

The family-social-secular-religious world of Jesus of Nazareth: from twelve to thirty years of age.

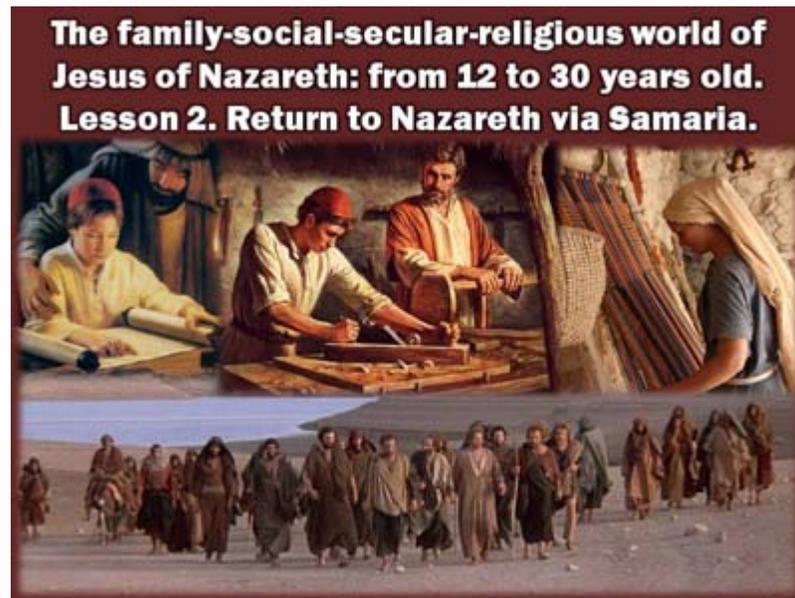
This series of four lessons was prepared for a class of students twelve to eighteen years old.

Lesson 2

The young Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. His return to Nazareth via Samaria.

Moral and spiritual lessons. Plus some history, culture, geography and archaeology. To broaden the mind, sharpen perceptions and strengthen the spirit.

Images, with Notes for the Teacher



A. This slide introduces Lesson 2. The young Jesus Christ returns from Jerusalem to Nazareth via the province of Samaria.

B. The teacher, at his discretion, reviews the graphics. Lesson 1 contains extensive notes on them.

C. An effective teacher avoids excessive repetitions. At the same time, he is careful to emphasize once and again the focus and purposes of these lessons. These also are defined at the beginning of Lesson 1.



A. Every year, Joseph, Mary and their son Jesus went up from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the solemn feast of Passover, perhaps remaining on occasions for the feast of Pentecost celebrated fifty days after Passover. As more children were born to Joseph and Mary, they also would accompany their parents and older brother Jesus on those trips.

B. The focus of Lesson 2 is on the return of the young Jesus, his family and the company of which they formed a part, **from Jerusalem to Nazareth via the province of SAMARIA**, when Jesus was twelve years old. Again, each student is encouraged to identify himself with the young Jesus, projecting himself as walking along with him, each one according to how old he is. That is, the twelve year old projects Jesus as being twelve years old. The fourteen year old sees him as being fourteen. The sixteen year old thinks of him as being sixteen. In Lesson 1, the focus was on the possible **Jerusalem-Jericho-Nazareth route**.

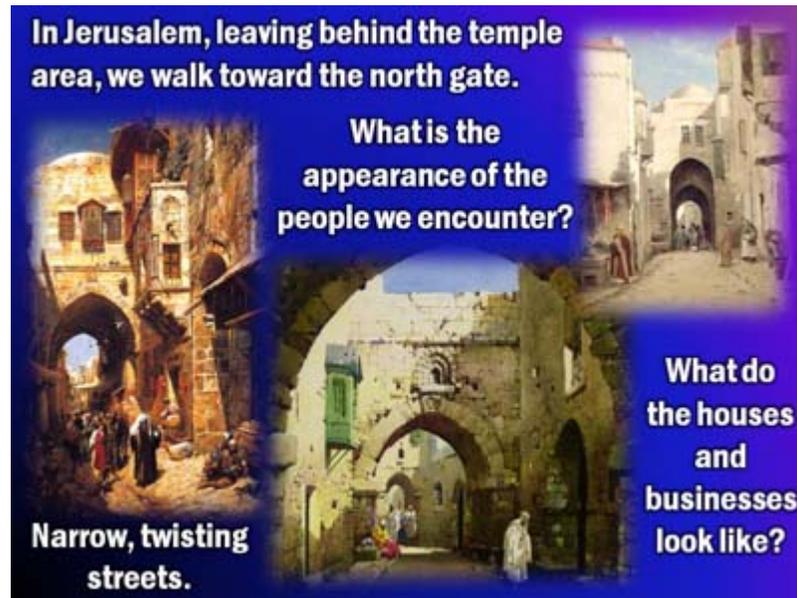
C. Always calling attention to **places and peoples the young Jesus might see** with the object of highlighting the fact that **he did not live the solitary or isolated life of a “youth that spent all in his time in the small village of Nazareth.”**

