

- Good morning Arising Church, (continuing in the series: Encountering Israel: Deepening Convictions)

Today, we will dig into the what we have been gleaned from our interactions with the Word, enriched by the recent insights we've gathered from exploring the geography of Israel. The title of today's message is:



Let's begin with a passage from Jeremiah that is often quoted but not fully understood. The original audience would have comprehended its meaning in a way that is seldom considered today. We will first read it in the ESV, which is representative of most translations, and then go deeper by examining the literal Hebrew and then the oldest Greek translation of the passage.

- **Jeremiah 6:16–17 (ESV)**
- 16 Thus says the LORD:
“Stand by the roads, and look,
and ask for the ancient paths,

where the good way is; and walk in it,
and find rest for your souls.

But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

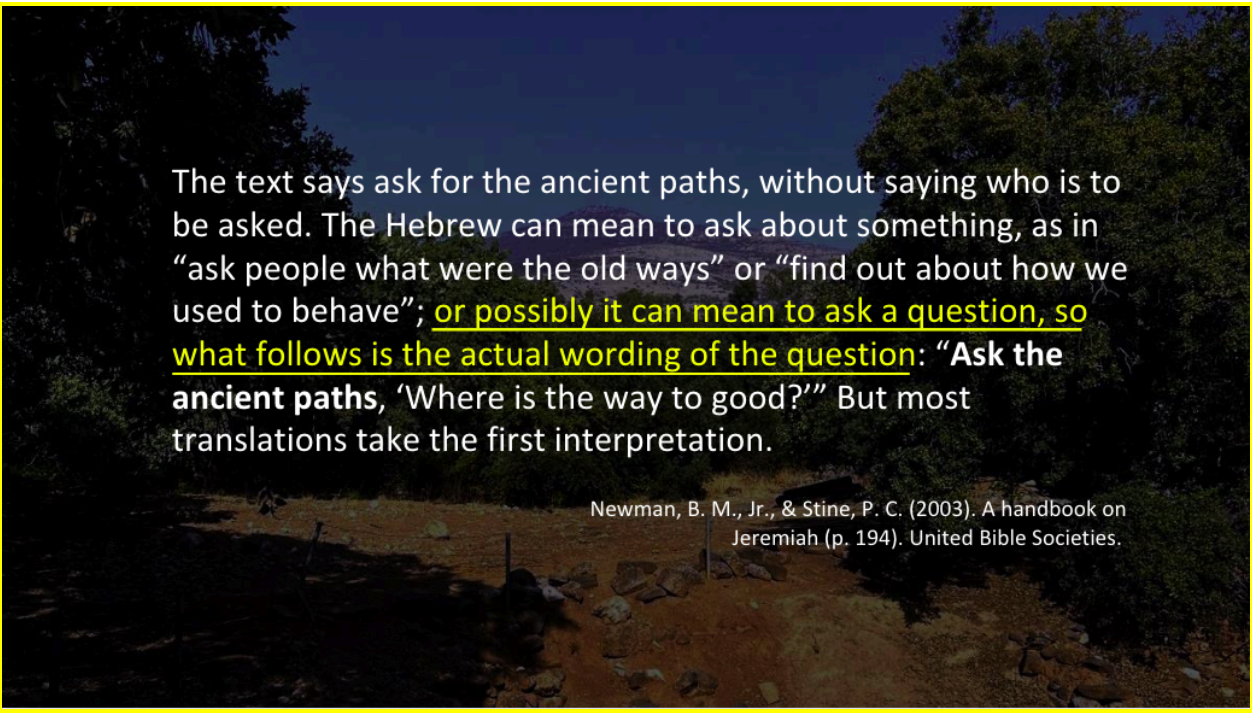
17 I set watchmen over you, saying,
'Pay attention to the sound of the trumpet!'

But they said, 'We will not pay attention.'

Clearly, this is a corrective passage being given from Jeremiah to the nation that concerns their rebellion to Adonai's will. However, when considering this passage, what is usually gleaned is that the people are positioned as near a pivotal intersection and in need of directions to be able to know what the ancient more traveled and sure paths are? The thought is that they are not on the roads but near them. Moreover, they don't know the ancient paths, they must ask for them.

This understanding is because nearly all translations supply words that the original Hebrew statement does not contain. In fact, let us show you a slide from the UBS:

(READ SLIDE)



The text says ask for the ancient paths, without saying who is to be asked. The Hebrew can mean to ask about something, as in "ask people what were the old ways" or "find out about how we used to behave"; or possibly it can mean to ask a question, so what follows is the actual wording of the question: "Ask the ancient paths, 'Where is the way to good?'" But most translations take the first interpretation.

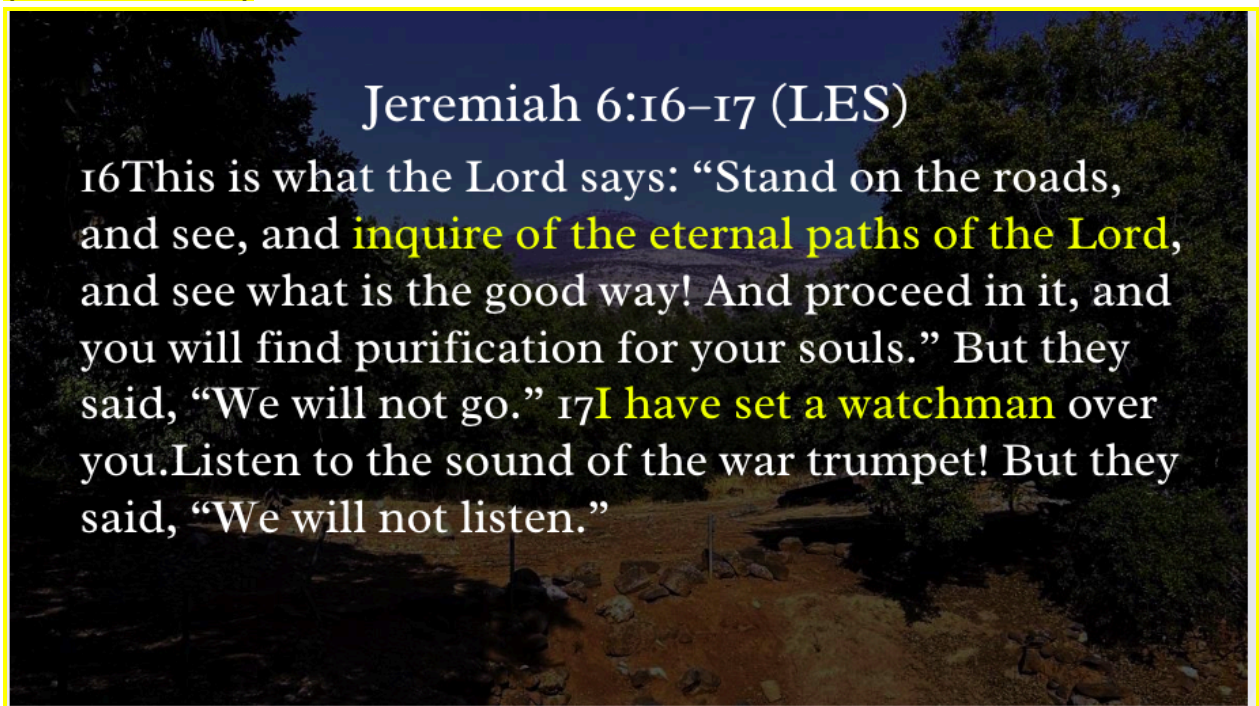
Newman, B. M., Jr., & Stine, P. C. (2003). A handbook on Jeremiah (p. 194). United Bible Societies.

