonians took the city after defeating Azekah. A hastily written ostraca was found in a guardroom reporting watching the Babylonian invasion. It said, "We are watching over the beacon of Lachish...Azekah is not to be seen." Excavation uncovered gates, walls, palace, moat, temples, well, etc.

**In the Bible:** **Jos.10:1**, Joshua takes Lachish; **2 Chr.11:5**, Rehoboam fortifies Lachish; **2 Kn.14:19** Amaziah (769 BC) strengthened it and fled there from Jerusalem during a rebellion, but was killed there; **Amos1:1**; **Zec.14:5**, in 760 BC an earthquake destroyed part of the city which was rebuilt; **2 Kg.18:13-17;19:8**, Sennacherib invades Judah, takes Lachish and made it his base to attack Jerusalem; **Jer.34:7**, Jeremiah says Azekah and Lachish would be the last cities to fall before Jerusalem.



Sennacherib's siege ramp 230' wide made of 15,000 ton of stone. 1,000 arrowheads were found in this ramp which is depicted in reliefs with 5 battering rams on it.



Israelite's wall and gate into the city of Lachish.

# Masada

Masada is an elevated rock, or a mesa, on Dead Sea's shore w/ 1,300 ft. cliffs on east side, 300 ft. on west. Top of the plateau is a flat 1,800 by 900 ft. Hebrew word translated Masada is *metsuda*, meaning "stronghold" or "fortress". Considered impregnable and accessible only up the winding narrow Snake Path (used today). David hid here 2x when fleeing



from Saul. Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BC) fortified it. In 40 BC, when Herod's father was assassinated, Herod hid his family here and fled to Rome for support. Herod fortified Masada with 18 ft. high wall on top with a winter palace as a safe house (39-31 BC). He built towers, storehouses, barracks, armory, palaces, cisterns, bathhouses. Cisterns were filled with rain water collected by an elaborate systems of channels cut in Masada's side. Jewish rebels fled to here under Eliezer Ben Yair's leadership when Jerusalem fell 70 AD. Rome encircled Masada with a 3 ft. high wall and with 8 camps also surrounded by stone walls still visible from the top. Rome then built a ramp up a rock spur on the side of Masada (total height 375 ft. but only 30 ft. needed to be added on the natural spur to reach the wall at the top.) Three years later, April 15, 73, the Romans broke into Masada to find 960 Jews had killed each other (except for 2 woman and 5 children) instead of face Roman captivity. Yigael Yadin excavated 1963-65. Yadin found fragments of Dt. 33-34 and Ezekiel 35-38 (the dry bones vision) in a synagogue built by the rebel forces in 70 AD. Also 10 small ostraca were found each with a single name that may have been used by the last ten men in charge of the mass suicide. One ostraca read "ben Yair", the name of the rebel's leader.

**In the Bible:** **1Sm.22:3-5; 1Chr.12:1-16**, David takes his parents to Moab, then David and 400 men returned to Judah and hid in the stronghold (or, Masada): **1 Sm24:22**. David again flees to the "stronghold" (or, Masada):



The three levels of the Hanging Palaces of Herod



Lower level of the 3 hanging palaces with original wall covering and fresco. Pillars are stacked rock plastered and fluted to look like marble.

# Mareshah (Guvrin, Bet-Guvrin)

*(Same information as the page for "Bet-Guvrin")*



Sidonian Burial Caves from 200 BC with gabled niches for the dead.



Inscriptions and paintings show life and art from 2,200 years ago.

# Mediterranean Sea

Mediterranean is the Latin word *mediterraneus* and means “in the middle of earth” (*medius* = “middle, between” and *terra*=“land, earth.” Greek is *Mesogeios* from μέσο “middle” and γη “land, earth”. It was an important route for traders and travelers in Bible times. Many products and much culture was exchanged between eastern and western people over the Mediterranean Sea.



**In the Bible:** Num. 34:6,7; Josh. 1:4, 9:1, 15:47; Ezek. 47:10,15,20, known as the Great Sea; 1 Kings 5:9, the Sea; Deut. 11:24; Joel 2:20, the “hinder Sea” translated as Western Sea”; Exod. 23:31, the “Sea of the Philistines. Jonah 1, the story of the ship wreck and the fish occurs on the Mediterranean Sea.



The Mediterranean Sea as viewed from ancient Ashkelon of the Philistines.

# Megiddo

Megiddo sets in a strategic location on the west end of the Jezreel Valley and at the north end of a mountain pass called the Megiddo Pass coming out on the south side of the Megiddo Valley (today the path of a modern road). Megiddo was settled in the Chalcolithic Age and has 26 levels of civilizations (4000-400 BC) built on top of each other.



