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For information on future trips to Israel...  
Currently in the early planning stages for  
spring / summer 2024



# Nazareth Village



Matt 2:23; 26:71; Mark 1:24; 10:47; 14:67; 16:6;  
Luke 4:34; 18:37; 24:19; John 18:7; 19:19;  
Acts 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 22:8; 26:9



## Nazareth Village



- ✧ Today Nazareth is an Arab city and is the largest in lower Galilee with a population of approximately 100,000 people. Of this population about 70% identify as Muslim and 30% as Christian.
- ✧ There is not a ton to see archaeologically in modern Nazareth, but the city is built on the same location as ancient Nazareth, though it is much, much larger.
- ✧ From a Biblical perspective, Nazareth is known because it was the hometown of Jesus. He is frequently identified as a Nazarene in passages such as Matt 2:23; 26:71; Mark 1:24; 10:47; 14:67; 16:6; Luke 4:34; 18:37; 24:19; John 18:7; 19:19; Acts 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 22:8; 26:9.
- ✧ "Nazareth Village" is operated by the YMCA. It is part archaeological site and part recreated village and farm to show what life would have been like in Nazareth during the time of Jesus.



Not a lot of archaeology in Nazareth as it is a modern Arab city. (May 2022)



Feral cat at Nazareth Village (May 2022)





When we arrived at Nazareth Village, there was a beautiful rooster standing on the entrance steps. Within minutes he had crowed three times and I joked that this must be the traditional Peter rooster and that they will be building a cathedral soon in his honor. (May 2022)



Olive trees at Nazareth Village (May 2022)



Wine press from the first century that had been carved into the rock. It consists of a flat basin where the grapes would have been pressed by walking on them with bare feet. Shoes were not used because they might crush the seed which could give the wine a bitter taste. Below the basin was a vat that had been hollowed out to collect the juice from the grape as it came down the hill. In the picture above, we are standing in the press, and you can see the vat just below our feet. Above us and to the left is the watchtower and you can also see the walls used to create farming terraces up the hill. (May 2022)

## Isaiah 5:1-2



Let me sing for my beloved  
my love song concerning his vineyard:  
My beloved had a vineyard  
on a very fertile hill.  
He dug it and cleared it of stones,  
and planted it with choice vines;  
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,  
and hewed out a wine vat in it;  
and he looked for it to yield grapes,  
but it yielded wild grapes.

## Matthew 21:33



“Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who **planted a vineyard** and put a fence around it and **dug a winepress** in it and **built a tower** and leased it to tenants, and went into another country...

Parable of the Tenants



Close up of the watchtower at the top of the hill (May 2022)



Close-up of the wine press with vat below...all carved into the rock. (May 2022)

## Tel Dan



Gen 14:14; Josh 19:40- 48; Judg 18:27, 29;  
1 Kgs 12:26-33, 15:20, 20:34, 42; 2 Chr 16:4;

“From Dan to Beersheba” - Judges 20:1; 1 Samuel 3:20; 2 Samuel 3:10,  
17:11, 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25; 1 Chronicles 21:2; 2 Chronicles 30:5





## Tel Dan



- ☞ Dan is located at the foot of Mount Hermon
- ☞ In 1993 an inscription was found at Tel Dan that reads “King of Israel, King of the House of David.” This was the first time a reference to David was found outside of scripture.
- ☞ Dan is first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 14. Abraham is pursuing Chedorlaomer king of Elam, who had abducted his nephew Lot, when they looted Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham caught up with Chedorlaomer at Dan (Genesis 14:14).
- ☞ According to Judges 18:29, Dan was called Laish (or Leshem) prior to Israel’s conquest of Canaan, so the use of the place-name “Dan” in Genesis 14 likely reflects a later updating of the text to use the Israelite name instead of the Canaanite name for the site.

The inscription regarding David is now held in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem

## Tel Dan (Cont.)



- ✧ The tribe of Dan was originally given territory on the southern coast, but they migrated when they could not defeat Philistine coastal inhabitants (Joshua 19:40- 48). A group of Danites went north to Laish and destroyed it (Judges 18:27). They renamed it “Dan” after their patriarch.
- ✧ Dan was also the location of a large religious complex, built by Jeroboam during the Divided Kingdom (1 Kings 12:26-33). He built a large altar and temple complex at Dan (and at Bethel; see 1 Kings 12:29) to stop Israelites from going to Jerusalem to worship. He set up a golden calf in the shrine and proclaimed, “Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt” (1 Kings 12:28).

## Tel Dan (Cont.)



- ✧ During the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, Dan traded hands several times between the Israelites and the Arameans. Dan was briefly captured by Ben-Hadad I—king of the Arameans of Damascus in the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC—he was bribed by Judah to break his alliance with Israel (1 Kings 15:20; 2 Chr 16:4).
- ✧ By the reign of Ahab (ca. 874–850), Dan was once again under Israelite control. Ahab defeated Ben-Hadad (possibly his son Ben-Hadad II) and Ben-Hadad offered to give back “the cities which my father took from your father” (1 Kings 20:34). This included Dan and was an offer Ahab agreed to. Ahab was condemned for accepting this concession instead of killing Ben-Hadad, as the Lord had ordered him to do (1 Kings 20:42).