The distinction here is subtle but carries significant implications. Are the people truly lost and clueless about their next steps, or are they on a well-defined, ancient path that they should be seeking guidance from? The former suggests ignorance, while the latter leans more towards rebellion against something they already know. In Hebrew, this can be interpreted as "***You stand on the roads and see, you should inquire of the ancient paths,***" implying that Adonai had already placed them on the right path, and all they needed to do was consult the way that had been revealed. Regardless, the core issue is rebellion, but this translation choice influences how we perceive the foundation already given to us.

affirm the Church that they are already on the Eternal paths... they have what they need

Let's examine how the LXX translated this passage from Jeremiah.
Next slide:

(READ SLIDE)



For the time being let's not explore the negativity of their rebellion, instead let's focus on the admonition to stand **on** the roads. **To see and inquire of the eternal paths** of the Lord that had already been revealed to them. This means that they were not looking for a pathway to righteousness; they already had that pathway revealed to them. All they needed to do was inquire of the eternal paths that the Lord had already given them. This is clearly a reference to the Eternal Law of God! More than that, look at verse 17: "I have set **a watchman** over you". In this reading it becomes clear that the Lord had already given them the Eternal Law or ancient path ways that they should be consulting and that the Eternal Law is a watchman over them.

God has already blessed you with a Watchman... the Law's instruction protects you

Today, we are going to take our stand on the eternal path of the Lord. We will embrace the Watchman that Adonai has placed over us that will lead us into victory rather than rebellion and defeat. His Law will make wise the simple and enlighten our eyes to an overcoming faith. As Psalm 119:33 says, He will...

- **Psalm 119:133 (ESV)**
- 133 Keep steady my steps according to your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.

My friends, we are not looking for the pathway we are consulting the pathway already laid out for us. His Word is a watchman over us that is living and active. Continuing in what has already been revealed will guarantee that we overcome the world even as we purify our own souls.

Church, one of the reason for our sermon today is that there is necessary confrontation on the journey of salvation. The process is:

- The enemy resists, identity is contested, and through this process, conviction is forged.
- Ultimately, this ends up affirming your trust in the Law as a Watchman and absolute confidence in the Eternal path that you have chosen to walk.

This morning, we wanted to speak to you about a compelling site in Israel rich in both biblical and cultural history. Located within the northern landscape of Israel, the ruins of Tel Dan date back over 4,000 years, offering a glimpse into a Canaanite city and Israelite stronghold that has stood since the time of Abraham. Next slide:

(SLIDE)



The small figure that you see at the top of this structure is Pastor Nick Slaughter. This is actually a model of what the ancient mudbrick gate into the city used to look like at around 1700 B.C.

(SLIDE)



Now in this image, Pastor Slaughter is physically on top of the ruins of the ancient mudbrick gate as it looks today. Incredibly, it's still standing! We wanted to show you a video of us teaching about this mudbrick gate from our Israel trip.

Video Judah Tel Dan part 1

<<Tel Dan Gates1.mp4>>

Archeologist, know that this structure was built in the same manner as people from Iraq or Mesopotamia... the structure itself is unique in Israel and was built by foreigners

As early as Genesis 14, the Scripture begins to speak regarding this historic biblical site of Tel Dan. Let's start reading together at the beginning of the chapter:

- **Genesis 14:1–4 (ESV)**
- 1 In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, 2 these kings

made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). 3 And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). 4 Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

We are now encountering the first geopolitical conflict and war recorded in the Bible. One of the most important questions that you can ask yourself is "Why is this story being related in the Text?" In other words, what does the Holy Spirit-inspired author intend for you to take away from these details? By the end of our time together this morning, the answer to that question will become very clear to you. Rather than just give you the answer up front, let's take some time to envision what is happening in these opening verses.

The text presents two factions in conflict with each other. This next slide will help you keep the two parties straight in your mind:

(DO NOT READ)



The four kings on the left are the larger and more predominate of the two parties involved in this war. The leader of the four kings is Kedorlaomer, and he is centered in the region of present day Iraq and Iran. The five kings on the right are the much smaller faction that has been in subjugation but is now in the act of rebellion. These five kings are centered in the region where the Dead Sea is presently located in Israel.

Let's look at a map so that you can visualize the geography associated with this conflict and begin to understand the nature of the land of Israel's placement throughout the Biblical record. Next slide please:

(DO NOT READ)