D. If possible, allow selected students to use a **laser pointer** to identify elements of the images, or the mouse pointer or some other type.

E. On the map...

1. Identify the two routes Jerusalem-Jericho-Jordan River-Nazareth. One running along the west side of the river; the other, on the eastern side.
2. Identify the province of Samaria, and the Jerusalem-Samaria-Nazareth route.
3. Compare the distances of the routes.

F. Ask one of the students to read what the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus says.

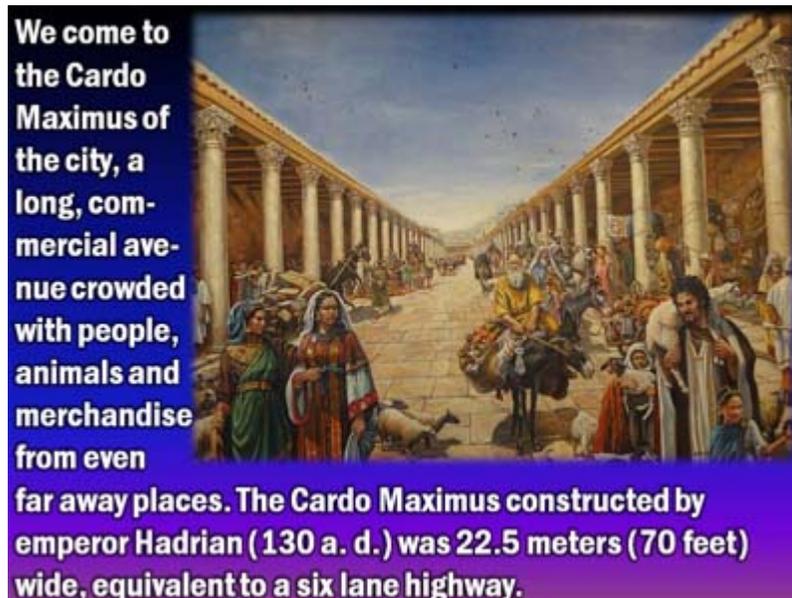


A. The point of departure for the return from Jerusalem to Nazareth via Samaria is the **great, elegant temple on the Temple Mount**. That is where Joseph and Mary found the young Jesus, twelve years old, when he stayed behind in Jerusalem, talking with the doctors of the law, after his parents and the rest of the company had left for Nazareth four days before.

B. As each one of us projects himself as accompanying Jesus and his parents, we leave the area of that temple, walking, not towards the East as if going by the Jericho route, but in the general direction of the northern part of Jerusalem to take the route through the province of Samaria.

C. Allow the students to point out and comment on different elements in the three graphics. Types of structures and their possible uses. Styles of clothing worn by those we encounter on the streets. Emphasis on the fact that the young Jesus would have walked such streets in Jerusalem, seeing people dressed like that, etcetera.

1. Observe that these narrow streets were not always tranquil and safe, for, according to histories of Jerusalem and Judea of the first century, **there were times when thieves and other criminals abounded in certain areas of the city**.
2. Do such areas, with narrow, dangerous streets, exist in towns or cities of the present time? Do any of the students reside in such areas? Do any visit such areas?
3. What steps can you take to avoid being a victim of petty criminals or vice ridden people in such areas? Drug sellers, drug addicts, drunks, prostitutes, thieves.
4. What would the young Jesus have done?