## Tel Dan (Cont.)



- ☞ Dan was recaptured by the Arameans under Hazael in the late ninth or early eighth century, but the Syrians would only control it for a short time. When Syria was threatened by Assyria on its eastern border during the early seventh century, the Israelites under Jeroboam II took the opportunity to recapture Dan.
- ☞ “From Dan to Beersheba” is a biblical phrase used nine times to refer to the settled areas of the Tribes of Israel between Dan in the North and Beersheba in the South (Judges 20:1; 1 Samuel 3:20; 2 Samuel 3:10, 17:11, 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25; 1 Chronicles 21:2; 2 Chronicles 30:5).

The phrase “From Dan to Beersheba” contributed to the position that was used by British politicians during negotiation of the British Mandate for Palestine following World War I.



Dan is in the foothills of Mt. Hermon. Mt. Hermon consists of several peaks that reach a height of 9,232 ft above sea level. The snow from the top of Mt. Hermon supplies the 4 tributaries to the Jordan River. (May 2022)



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The largest of these tributaries is Dan Springs, which was the first thing that you see on the walk to the city. This stream moves very fast and supplies 1/3 of the water to the Jordan River. (May 2022)





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Restored outer wall of Tel Dan (Restored by a team from the University of Chicago) – January 2020

## 1 Kings 12:26–33



<sup>26</sup> And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David. <sup>27</sup> If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." <sup>28</sup> So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." <sup>29</sup> And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. <sup>30</sup> Then this thing became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one. <sup>31</sup> He also made temples on high places and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not of the Levites. <sup>32</sup> And Jeroboam appointed a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. <sup>33</sup> He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he had devised from his own heart. And he instituted a feast for the people of Israel and went up to the altar to make offerings.



The remains of Jeroboam's temple that is mentioned above from 1 Kgs 12. This was the actual site where Jeroboam placed his golden calf for the people to worship. Bema (High Place) is on the right and the altar on the left. Metal frame shows where altar would have been. (January 2020)



Metal frame shows where altar would have been. (May 2022)



Teaching from the front of Jeroboam's temple (May 2022)



Standing in front of Jeroboam's temple (May 2022)



Sitting on the remains of the Bema (High Place) – January 2020





“Abraham’s Gate.” This is a mud brick gate discovered in the 1980s that is remarkably intact. It is from the 18th century BC, which would have been the approximately time of Abraham. It is possible that when Abraham pursued Chedorlaomer to Dan / Laish to rescue Lot that he entered the city through this gate. There has been no restoration on this site. It is exactly as it was discovered. Probably the oldest gate in the world. (May 2022)



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Artist model of what the gate and city wall would have originally looked like (January 2020)



In 1993 an inscription that reads “King of Israel, King of the House of David” was found at Dan / Original is in the Israel Museum



Talking to the group about the David inscription found at Dan (May 2022)

# Caesarea Philippi



Matt 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30



## Caesarea Philippi



- ✧ The city was originally built by Herod Philip, the second son of Herod the Great at the southwestern base of Mount Hermon.
- ✧ It was adjacent to a spring, grotto, and related shrines dedicated to the Greek god Pan. Pan had the face and upper torso of a human and the horns, beard, and lower body of goat. He was the god of forests.
- ✧ Caesarea Philippi is mentioned in both Matthew and Mark as the setting for a conversation in which Jesus asks His disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” – to which Peter replies, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt 16:13–20; Mark 8:27–30). Luke records a similar conversation but does not mention Caesarea Philippi (Luke 9:18–22).
- ✧ Jesus’ comment about the “rock” could possibly have been inspired by the giant rock mountain face at the temple of Pan.