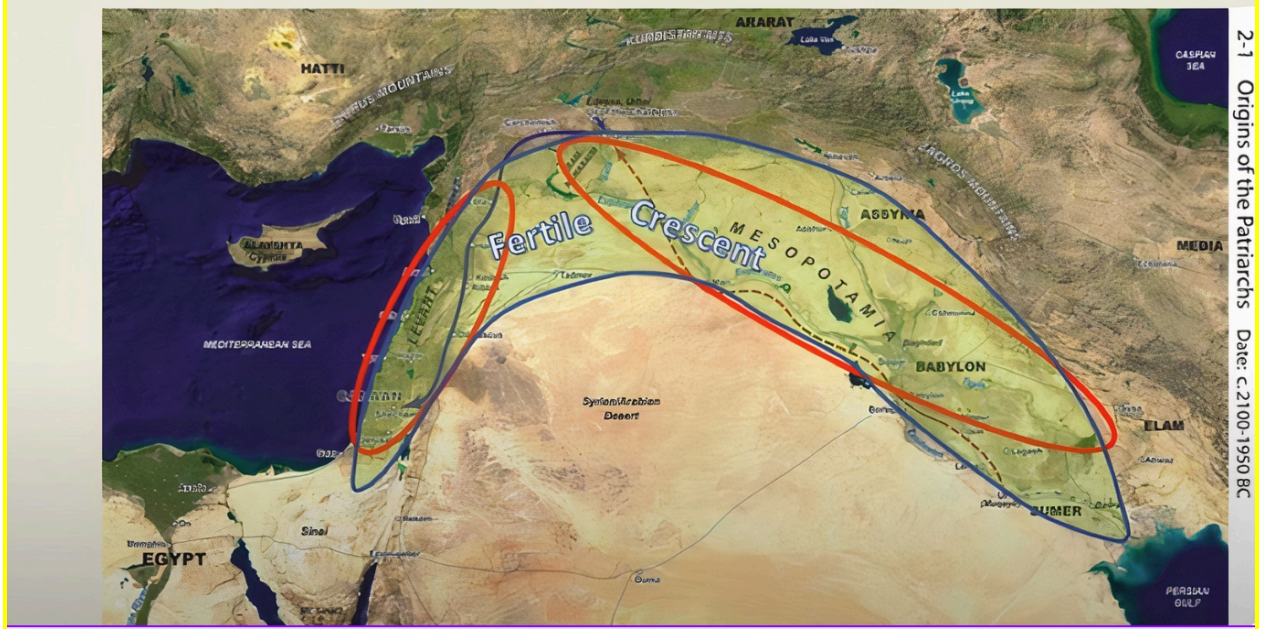


The promised land is quite literally in the center of the biblical world. Look at Africa on this map and understand that all trade from Africa would have to go through the land of Israel to be able to gain access to either Asia or Europe. The same is true if Asia or Europe wanted to trade with Africa.

Now let's consider the topography of the region that Israel is located in on our next slide:

(DO NOT READ)

The Fertile Crescent: Mesopotamia and Levant



The elongated red circle on the right is the region known in academia as Mesopotamia. It is the land between the river Tigris and the river Euphrates. This is where Babylon is located.

The red circle on the left is referred to in academia as the Levant. This is where Israel is located. The two circles and regions are known collectively as the Fertile Crescent because they form a rich agricultural region that is a pathway around the Arabian desert.

To assist you further in your Biblical studies, we want to alert you to a few principles. We are going to use a modern nation-state map to do it on our next slide:

(DO NOT READ)



Do you see Turkey in the upper left hand corner on this map? In the Bible, kings from this area are usually referred to as "kings of the north."

Do you see the red circle on the right hand side of this map, where Iraq is located? In the Bible, kings from this area are usually referred to as "kings of the east."

Do you see the red circle in the lower left hand corner of the map, where Egypt is located? In the Bible, kings from this area are usually referred to as "kings of the south."

When nations invade Israel in the Bible the topography of Israel funnels the armies through common routes. Look at this next map on our slide:

(DO NOT READ)

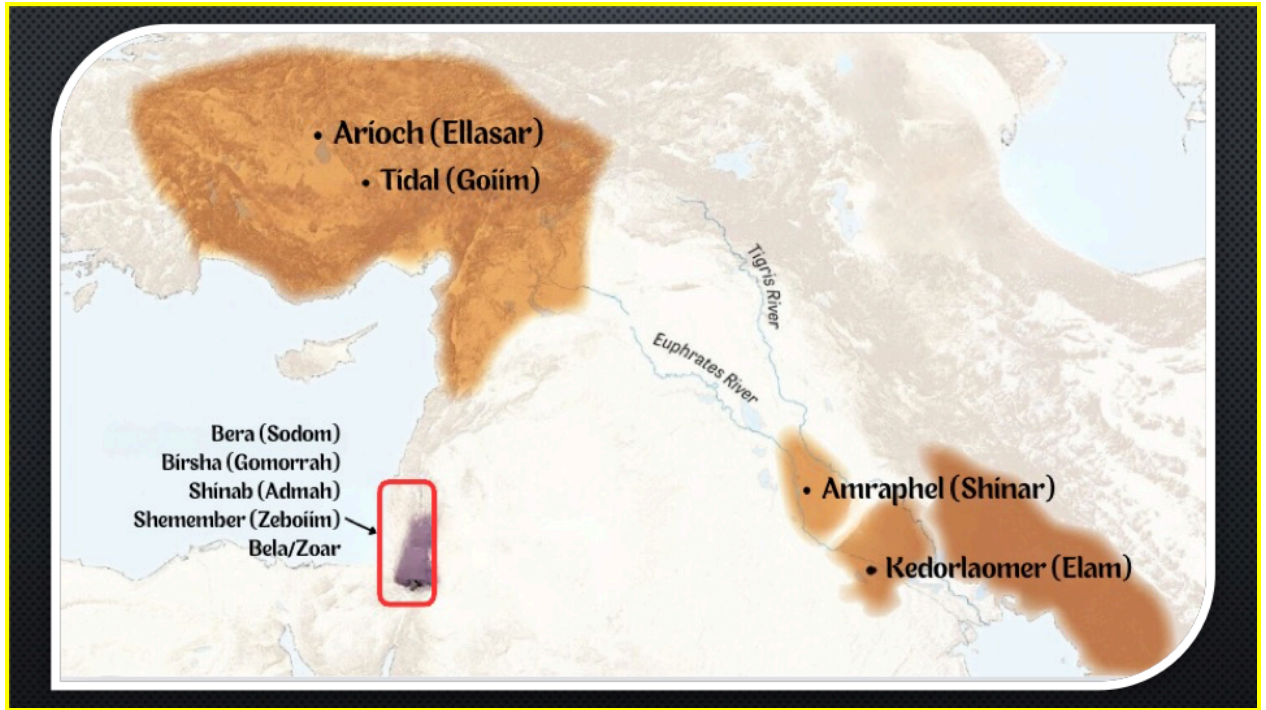


The longitudinal blue lines on this map are the predominant ways to traverse Israel from north to south. There are **significant** obstacles due to elevation differences and terrain that inhibit traveling from West to East. (sometimes the differences in elevation are as much as 4 or 5 thousand feet)

What this means is that armies coming from the East or the North tend to enter Israel in 1 of 2 ways: either they enter by sea and come through the valley of Megiddo located adjacent to Mount Carmel on this map (indicated by the red **1**) and then proceed southward, or they enter into the Jordan valley rift (indicated by the red **2**) starting north of the Galilee and descend from the North to the South following the Jordan River which continues all the way down to the Dead Sea.