A. Going through the narrow streets, we come to a wide avenue, more or less in the center of the city, which runs from North to South. This is the **Cardo Maximus**. “**Cardo Maximus**” is Latin for “**Main Street**.” When Romans built cities, their master plan included the principal Cardo Maximus from North to South, and another Cardo Maximus, perhaps not so wide, from East to West. In cities they conquered, they imposed the same plan when they reconstructed or improved them. Let us keep in mind that **the Roman Empire conquered Israel in the year 63 before Christ**, applying its laws and carrying out their criteria for city planning, etcetera.

B. Read the information on the slide.

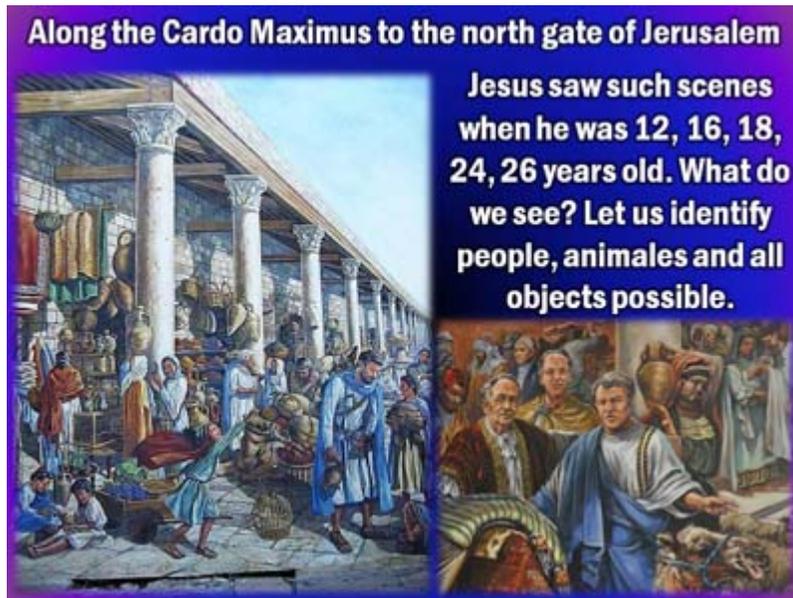
C. **The scene.** At his discretion, the teacher may invite students to help identify elements of the scene. Special attention should be called to:

1. The professionally paved street, made with precisely cut tiles of rock.
2. That the street slopes slightly from the center to each side, allowing for the drain off of water.
3. The spaciousness of the street.
4. The columns on both side, five meters (sixteen feet) high, with ornate capitals. These columns supported roofs on both sides of the street.
5. That, between the columns and interior walls, there were shops and businesses all along the street on both sides.

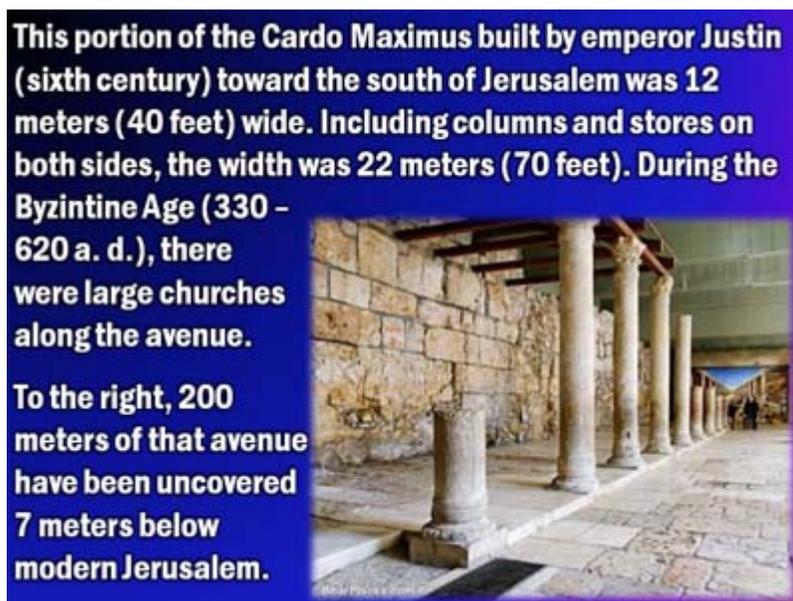
-Visualize the young Jesus walking along that Cardo Maximus in Jerusalem, in the company of his parents.