Many battles from Thutmose III until Revelation 16 have involved this fortified city. Solomon made it his chariot city. The water system from 800's BC is a large shaft dug through bedrock 120 ft deep where it meets a tunnel that was cut of 215 feet to a spring of water outside the city. The spring was disguised so invading armies would not see it. Before King Ahab had this shaft and tunnel engineered, the citizens were exposed to danger while getting water outside the city walls. This tunnel is accessible today and was dug similar to Hezekiah's tunnel. The workers cut from both ends and met in the middle only 12 inches from meeting perfectly underground. Also visible today is a large circular Canaanite altar 32 ft. dia. The altar which was found along with large amounts of ashes and animal bones has a staircase, a small wall and sets next to a temple.

**In the Bible:** **Js.12:7,21**, king of Megiddo was one of 31 kings defeated by Joshua; **Jud.1:27**, Megiddo allotted to Manasseh, but the Canaanites remained; **Jud.5:19-20**, Deborah defeated Sisera by the waters of Megiddo (Kishon River); **1 Kg.4:12**, Solomon gave governorship of Megiddo to Baana along with Beth Shean and Jezreel; **1 Kg.9:15;10:26**, Solomon fortified Megiddo; **2 Kgs.9:27**, Jehu attacked King Ahaziah of Judah, but Ahaziah fled to Megiddo to die; **2Kg.23:29;2Chr.35:20**, Josiah tried to stop Pharaoh Neco and was killed at Megiddo (609 BC); **Rev.16:13**, the last great battle, Armageddon (Hebrew: *Har Megiddo* meaning "Hill of Megiddo")



Three chambers of a six chamber gate built by Solomon at Megiddo.



A limestone manger sets next to stone hitching posts where Ahab's (Solomon's) stables remain.

# Mitzpeh Danny (Mitzpe Dani)

Mitzpe Danny is an Israeli settlement in the West Bank. Mitzpe means “look out.” This outpost was established in 1998 by residents of another settlement in the West Bank called Ma’ale Mikhmas (founded in 1981). Mitzpeh Danny was named after a settler from Ma’ale Mikhmas named Danny Frei who was murdered in a Palestinian attack on his home in 1995. Mitzpe Dani is home to about 25 families.



**Below is a copy of an article from Israel National News dated July 19, 2011 and titled “Arson Attacks Wrack Samaria Outpost”:**

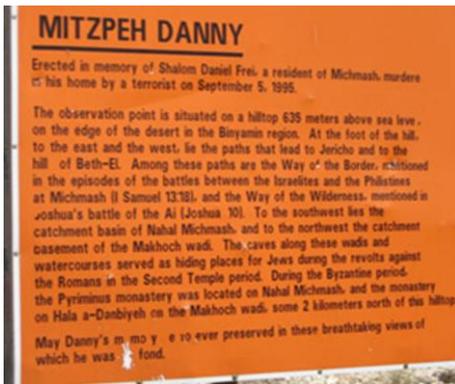
“Residents of Mitzpe Danny in Samaria are fighting the fourth fire in three weeks on Tuesday. Footprints from a previous blaze led to nearby Bedouins.

“The latest blaze comes several days after residents told the IDF commander in the Binyamin region in Samaria that fires, thefts and reckless driving by Arabs and Bedouin plague the community.

“Mitzpe Danny residents and children were temporarily evacuated two weeks ago after a fire threatened their homes and a pre-school nursery facility. Three weeks ago, a fire raged at the nearby Kochav Yaakov community, where security officials later discovered firebombs that ignited the fire at the security fence.

“Residents of Mitzpe Danny, like others throughout Judea and Samaria, have asked the IDF to step up efforts to prevent a rash of thefts and to deter reckless Arab and Bedouin drivers, many of whom have no licenses or who drive cars without permits.

“Mitzpe Danny is named after British native Danny Frei, who was murdered by Arab terrorists at his home in nearby Maaleh Mikhmas in 1995. The outpost was established three years later.”