Now let's look at the context of the war in Genesis 14 on our next slide:

(DO NOT READ)



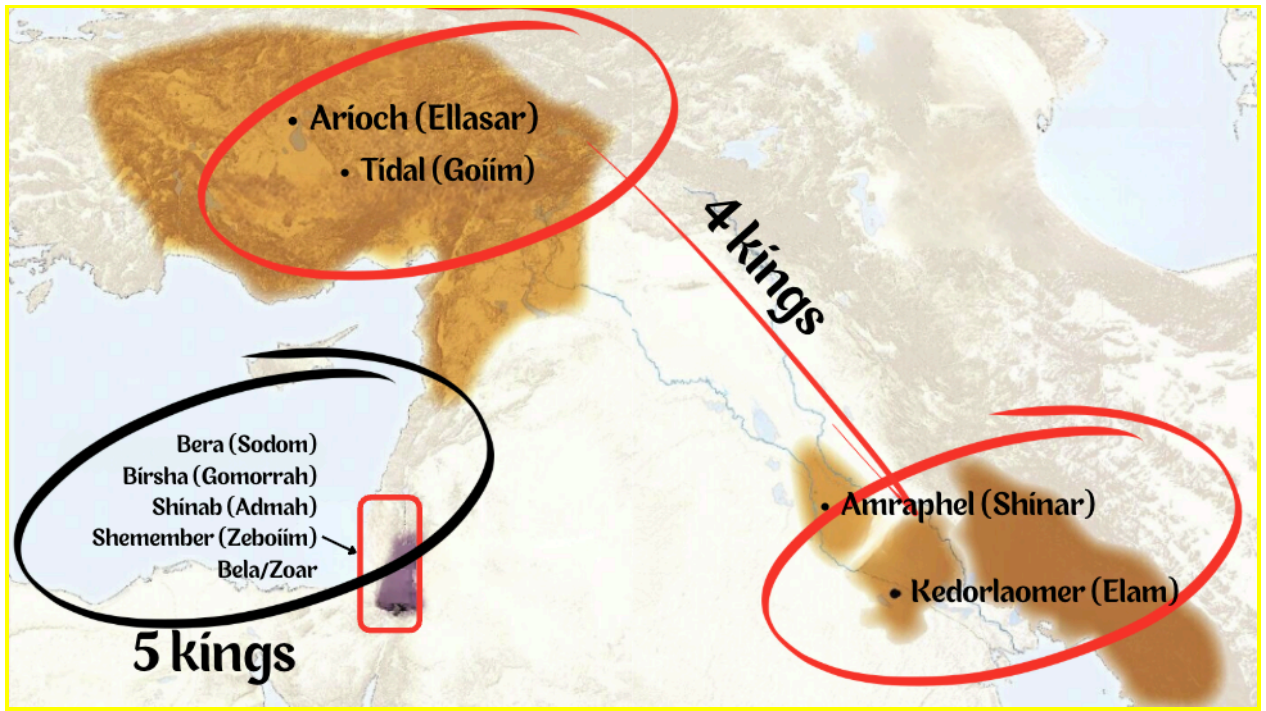
The red box on this slide approximates the location of Israel. Powerful kings from the east ally with kings of the North in this chapter and invade the promised land from the north. The head of this faction is Kedorlaomer, and he is from the area of present day Iraq and Iran. The other kings in his party are from his region and the region of present day Turkey and Syria.

The 5 kings that this coalition are fighting with are all located within Israel in the vicinity of what is now the Dead Sea. (*this is before Sodom was destroyed*)

When you are considering the odds and relevant marshal power of the two groups you should not think of this battle as being between roughly equivalent powers. The 5 kings within the promised land **are much smaller regional** powers. The 4 kings led by Kedorlaomer are a **much larger multinational** coalition with **transregional** power.

Here is one more map to ensure that you keep the parties straight in your thoughts.

(DO NOT READ)



The two red circles comprise the much larger 4 king coalition that will attack the tiny 5 king coalition indicated by the black circle. Keep this in mind as we continue in the story and arrive at the reason why Abraham is going to get involved.

This is the seed book and when you see the first international conflict that comprised the Biblical world, it is setting a pattern that will play out throughout the rest of the Bible

- **Genesis 14:12–14 (ESV)**
- 12 They also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who was dwelling in Sodom, and his possessions, and went their way. 13 Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram. 14 When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as **Dan**.

How far did Abraham go in pursuit of these opposing forces? That's right, all the way to Dan. Abraham's actions can be defined by what is called a FAFO moment... In Texas, it is sometimes said, "Don't start none if you don't want none!" Well, the opposing forces took Lot... and they are about to find out why that was unwise. This invoked the Overcoming Faith of Abraham.



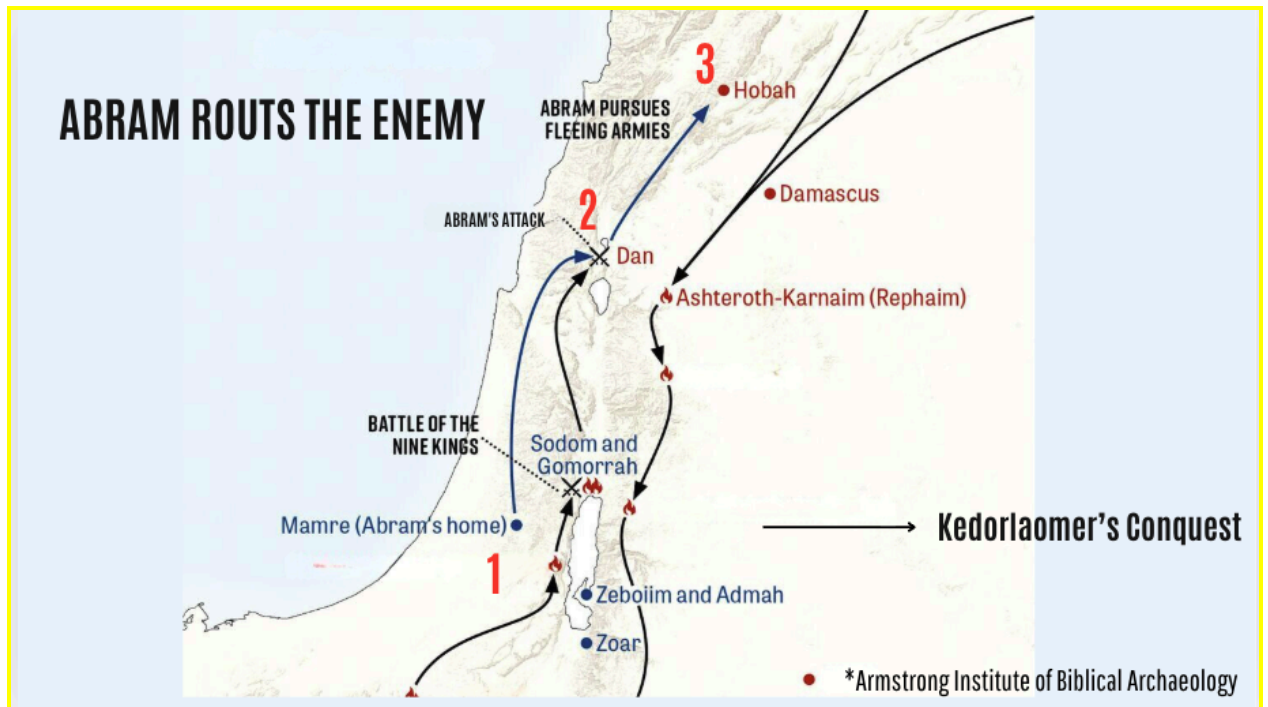
Abraham had convictions that overwhelmed all forms of compromise, and those convictions showed up in his faith-filled actions:

- **Genesis 14:15–16 (ESV)**
- 15 And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. 16 Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.