## Caesarea Philippi (Cont.)



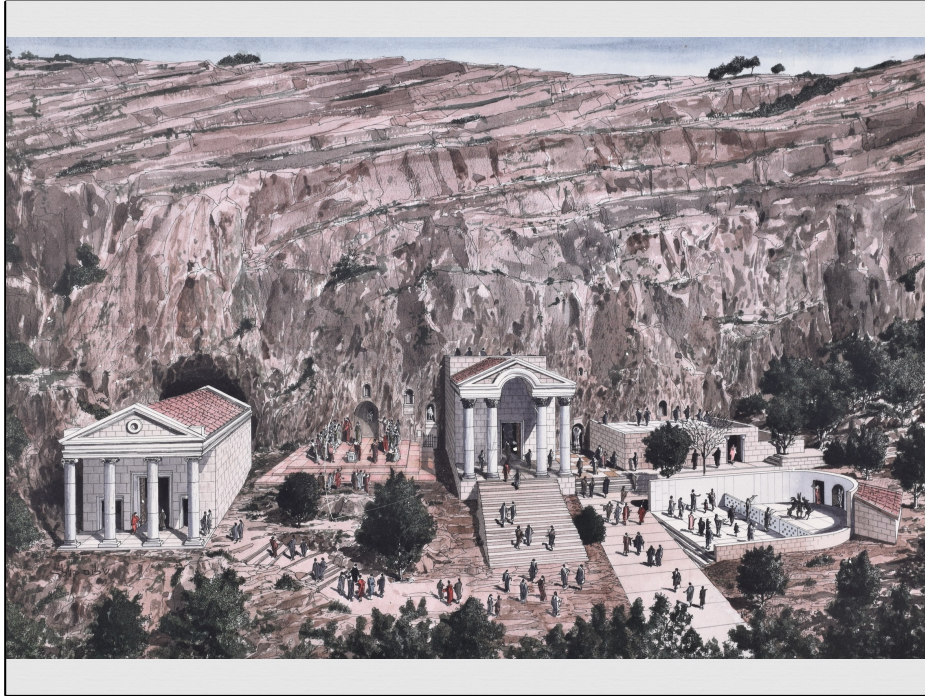
- ☞ Caesarea Philippi is the home to the recently uncovered remains of the palace of Herod Agrippa II.
- ☞ Agrippa II was the last Herod to also be called king.
- ☞ Herod Agrippa II tried Paul in Caesarea Maritima in Acts 25 and 26.
- ☞ In 61 AD, King Agrippa II renamed the administrative capital as **Neronias** in honor of Roman Emperor Nero.



Spring dedicated to the Greek god Pan. (May 2022)



Remains of the Temple and Grotto of Pan (May 2022)



Artist rendition of the Temple and Grotto of Pan



Greek god Pan / god of Forests



Remains of the Temple and Grotto of Pan (May 2022)



Remains of the Temple and Grotto of Pan (May 2022)



Remains of the Temple and Grotto of Pan





Remains of the Temple and Grotto of Pan (May 2022)



Speaking to the group at Pan's temple / talking to them about possibility that Jesus mentioning the "rock" was inspired by the view at Caesarea Philippi in the foothills of Mount Hermon (May 2022)



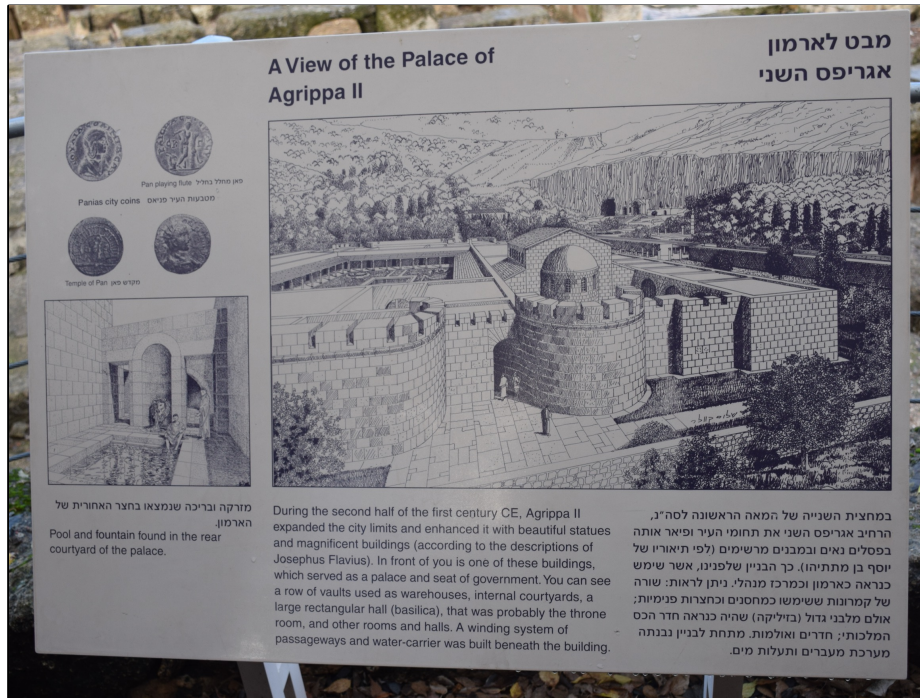
Cardo from ancient Caesarea Philippi (Cardo = Heart of the City) – May 2022



Remains of Palace of Herod Agrippa II (May 2022)



Palace of Herod Agrippa II (January 2020)



Artist rendition of the Palace of Herod Agrippa II (January 2020)



Speaking to the group about Herod Agrippa II (May 2022)



Palace of Herod Agrippa II (January 2020) – Steps that lead to lower tunnels of the palace. These are the steps where I fell in 2020 and smashed my hand / required surgery and many screws to repair.





Triumphantly conquering the stairs in May 2022.



Tunnels under the Palace of Herod Agrippa II (May 2022)



Tunnels under the Palace of Herod Agrippa II (May 2022)