-Encourage each one to see himself back then, in Jerusalem, walking along that Main Street with Jesus.

-The scene is a mural which actually exists in the modern city of Jerusalem.



- A. Two more views, closer up, of portions of the Cardo Maximus of Jerusalem in the time of Jesus Christ and the apostles.
- B. Encourage students to identify all the different people, animals, objects, etcetera. What are the people doing? What were the different objects used for?
- C. Relate all that is seen to the young Jesus. What would have been his reaction, as a young boy or young man, to such scenes? How much of all this would he have assimilated? Would he have been fascinated by it? Would he have dreamed of becoming a part of it? Being a merchant? Getting rich? Give reasons for your answers.



- A. The photograph in this slide shows the ruins of a part of the Cardo Maximus constructed by the Roman emperor Justin in the VI century. These ruins were discovered by archeologists 7 meters (22 feet) under the actual city of Jerusalem. ¿Why at such a depth? Because after the VI century, more ther foreign forces attacked the city,

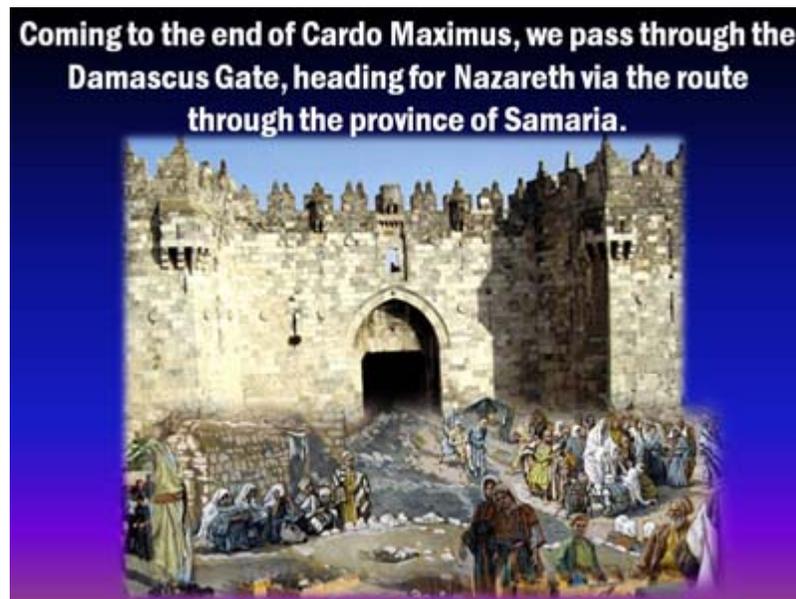
destroying it and rebuilding over the rubble of previous constructions. This happened once and again. Thus it is that modern Jerusalem rests on numerous strata of rubble of the city in its different stages during long centuries, even from the time of king David, whose reign began in the year 1005 b. C., coming to an end in 965 b. C. What happened to Jerusalem is illustrative of what happened to many, many cities throughout the world, perhaps especially to those in the Fertile Crescent.

B. In the upper, right corner, huge, concrete beams support modern buildings constructed above these ruins.

C. **“Byzantine Stage...”** This stage began when the Roman emperor Constantine converted from paganism to Christianity and moved the capital of the Roman Empire from the city of Rome, in the Italian peninsula, to a place called Bizantium, in the East, on the Strait of Bosphorus. The new capital was inaugurated in the year 330 a. d., and was called the “New Rome,” later “Constantinople,” in honor of its founder, the emperor Constantine. **This new capital was not pagan but “Christian.”** It is also worthy of note that neither Constantine nor his successors ever gave the name “Byzantine Empire” to the Roman Empire, “Byzantine Empire” being a nomenclature created exclusively by modern historians, a curious but true fact which has contributed to confusion about the duration of the Roman Empire. Today, Constantinople is known as Istanbul, and belongs to the country of Turkey. For Jerusalem, the “Byzantine Stage” came to an end in more or less 620 a. C., when forces loyal to the prophet Mohamed conquered it, converting it into an Arab-Mohammedan city.