View of the area where Mitzpeh Danny is located in the West Bank

# Mitzpe Ramon

Mitzpe Ramon is a town in the Negev desert setting on the north ridge of the Ramon Crater, which is a very large erosion cirque (French for “arena”), or a basin formed at the head of a valley glacier by erosion. The Ramon Crater is known as a makhtesh which is a geological formation unique to the Negev. A makhtesh has steep walls of rock surrounding a deep encircled



valley drained by a single wadi. Mitzpe Ramon is unique because it is drained by two rivers: Nahal Ramon and Nahal Ardon. It is often called a “crater”, but craters are formed by the impact of a meteor or the eruption of a volcano. A makhteshim is formed by erosion. The outer layer of hard rock (limestone, dolomites) covered softer rock (chalk, sandstone) that is quickly removed and washed away leaving the outer hard rock setting over hollow space. This hard, outer rock eventually caves in on itself and a crater called a makhteshim is formed. The word makhtesh is the Hebrew word for “mortar grinder” and it is used because this process is similar to grinding a bowl. “Mitpe” means “look out.” So Mitzpe Ramon means “the lookout at Ramon.”



A view from the edge of the ridge looking over the basin, or makhtesh, called Mitzpe Ramon.



Looking down into the Ramon Crater.

# Mizpah

Mizpah is located between Gibeon to the SW and Bethel to the NE. Mizpah means “watch-tower” or “look-out.”

Today the it is Tell en-Hasbeh 8 miles north of Jerusalem (some consider it to be Nabi Samwil at Gibeon of God, 4 miles NW of Jerusalem.) Tell en-Hasbeh (ancient Mizpah) sets on an ancient road running from Jerusalem into the north hill country of Benjamin.



Excavation took place from 1926-1935 where 5,800 objects were collected.

**In the Bible:** **Judges 18:26**, allotted to Benjamin; **Judges 20-21**, Israelites met to make war against Benjamin due to their immoral crimes against the Levite’s concubine; **1 Samuel 7; 10:17**, a worship center during Samuel’s time; **1 Kings 15:22** and **2 Chron. 16:6**, King Asa took the building material out of Ramah, King Baasha’s city Israel and built Geba and Mizpah; **2 Kings 25:23**, Nebuchadnezer of Babylon appointed Gedaliah to serve him as governor of Israel. Gedaliah resided in Mizpah where the captains and their troops reported to him;

**2 Kings 25:25** and **Jeremiah 41:1, 3, 6, 10, 14, 16**, Ishmael came to Mizpah with 10 men and killed Gedaliah; **Hosea 5:1**, the priests and people of Israel are warned by God because they were a snare on Mizpah;

**Jeremiah 40:10, 12, 13**, Gedaliah promise to dwell in Mizpah; **Nehemiah 3:15**, Jerusalem’s Fountain Gate was repaired by Shallun the son of the one of the rulers of Mizpah; **Nehemiah 3:19** Ezer the son of the ruler of Mizpah repaired part of Jerusalem’s wall; **Nehemiah 3:7**, men from Mizpah helped repair Jerusalem. **Judas Maccabeus** gathered his troops at Mizpah before he met the Seleucids. Hellenistic pottery and coins matching this account have been found at Mizpah.

## Moreh (Hill of Moreh)

Moreh sets in the middle of the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley. It is 1,700 ft. high, so it is not a mountain, but its height makes it a strategic position to view from the east any activity in the Valley towards the west and the International Highway that crosses. Four cities with biblical references set on the Hill or near it: Ophrah, Shunem, Endor, Nain.



Since the 'N' in Hebrew can be transferred to an 'L' in Arabic the ancient site of Shunem is today the modern city of Sulam. "Moreh" means "teacher" and some associate the name with the teaching ministries of Elijah and Elisha. So this could be called "the Hill of the Teacher." Mount Gilboa is 7 miles south.

**In the Bible:** **Jud.6:11, 24**, Gideon lived on the SW side of the Hill of Moreh in Ophrah, a city in the Jezreel Valley; **Jud.7:1**, the Midianites camped near the Hill of Moreh in the Jezreel Valley; **1 Sam.28:4-8**, the Philistines camped at the village of Shunem on the southern slope of the Hill of Moreh; **1Kg.1:3-4**, Abishag was from the village of Shunem and she was chosen take care of the aged King David in his final days; **2Kg.4:8-37**, Elisha often stayed with a wealthy woman and her husband in Shunem on the southern slope of Moreh. The woman provided a room for Elisha. Elisha promised the couple they would have a son. Late when that boy died, Elisha raised him back to life; **Luke 7:11-17**, Nain was on the northern slope of the Hill of Moreh. This is where Jesus raised a woman's son back to life.

# Mount Gilboa

Mount Gilboa appears as a rocky ridge out of the Jezreel Valley to the southeast of the valley. It marked the north edge of Manasseh's territory and the southern edge of Issachar. Mount Gilboa was a favored spot for militaries to view the Jezreel Valley and watch for other invading armies.