The map on our next slide is representative of the military movements

that occurred in these verses:

(SLIDE)



Abraham pursued the fleeing armies who had taken his nephew Lot, overtook them, and beat them all the way to the north of Damascus. He left with what he came for—his nephew Lot—along with other women, people, and possessions.

(This is a good time for us to remind you what we showed you in the beginning. Abraham was already on the right ancient path and he knew who he was. He didn't need a new word, his convictions and identity already informed how he must respond.) *When convictions are forged that have secured your identity, then you no longer need someone to tell you what you should do! You are on the Ancient paths

(TEL DAN VIDEO 2)

<<Tel Dan Kids.mp4>>

These are the kinds of things we are teaching our children... and this should be what you are teaching your children. (The odds don't matter, you don't need new confirmation. You have all that you need)

Abraham's actions in the story that we have in Genesis 14 are a prototype for things that were still to come. Of the many things that the first foundational battle teaches us, a singular figure arose who would not tolerate his family as lost sheep who were taken captive. This points us toward Messiah, who came to seek and save the lost among Israel. This was true in His earthly ministry, and it will be true at the end of days as well.

This story serves as an ancient pathway that has verifiable markers along the way. For instance, at this very site, the family of King David was attested to. We've got another video for you from Tel Dan regarding what is called the Tel Dan Inscription:

(TEL DAN VIDEO 3)

<<Tel Dan Inscription.mp4>>

Our next slide shows an image of the actual stone found in 1993 at Tel Dan:

(SLIDE)



This stele from the 9th century B.C. is about 30 cm in length and offers the earliest known extrabiblical reference to the “House of David” that we know of today!

Science catches up to the Bible overtime

- **2 Samuel 3:10 (NIV)**
- ¹⁰ and transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and establish David’s throne over Israel and Judah **from Dan to Beersheba.**”

Think about what this means, 1000 years after Abraham displayed such incredible faith, such iron clad convictions, the entire land of Israel had been taken by David from Beersheba in the south to Dan in the north. The faith of Abraham down through the generations caused the Kingdom of God to expand through men with convictions like Abraham!

David as the prototype of the messianic king did this and Jesus will further it in His time.

But as you are learning, there would be necessary confrontations all along the way that would deepen and forge convictions all along the eternal path.

This also happens to be the same site as the bull worship instituted by Jeroboam. We have a couple of pictures for you. Next slide:





Missing slide

This is a picture of Jeroboams altars with our team present. The gates Abraham prevailed over are just on the other side of the hill.

So, to bring it home practically, if you're standing there, you're standing on the ancient pathway. You're standing right where Abraham overcame unimaginable odds to rescue a single uh proto Jewish life. Okay. Later, kings standing in the very same place compromise. They said, "This is too hard. We can't go all the way to Jerusalem. Let's set up here for convenience." If they had just inquired of the path they were already standing on, they didn't need a new revelation. They didn't need 12 new confirmations. They simply needed to look at the ground under their feet in what had already happened.

42:5

you're standing there, you're standing on the ancient pathway. You're standing right where Abraham overcame unimaginable odds to rescue a single uh protoJewish life. Okay. Later, kings standing in the very same place compromise. They said, "This is too hard. We can't

go all the way to Jerusalem. Let's let's up for convenience here." If they had just inquired of the path they were already standing on, they didn't need a new revelation. They didn't need 12 new confirmations. They simply needed to look at the ground under their feet in what had already happened.

Our next slide will give you a better perspective of the altar:



This area has always been a site of multiple kinds of opposition. In Abraham's day it was the site of physical adversaries. In later times it became the site of a more internal and insidious threats. Jeroboam claimed to still be offering YHWH worship will leading the people into pagan idolatry under the pretense of fidelity to the one true God.

Deviations from the Eternal Path

Jeroboam: 1 Kings 12:25-33

- *More Convenient places of worship*
- *Priests who are not Levites*
- *Abandoned the established days of worship*



In Abraham's day, it was the site of physical adversaries. In later times, it became the sight of a more internal, a more insidious threat. Jeroboam claimed to still be offering sacrifices to Yahweh God and worshipping Yahweh God, all the while leading the people into pagan idolatry under the pretense of fidelity to the one true God. So again, grab hold of this. I don't know which you would rather face. Would you rather face overwhelming multinational armies that have taken one of your children or a nephew captive? Well, at least the bottom lines are very obvious. Yeah. Okay. You're either going to rise in faith or not. That is one kind of a gate of hell you must face. Yeah. Wow. Another kind of gate of hell you must face took place in the same moment. Little compromises for the convenience of the people. Can you see how one was

outside and the other is an attack? inside. They're equally dangerous. And the one that is a little more subtle often goes unnoticed. Like in the churches in Romania and the United States, we actually exported that craft to you. And now we've moved here to try to fix that problem. Yeah. Okay. Uh both take people captive and they're both things that we can rise in faith and say, "No, we're already standing on what God has said."

From nearly the very beginning of the biblical account this area has been ground zero for corruption and satanic stratagems. Let's take a slide from our session on Genesis 5:

(READ SLIDE)

ENOC 6:1-6

6:1 And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. 2 And the angels, the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: 'Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children.' 3 And Semjâzâ, who was their leader, said unto them: 'I fear ye will not indeed agree to do this deed, and I alone shall have to pay the penalty of a great sin.' 4 And they all answered him and said: 'Let us all swear an oath, and all bind ourselves by mutual imprecations not to abandon this plan but to do this thing.' 5 Then swore they all together and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it. 6 And they were in all two hundred; who descended in the days of Jared on the summit of Mount Hermon, and they called it Mount Hermon, because they had sworn and bound themselves by mutual imprecations upon it.