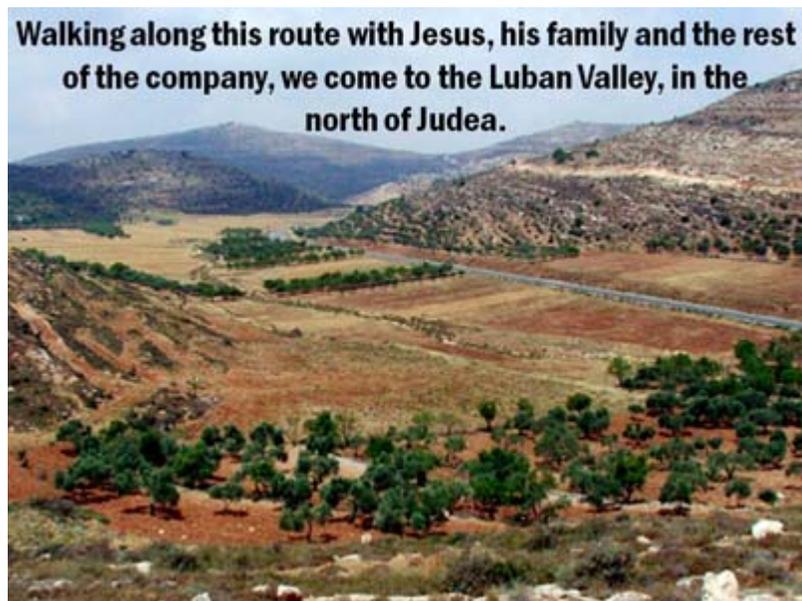
D. At his discretion, the teacher may share a part or all of this information with the class.

E. Emphasize the existence of **many churches** along the Cardo Maximus of Jerusalem during three centuries –from 330 to 620 a. d. Not necessarily many denominations or sects, but a number of congregations more or less of the kind common in that time.



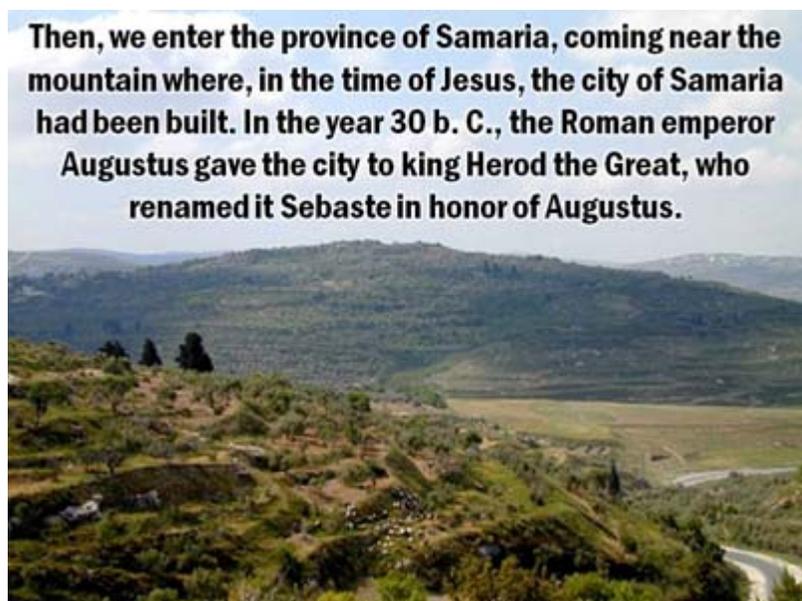
A. In this amalgamation of a photograph with a painting, the wall and the Damascene Gate exist today as they appear in this slide.

B. The painting of people, dressed as in the first century, coming out of the gate is superimposed on the photograph, with the idea of projecting Jesus, his family, ourselves and other travelers among them.



A. Not a few trees grow in the Luban Valley, in the northern part of Judea, and some lands can be used for different crops. The young Jesus would pass through this valley, or nearby, in the company of his parents, the rest of the family and other pilgrims.