**In the Bible:** **Judges 7**, Gideon chooses his 300 men at the base of Mount Gilboa at the Springs of Harod; **1Sam.28:4-5;31:1-5**, King Saul made his last stand against the invading Philistines here and died with his son Jonathan; **2Sm.1:21**, David curses Mount Gilboa as dry and barren for being the site of Saul's death.

# Mount Tabor

Mount Tabor sets on the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley. It is 11 miles from the west shore of the Sea of Galilee. The road called Via Maris passed by Mount Tabor through the Jezreel Valley going north into Damascus. This was one of the mountain peaks that beacons were lit to inform the northern cities of the Jewish holy days.



When looking to the east from the ridge that Nazareth sets on Mt. Tabor appears very large. It reaches a height of 1,850 feet. This is where Deborah and Barak camped before they defeated Sisera's army. Some mistakenly teach that Jesus' transfiguration occurred here on Mount Tabor, but it seems Scripture places this event on Mount Hermon near Caesarea Philippi.

Today Highway 65 runs past Mount Tabor and a visitor can drive their own vehicle to the top by Shibli's access road. In the Byzantine period a pilgrim would have to climb to the top using 4,340 stairs. Today a pilgrim visiting on foot can use the Israel National Trail to reach the top of Mount Tabor.

**In the Bible:** **Judges 19:12,22,34**, Mount Tabor is on the boundary of Zebulun, Isachar and Naphtali; **1 Chr.6:77**, Mount Tabor is a city for the Levites; **Judges4:6,12-16**, Deborah and Barak organized their army on Mount Tabor to face Jabin, king of Hazor led by General Sisera; **Jud.8:18-21**, Gideon killed the leaders of the Midianites because they had killed Gideon's brothers on Mount Tabor; **Psalms 89:12**, Mount Tabor used to express God's great creation; **Jer.46:18**, Jeremiah compares Nebuchadnezzar's greatness to the great height of Mount Tabor.



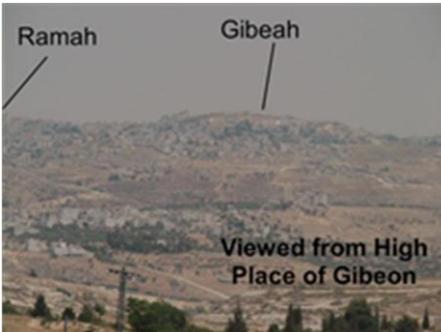
Mount Tabor

# Nabi Samwil

Nabi means “prophet” and Samwil is “Samuel,” so Nabi Samwil means “The Prophet Samuel. This is the high place often used for worship.



*Nabi Samwil is the same as Gibeah of God (Gibeon of God) (High Place of Gibeah or Gibeon) that is described earlier in this book.*



A view looking east from Nabi Samwil, or the High Place where Samuel met and anointed Saul



A view looking south at Jerusalem from the High Place of Nabi Samwil as the Crusaders did in 1099 AD.

# Nazareth

Nazareth was a small village overlooking the Jezreel Valley from the hills on the north side. The name Nazareth comes from the Hebrew word *netzer* for 'branch' or 'shoot.' Archaeology has revealed the Nazareth was settled in the bronze age around 1000 BC. It is never mentioned in the OT.



Nazareth was the crusader capital of Galilee in the 1100-1200's. It fell to the Muslims in 1263 when the Mameluk's Sultan Baybars took Nazareth. Pillars from the crusaders cathedral can be seen in the Museum of the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. Today Nazareth is a very busy, crowded city.

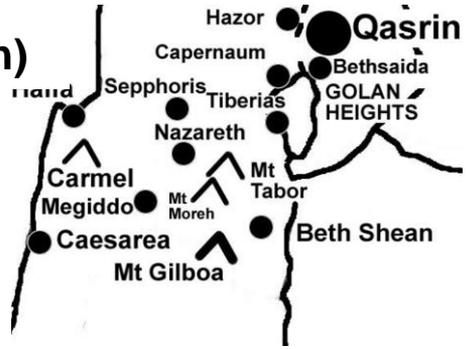
## Things to See:

- Basilica of the Annunciation – traditionally part of the house of Mary's family where the angel appeared to her. It is erected over an early Jewish church used before 325. The Byzantines built a shrine over this early church. Excavation show this Byzantine church was built in 427 AD.
- Elaborately Carved Pillars from the Crusaders cathedral are in the Museum of the Basilica of the Annunciation.
- Remains of homes of ancient Nazareth.