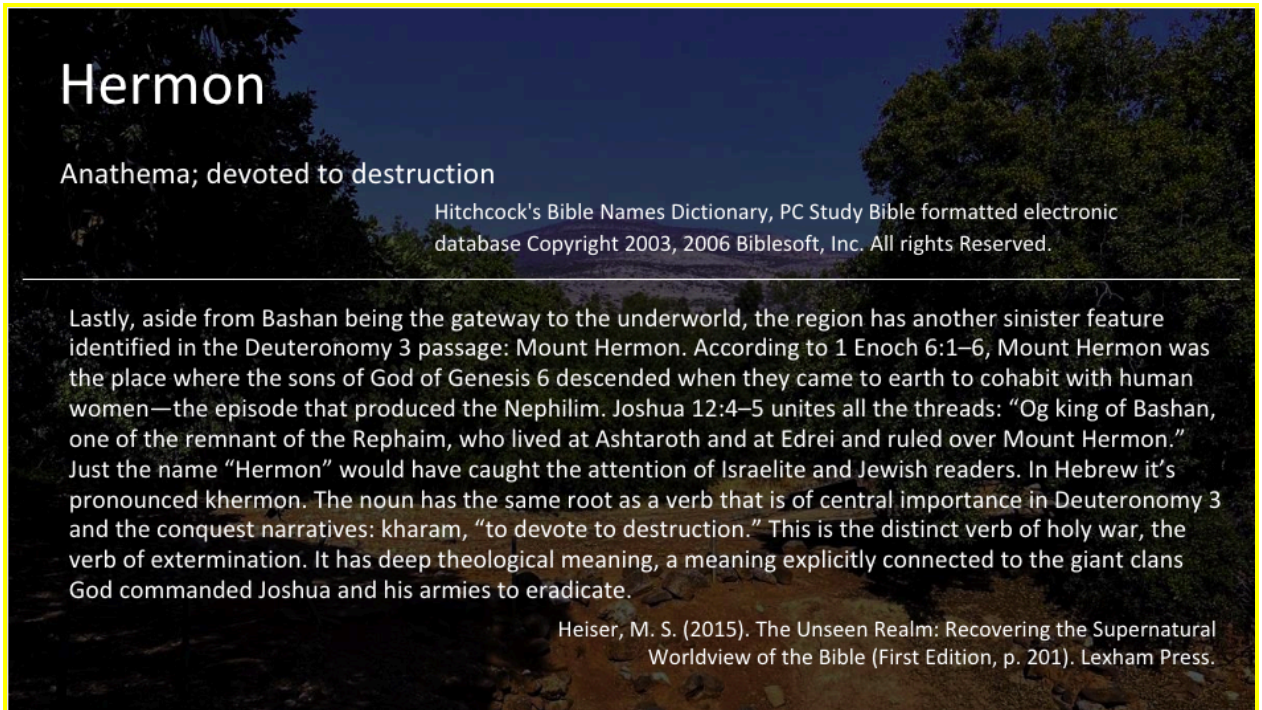
Robert Henry Charles, ed., *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 191.

You are well aware that Bene-ha-elohim produced giant offspring with women. What you may not have remembered is that this first occurred in the very same area that Abraham overcame the armies of

the north through his faith and disdain for the treasures of the world.

Let's help you with a little refresher as to the meaning of the name Hermon. Next slide:

(READ SLIDE)



Hermon

Anathema; devoted to destruction

Hitchcock's Bible Names Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. All rights Reserved.

Lastly, aside from Bashan being the gateway to the underworld, the region has another sinister feature identified in the Deuteronomy 3 passage: Mount Hermon. According to 1 Enoch 6:1–6, Mount Hermon was the place where the sons of God of Genesis 6 descended when they came to earth to cohabit with human women—the episode that produced the Nephilim. Joshua 12:4–5 unites all the threads: “Og king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei and ruled over Mount Hermon.” Just the name “Hermon” would have caught the attention of Israelite and Jewish readers. In Hebrew it’s pronounced khermon. The noun has the same root as a verb that is of central importance in Deuteronomy 3 and the conquest narratives: kharam, “to devote to destruction.” This is the distinct verb of holy war, the verb of extermination. It has deep theological meaning, a meaning explicitly connected to the giant clans God commanded Joshua and his armies to eradicate.

Heiser, M. S. (2015). *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (First Edition, p. 201). Lexham Press.

According to *Hitchcock's Bible Names Dictionary* The etymology of the name Hermon means "damned," This combined with its historical significance, paints a vivid picture.

- This is where angelic corruption first began.
- This is where Abraham by faith and a lack of desire for this world overcame insurmountable external enemies
- This is also where Israel faced insidious internal opposition.

•

Today's title was not click bait nor was it haphazard. Hermon represents a battle that has always determined whether there will be "compromise of convictions". This kind of confrontation is foundational to the development of every believer. The forces at

Hermon would like to corrupt the world from within or if that fails overwhelm with sudden and forceful opposition from without

The cure to both of these kinds of attack is the faith of Abraham and the disdain for the world of Abraham. Would you be surprised to learn that long after Abraham had gone on to glory that his faith was still on display in this very same geography?

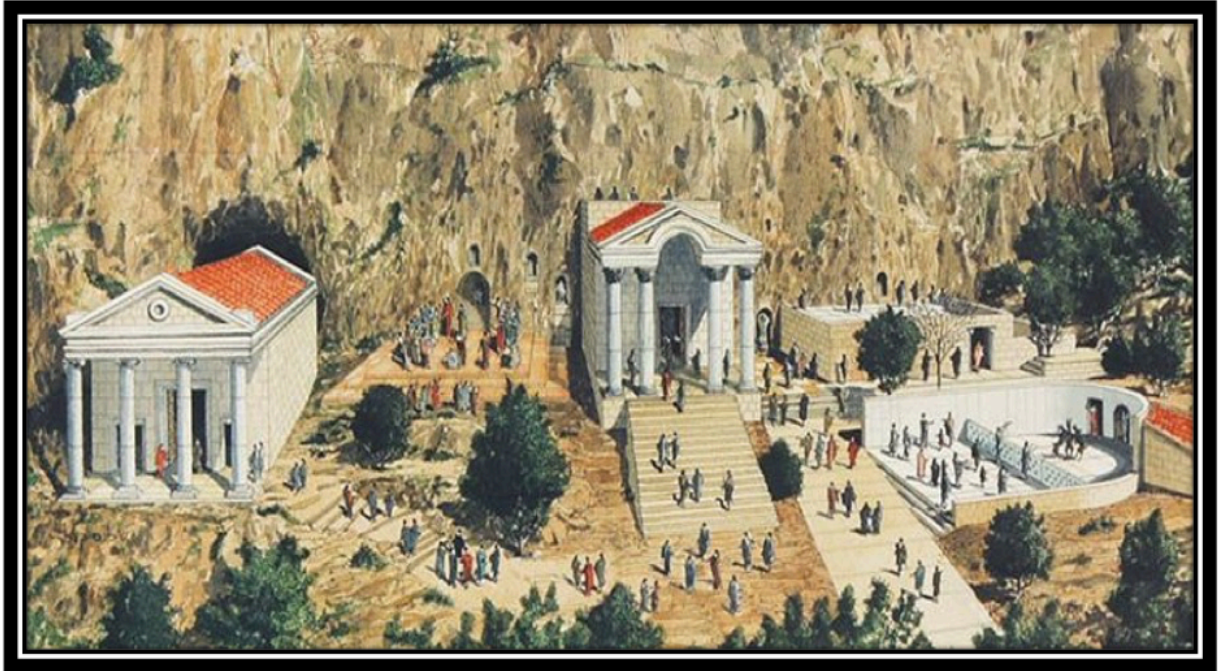
- **Matthew 16:13–15 (ESV)**
- 13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”
- Picture and explain pagan back drop





○ Next slide:

-



On the left stands a classical temple with a red-tiled roof and columned façade, dedicated to the foreign god Pan, reflecting Roman architectural influence and pagan worship

On the right is a raised platform that was once supported by Roman concrete walls, with Herod's palace constructed on top of it, built to honor Emperor Augustus and assert Herod's presence in the region

- Explain why Jesus took them to the north to face external opposition before the internal

-

At Tel Dan, the opposition was overtly external. It was obvious. However, just a short distance away at this site of Caesarea Philippi, it is more about the internal fight against compromise

- **Matthew 16:16–18 (ESV)**
- 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon

Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

(CP VIDEO 1)

<<Caesarea Philippi 1 (1).mp4>>

From Lexham press:

(READ SLIDE)

One popular tradition from Late Antiquity may augment this picture. There is a rabbinic discussion as to the wide range of conditions that will (or will not) prevail when the Messiah (Son of David) comes. The final contribution reads as follows:

*The disciples of R. Jose b. Kisma asked him, 'When will the Messiah come?'—He answered, 'I fear lest ye demand a sign of me [that my answer is correct].' They assured him, 'We will demand no sign of you.' So he answered them, 'When this gate falls down, is rebuilt, falls again, and is again rebuilt, and then falls a third time, **before it can be rebuilt the son of David will come.**' They said to him, 'Master, give us a sign.' He protested, 'Did ye not assure me that ye would not demand a sign?' They replied, 'Even so, [we desire one].' He said to them, 'if so, let the waters of the grotto of Paneas turn into blood;' and they turned into blood. When he lay dying he said to them, 'place my coffin deep [in the earth].' (b. Sanhedrin 98a)*

While the rabbinic traditions were written significantly later and include some likely fanciful elements, the connection between “this gate” and “the waters of the grotto of Paneas” establishes the location and indicates that the numinous world beyond that rock face terrified people. For Jesus to own in Caesarea Philippi the titles “Son of the living God” as well as “Son of Man” **would upend all of the pagan notions associated with the location.**

Phillips, E. A. (2016). Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels* (pp. 294–295). Lexham Press.

What you should be gaining from this excerpt—even though it is written later—is that this rabbinic discussion gives insight into Jewish expectations connected to this area. They recognized that it was demonic. They also recognized that throughout their history there had always been satanic strongholds here. Because of this, they held the belief that it would only be remedied by the arrival of the Son of

David.

Now, who was that?

Who was the Son of David standing there in Matthew 16?

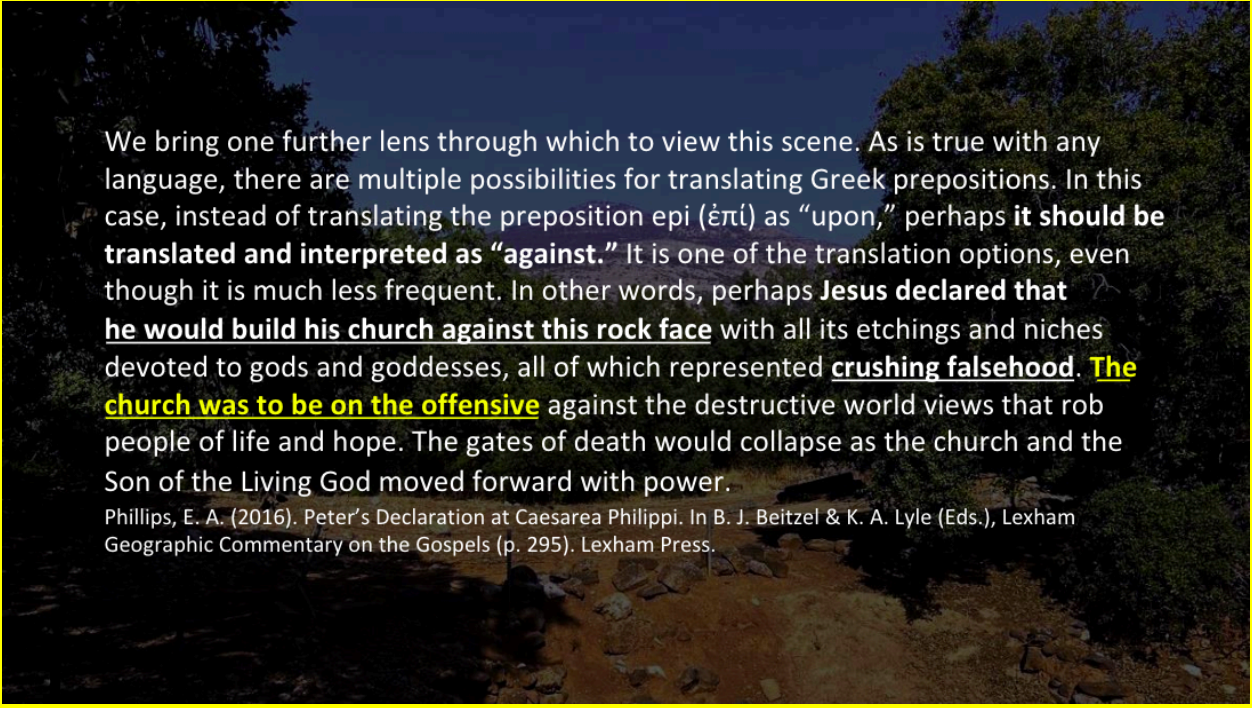
Jesus.

The Son of David went to this very site—the place where they expected someone to come who would actually cause them to prevail over the gates of hell.

There is one more connection worth noting, not as explicitly biblical as it is experiential. A stone's throw from this location is where the existence of David was first proven archaeologically. In 1993, the first inscription was verified, confirming that David was a real historical figure. And in the years AD 30–33, Jesus stood a stone's throw from that inscription and spoke about overcoming these gates.

The Jewish literature surrounding this subject consistently maintained that only the Son of David would bring victory over these gates.

(READ SLIDE)



We bring one further lens through which to view this scene. As is true with any language, there are multiple possibilities for translating Greek prepositions. In this case, instead of translating the preposition *epi* (ἐπί) as “upon,” perhaps **it should be translated and interpreted as “against.”** It is one of the translation options, even though it is much less frequent. In other words, perhaps **Jesus declared that he would build his church against this rock face** with all its etchings and niches devoted to gods and goddesses, all of which represented crushing falsehood. **The church was to be on the offensive** against the destructive world views that rob people of life and hope. The gates of death would collapse as the church and the Son of the Living God moved forward with power.

Phillips, E. A. (2016). Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels* (p. 295). Lexham Press.