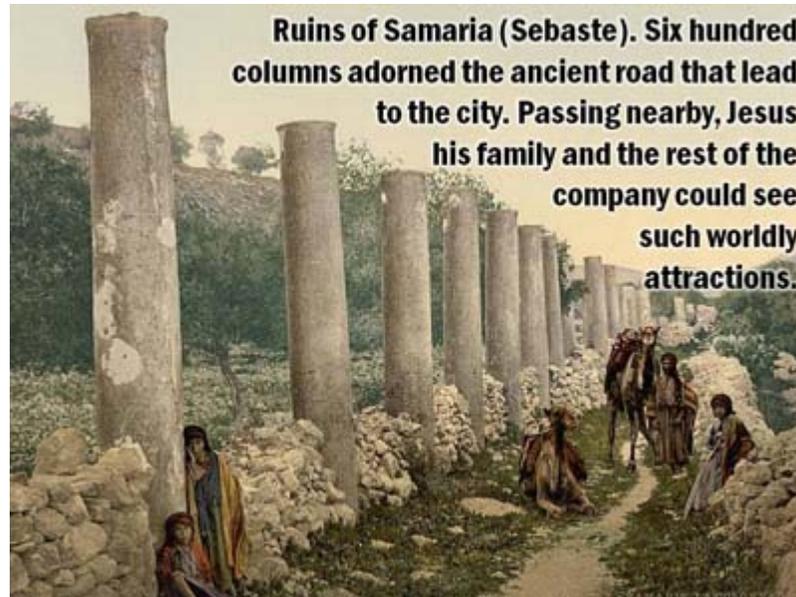
B. By contrast, following the route from Jerusalem to Jericho, the traveler soon enters a very arid area where no tree grows and only a few desert-type plants. Do you remember the “Jericho Road” which Jesus and his family would have possibly walked on one or another of their trips to or from Jerusalem?



A. Herod the Great was king of Judea, Samaria and Galilee from 37 b. C. to 4 a. D.

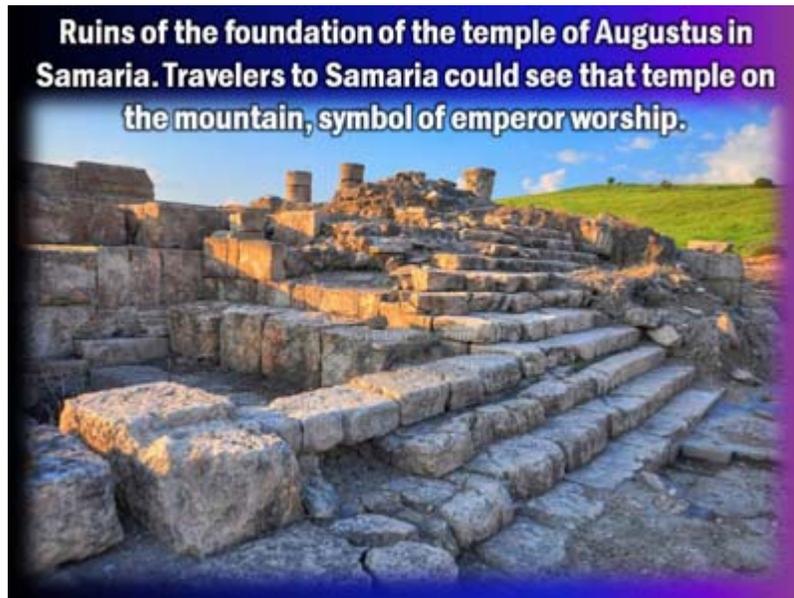
B. **“Samaria: Mountain, city, region and kingdom of the north.”** Samaria was the capital, residence and burial place of the kings of Israel [the ten northern tribes]. It was conquered by Asiria in the year 721 b. C. Exiles from a number of nations were taken there to live. Samaria was conquered by Greece in 331 b. C. It was destroyed by John Hircanus and the Hasmoneans in the year 119 b. C. Under the leadership of the Roman Pompey, it was resettled in 63 b. C. Herod the Great obtained control of Samaria en 30 b. C., *“and turned the city into one of the principal ones of his territory”* (Holman Concise Bible Dictionary). 1 Kings 16:21-28.