**In the Bible:** **Lk.1:26**, Gabriel appears to Mary; **Lk.2:1-7**, Joseph and Mary leave Nazareth for Bethlehem; **Mt.2:21-23**, Joseph and Mary return to Nazareth from Egypt with Jesus; **Lk2:41-52**, Jesus grows up in Nazareth; **Lk.4:16-30**, Jesus preaches his first recorded sermon in Nazareth and makes the crowd angry and they try to kill him by throwing Jesus down over a side of a steep cliff; **Mk.6:1-6**, Jesus performs only a few miracles in Nazareth because of the people's unbelief.

# Qasrin (Katzrin, Qatzrin)

Qasrin sets in the Golan Heights and is actually the remains of a Jewish community that was not settled until the Byzantine period (300's). This Talmudic Village was ruined by an earthquake in 746 AD during the Islamic Period. Many of the buildings have been reconstructed and hold ancient artifacts from daily life of the past when about 300 people lived in the 75 houses.



The Qasrin synagogue is one of the best preserved synagogues of the ancient world. The synagogue was constructed out of ashlar stones without mortar. It is oriented toward Jerusalem so that when the worshipers faced the Torah on the south wall they would be facing Jerusalem.



Olive Grinder used to grind olives including seeds. An olive press is in the back used to press the olive oil out of the crushed olives and seeds from the grinder.



Toni stands inside the north entrance of the synagogue built with ashlars, no mortar and a lintel with a carved wreath.

# Qumran

Qumran is 25 miles SE of Jerusalem next to the Dead Sea in the Judean Wilderness on a little plateau. This is most likely the source of John the Baptist who preached and baptized in this same area. The Dead Sea scrolls were discovered in caves surrounding this settlement. In fact, the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls led to the



excavation and discovery of many buildings in this community. The people who settled Qumran were Essenes of the NT time, a rival sect of Jews who separated from the corrupt temple practices and religion of the priests, Sadducees, Pharisees and other contemporary world views such as the Herodians, Zealots and Sicarii (first century terrorists). In 700's BC the Israelites had established a small fort here that may be the "City of Salt" of Joshua 15:61-62. In 150 BC the Essenes (The Teacher of Righteousness and 50 followers) fled here. After the corrupt reign of John Hyrcanus (a Hasmonean, 134-103 BC) many new converts flooded the settlement to join the Essenes. Extensive building programs followed. During Herod the Great's war with the Jews who resisted his appointment as king by Caesar (40-37), the Essenes had to flee Qumran. In 31 BC the site was damaged by an earthquake. The Essenes returned a few years later (enter John the Baptist) and continued here until the Romans expelled them in 68 AD during the Jewish Wars of 66-70 AD. At this time the Essenes hid their scrolls in caves to preserve them in hope of returning. Their return never occurred and these scrolls were not discovered until the 1900's when they became famously known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Today visitors can see: aqueduct, decantation pool, cisterns, ritual baths, refectory (cafeteria), council chamber, scriptorium, pottery workshop, cemetery and Cave 4 and 6.

**In the Bible:** **Js.15:61**, "the City of Salt"; **Mt.3:1**, "In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea."



#4 of 11 caves were the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Over 550 manuscripts fragments were found in this cave.#4.



The scriptorium where the Essenes wrote the scrolls. Benches, inkwells, etc. have been found in this room.

# Ramah

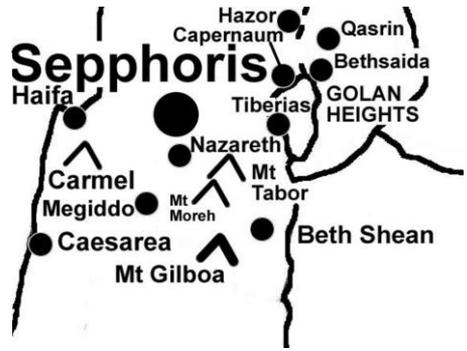
Ramah is in the land of Benjamin between Gibeon and Geba. Today it is Er-Ram 5 miles N. of Jerusalem.



**In the Bible:** **Joshua 18:25**, Ramah is near Gibeah of Benjamin. **Jg 19:11-15**, the Levite came to Gibeah with Ramah just ahead of him. **1 Kings 15:17-22**; **2 Chr. 16:1-6**, fortified by Baasha; **1 Kings 15:18, 20**, Asa, asked Ben Hadad the Syrian king to attack Baasha to draw his forces away from Ramah; **Jeremiah 40:1**, Babylonian captives were assembled in Ramah before moving to Babylon; **Jer.31:15**, Jeremiah predicted the captives of Jer.40:1 being assembled at Ramah when he says: “A voice was heard at Ramah, Rachel was weeping over her sons, because they were no more.” **1 Sam 1-2**, Ramah is the hometown of Samuel and his mother Hannah and his father Elkhana; **1Sm.8:4**, Ramah is a meeting place during Samuel's rule. **Matt.2:18**, quotes Jeremiah's prophecy about Rachel weeping that is mentioned above as being fulfilled with Herod killing of the Bethlehem boys.

# Sepphoris (Zippori)

Sepphoris sets 5 miles north of Nazareth, or about an hour's walk. It was the capital of western Galilee until Tiberias was in 19 AD. Sepphoris was under construction during Jesus' years in Nazareth. Herod Antipas began rebuilding the city in 3 BC. It is very possible that Joseph and Jesus worked on construction projects in this city as carpenters and stone masons.



In the winter of 39-38 Herod took Sepphoris in a snowstorm on his way to take Jerusalem. The city rebelled against Rome when Herod died and Rome destroyed it in 4 BC leaving it to Herod Antipas to rebuilt. Sepphoris took no part in the Jewish rebellion of 66-70 AD and so maintained good relations with Rome. When the Jews lost their temple, their holy city and freedom the Romans allowed them to move the Sanhedrin to Sepphoris. Here in Sepphoris synagogue life flourished and Sepphoris drew the greatest of the Jewish scholars. It was here in Sepphoris the the Jewish scholar Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi (135-217 AD) wrote down the oral law and traditions of the Jews in a collection known as the Mishna in 220 AD (the written commentary explaining the Mishna is called the Talmud). Sepphoris was first excavated in 1931 by Waterman then by J. F. Strange in 1983. Near the theater at the summit is a large dining room floor from 200 AD that may have been home to the governor. There is a mosaic on the floor with 1 ½ million stones of 28 colors that includes a beautiful woman known as "Mona Lisa of Galilee." In another large building is a mosaic that portrays life in Egypt and includes Pharos, the lighthouse of Alexandria, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Another interesting mosaic includes the zodiac with each of the zodiac signs labeled in Greek and Hebrew. This panel is placed beside other mosaic panels depicting Table of Shewbread, the consecration of Aaron, the ark of the covenant, etc



This Roman road in Sepphoris was one of the main streets. It was colonnaded



There are many well preserved floor mosaics in Sepphoris.

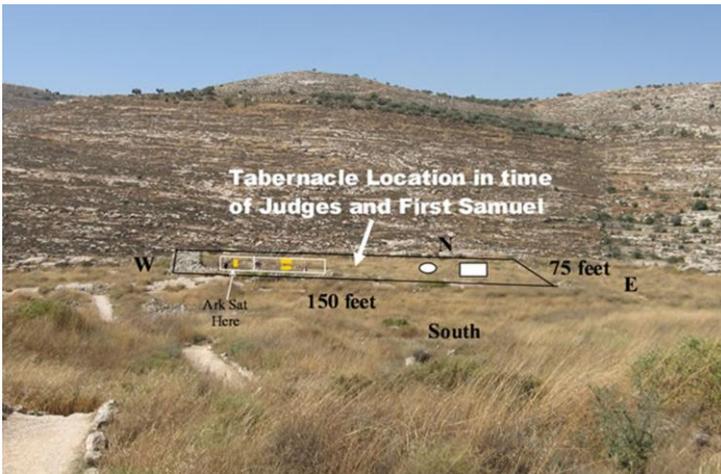
# Shiloh

Shiloh is the first place the tabernacle of Moses was set up permanently as described in 1 Samuel. It was overrun by the Philistines in the days of the High Priest Eli and moved to the High Place of Gibeon by Samuel. It was first occupied in the Bronze Age (1750-1550 BC) and glacis setting against a large city wall from this time can still be seen. Excavations have



uncovered no residences which seems to indicate that Shiloh was only a cultic site of worship for people traveling to the site (1400-1200 BC). The Israelites simply set up their worship center where the Canaanites had been holding services for 200 years. The Israelite's use of Shiloh came to an end in 1050 BC when the Philistines captured the Ark in battle and followed the retreating Israel army back into Shiloh to burnt the tabernacle. Shiloh is never seen again in Israel's history except as a warning to the people of Jeremiah's day. In 1100-900 BC, after Israel's worship center had moved to the High Place of Gibeon, and then, to Jerusalem, two houses were cut into the glacis that had protected the wall in the 1500's BC.

**In the Bible:** **Jos.18:1**, Israel sets up tabernacle after having come out of the wilderness; **1 Sm.3:2-15**, a permanent type of temple is built for the Ark at Shiloh; **Judges 21:19**; **1 Sm.1:3**, Israelites would travel annually to worship at Shiloh; **1 Sm.4:1-18**, The Ark of the Covenant is captured and Shiloh is destroyed by Philistines; **Jer.7:1-7**, Jeremiah uses God's destruction of Shiloh as proof that God will destroy the Jerusalem Temple.