C. In Greek, “Sebaste” is the feminine form of the name Augustus.



A. Ruins of the ancient road that lead to the city of Samaria in the time of the young Jesus Christ.

B. In the first century, the Samaritans were a mixture of peoples from different parts of the world. They were not Jews, though some, even many, might have Israelite blood. How many Samaritans would Jesus have seen during his youth?



A. Ruins of the foundation of the temple to Augustus in Samaria. Herod the Great had this temple built in honor of the Roman emperor Augustus.

B. Although Herod practiced the Jewish religion, he maintained his position as king of Judea, Samaria and Galilee for 41 years thanks to the honor he paid to Roman governors, including emperors, and to rich contributions he gave some.

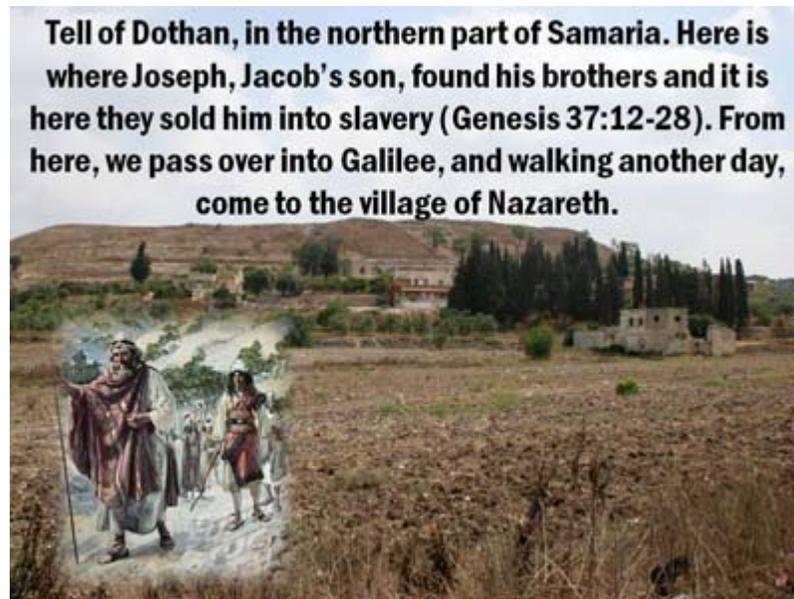


A. Later in his life, when Christ went through Samaria, with whom did he have a conversation, and what were the subjects? With the Samaritan woman at the well. The subjects included: (1) the water of eternal life, (2) the social-marital wife of that woman, (3) worship in that time by Samaritans and Jews, (4) that salvation did not come through the Samaritans but rather through the Jews, (5) who would be the true worshipers of God when *“the hour comes, and now is,”* (6) the nature of God and (7) who is the Messiah (John 4:1-26).

B. Who was the first to preach the gospel in Samaria, establishing a church of Christ there? Phillip, the evangelist (Acts 8:13).

C. What apostles visited the church in Samaria? Peter and John (Acts 8:14-25).

D. Who was the most famous personage of that city in the first century? Simon, the Magician (Acts 8:13-24). Some might answer: “the Good Samaritan.” Or even: “the Samaritan woman with whom Jesus conversed at the well.” But, in that time and the province of Samaria, Simon was a powerful figure. Information about him after his conversion may be found on the Internet.



A. The “Tell of Dothan” is the “hill” in the photograph. However, that is not a natural hill, but rather the accumulated rubble of ancient villages, towns or cities built on the spot over many centuries, each one destroyed and replaced by the one built on top of its ruins. There are a whole lot of tells throughout the countries of the Near East, a large number of which have yet to be excavated by archeologists. Covered by layers of sand or silt, and some with vegetation, excavating even a small area requires arduous work, which must also be carried out with great care so as not to destroy, in the very process of excavation, artifacts of possibly great value.

B. Here, the young Joseph, Isaac's son, not only found his brothers but was sold into slavery by them to the Ismaelites for twenty pieces of silver, who then took Joseph to Egypt (Genesis 37:12-28).

C. From here, walking another day, we cross from Samaria into Galilee, and come, at last, to the village of Nazareth.