Attempts to locate the place of the tabernacle have been many and futile since occupation and building during the Roman/Byzantine periods destroyed any evidence. The above photo presents merely a possible location

## Socoh (Soco)

Socoh was allotted to Judah and was located in the Shephelah between Adullam and Azekah. It is 17 miles West-Southwest from Jerusalem.

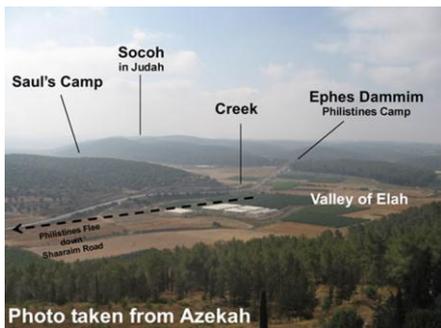
David killed Goliath near Socoh in the Elah Valley. The kings of Judah used it as an administrative center and stored products there. It is one of four cities named on the lamelech (LMLK) stamps found pressed into the



handles of pottery (see page 155). The word LMLK means “belonging to the king.” It seems this is the royal insignia of the Judean kings. Often the name of the city is included in the inscription which helps accurately identify the site being excavated.

Today ancient Socoh is called Givat HaTurmusim or Lupin Hill because in the spring this tel is covered with the wild blue Mountain lupins flower.

**In the Bible:** **Josh.15:35**, Socoh is in Judah between Adullam and Azekah; **1 Sm.17:1**, David fought Goliath near Socoh; **2 Chr.11:7**, Rehoboam fortified it for Judah; **2Chr.28:18**, Philistines took Socoh from King Ahaz;



Socoh and the Valley of Elah



Socoh as seen from Azekiah looking over the Elah Valley

# Sorek Valley

This valley stretches from the Judean Hill Country past Samson's birth place, past Beth Shemesh, and down into Philistine territory where it finally reaches the Shephelah and the Mediterranean Sea. It is one of the largest drainage basins, or wadis, from the Judean Hills. "Sorek" means "choice vine" from the root word meaning "red grapes."



Samson was born and buried in this valley. It was in this valley that Samson traveled to visit the Philistines, where the vineyards grew, where Samson killed the lion and where he tied the tails of 300 foxes together. It was in this valley that the cows pulled the cart sent from the Philistines to carry the Ark of the Covenant back to Israel. The Philistine city of Timnah sets on the west side of the Sorek Valley across from the Israelite city of Beth Shemesh which sets on the east side of the valley.

Today the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv railway runs in the Sorek Valley.

**In the Bible:** **Judges 16:4**, "Samson fell in love with a woman in the **Valley of Sorek** whose name was Delilah." **1Sm.6:9-21**, the cows pulled the cart with the Ark in it up the Sorek Valley straight to the Levitical city of Beth Shemesh. There in the valley the people of Beth Shemesh were harvesting their wheat when the cart with the Ark stopped by a large rock in the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh. It is here God struck down the Israelites that looked into the Ark.



To the north of Beth Shemesh is the ancient city of Zorah (by the single tree in the middle). The city of Eshtaol is to the right



Toni stands in Beth Shemesh on the east side of the Sorek Valley while holding a sign identifying the Sorek Valley.

# Tel Aviv (Joppa, Jaffa)

(This information is found under the site of Joppa on page 42.)



Highway 1 outside of Tel Aviv

# Tiberias

Tiberias was founded by Herod Antipas (Herod the Great's son) in 17 AD. South of Tiberias were hot springs used since the Iron Age (1200-586 BC). The new city of Herod Antipas was in Hellenistic style and replaced Sepphoris as the capital of west Galilee. It was built over an ancient burial grounds so it was considered unclean by the Jews. Herod Agrippa II



(Herod the Great's great-grandson) forced Jews to live there. Finally around 150 AD the city was purified and even the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Talmudic school left Sepphoris to settle in Tiberias. The Jerusalem Talmud was written here. (The Babylonian Talmud was written in Sepphoris). The city maintained peace with Rome during the Jewish wars. During the first century two synagogues were built near the coast of Galilee. In one synagogue there is a mosaic from 350 AD with three panels of mosaic figures: 1) the Ark with a menorah, shofar, etc.; 2) A zodiac circle with the pagan sun god Helios in his chariot encircled with the 12 signs of the Zodiac (similar to the one in Sepphoris made in 500-600 AD); 3) Greek inscriptions of the names of the founders of the synagogue.

Today Tiberias is a busy, modern city.

**In the Bible:** Herod Antipas named his city after Emperor Tiberias. Tiberias was the Caesar when Jesus began his ministry:

***“In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar – when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod (Antipas) tetrarch of Galilee, his brother (Herod) Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene – during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert.”*** - Luke 3:1-2

At that time people began to refer to the Sea of Galilee as the Sea of Tiberias as in John 6:1 and 21:1. There is no record of Jesus visiting Tiberias, only a couple of mentions of him being on or beside the Sea of Tiberias (or, the Sea of Galilee).

# Timnah

Timnah was a Philistine city in allotted to the tribe of Dan. It is strategically located in the Sorek Valley as travelers would pass from the Coastal Plain by the Mediterranean Sea through the Shephelah and into the land of Judah and the Judean Mountains. Timnah is 21 miles SE of Tel Aviv.



Excavation took place here 1977-79 by Amihai Mazar and George L. Kelm. First settled in the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1550 BC). There were 12 layers of strata showing continuous dwelling from its beginning until the Hellenistic Age. The strata from the time of the kings of Judah 700-600 BC provided a LMLK stamp on a ceramic potsherd which indicated it was from the royal store house. The remains of a Roman road can be seen on the edge of the Sorek Valley near the site of the tel along with the remains of the Chalcolithic and Canaanite settlements.

**In the Bible:** **Genesis 38:12-14**, Judah goes to Timnah to shear sheep but sleeps with his daughter-in-law who had disguised herself as a prostitute at Enaim which is on the road to Timnah; **Joshua 15:10**, Timnah is on the border of Judah; **Joshua 19:43**, allotted to Dan; **Judges 14**, Samson went to Timnah to find a wife and killed a lion on the way. In Timnah Samson marries a Philistine girl; **2 Ch.28:18;26:6**, controlled at times by Philistia and other times by Judah.



Toni holds a sign in Beth Shemesh identifying the Sorek Valley with Timnah setting on the edge.

# Valley of Aijalon

The Aijalon Valley is in the lowland of the Shephelah at the base of the Bethhoron Pass. The name means “place of gazelles” and was named after the city Aijalon that sets in the valley.



This is the valley where the moon stood still. Joshua had marched from his camp at Gilgal all night to arrive at Gibeon to defend them against an attack by a coalition of five kings. Joshua drove the coalition westward down the Pass of Bethhoron and then south into the Valley of Aijalon, but by this time Joshua was running out of daylight. This is where Joshua prays for the sun and moon to stand still.

In time the Philistines continued to control the valley which forced Dan to move their tribe to the north. At different times in history various armies would meet and assemble in the Valley of Aijalon to begin their assault on the Hill Country of Benjamin and the Hill Country of Judah: the Philistines, the Egyptians, the Seleudids, and the Romans.

**In the Bible: Joshua 10:12**, “O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon”; **1 Sm14:31**, Jonathon and Saul pursued and struck down the Philistines from Micmash to Aijalon (15 miles), similar to Joshua’s route of the five kings and along the same path.



Toni stands in Gezer with a sign pointing at the Aijalon Valley.



The Valley of Aijalon can be seen in the background outside the walls of the city. Galyn is seated inside the city in the gates of Gezer.

# Zorah

Zorah, allotted to the tribe of Judah. It sat on the top of a hill overlooking the Sorek Valley. Zorah is 15 miles from Jerusalem and was fortified in 2 Chron. 11:10 by Rehoboam. Zorah is mentioned in the Amarna letters written from Canaan to Egypt around the 1400's BC asking for help from invaders.



Zorah is the name of the Egyptian sun god, which is interesting because the name of two neighboring towns (as seen in the photo below) have similar pagan meanings and etymologies: Eshtaol means “valley of fire” and Beth Shemesh means “house of sun”.

**In the Bible:** Joshua 15:33, allotted to Judah; **Joshua 19:41**, Zorah is allotted to Dan, but is on Judah’s border with Dan; **Judges 18:2**, Dan occupied Zorah; **Judges 13:2**, Samson was born here and his father Manoah, was from the tribe of Dan; **Judges 13:25**, Samson lived his life in the area; **Judges 16:31**, Samson was buried near Zorah; **2 Chron.11:10**, Rehoboam fortified Zorah; **Neh.11:29**, exiles returning from Babylon settled in Zorah.



Galyn walks through the tel of Beth Shemesh with Zorah on the other side of the Sorek Valley.