- **Matthew 16:21–23 (ESV)**

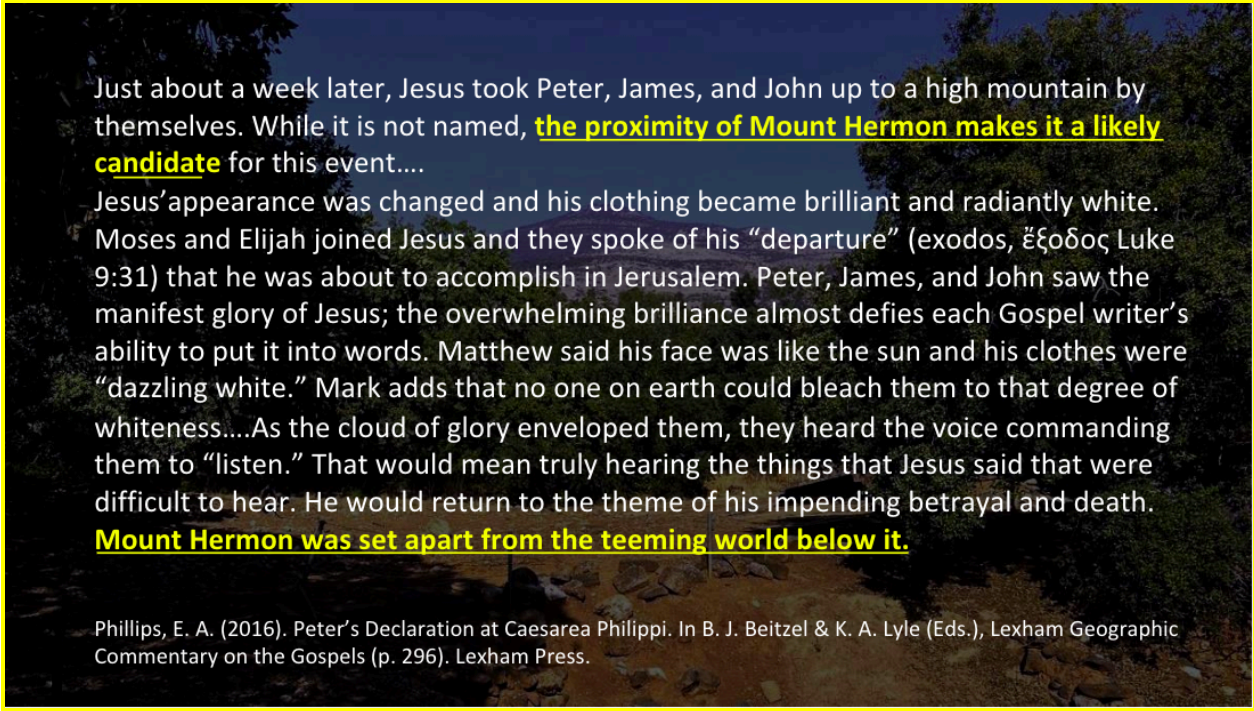
21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

(CP VIDEO 2)

<<Caesarea Philippi 2 (1).mp4>>

Lexham Press

(READ SLIDE)



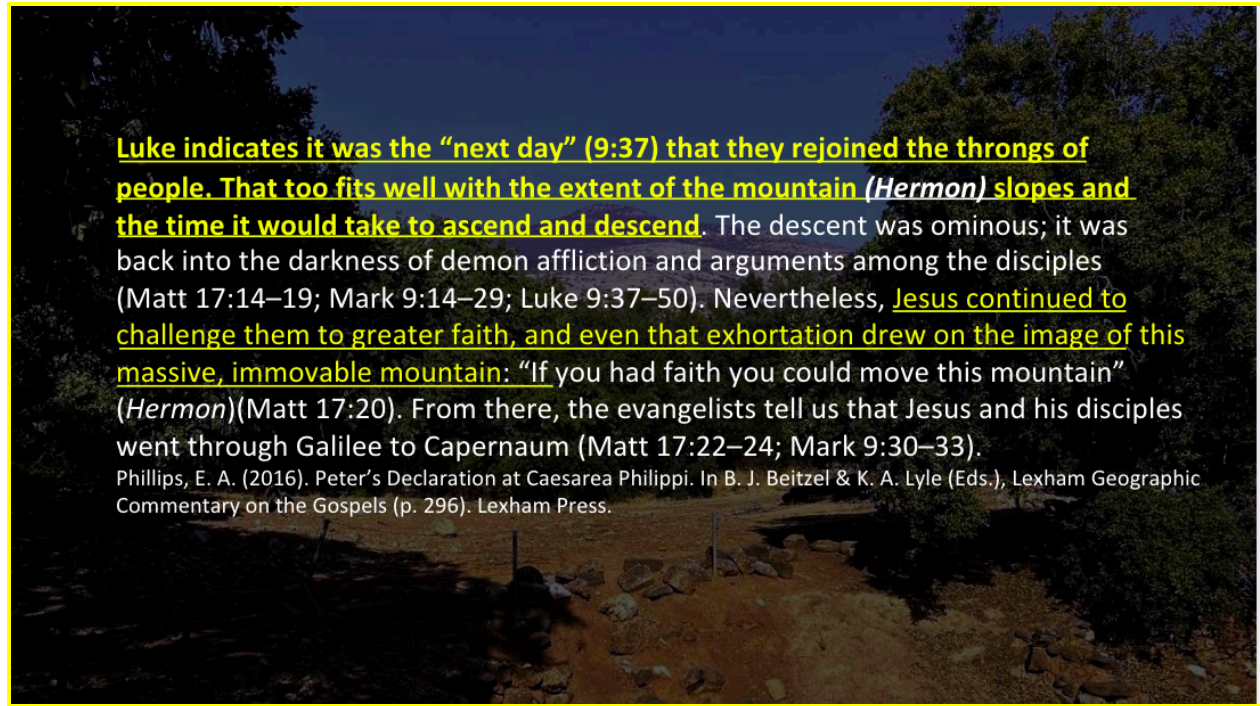
Just about a week later, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain by themselves. While it is not named, the proximity of Mount Hermon makes it a likely candidate for this event....

Jesus' appearance was changed and his clothing became brilliant and radiantly white. Moses and Elijah joined Jesus and they spoke of his “departure” (exodos, ἔξοδος Luke 9:31) that he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter, James, and John saw the manifest glory of Jesus; the overwhelming brilliance almost defies each Gospel writer's ability to put it into words. Matthew said his face was like the sun and his clothes were “dazzling white.” Mark adds that no one on earth could bleach them to that degree of whiteness....As the cloud of glory enveloped them, they heard the voice commanding them to “listen.” That would mean truly hearing the things that Jesus said that were difficult to hear. He would return to the theme of his impending betrayal and death.

Mount Hermon was set apart from the teeming world below it.

Phillips, E. A. (2016). Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels (p. 296). Lexham Press.

(READ SLIDE)



Luke indicates it was the “next day” (9:37) that they rejoined the throngs of people. That too fits well with the extent of the mountain (*Hermon*) slopes and the time it would take to ascend and descend. The descent was ominous; it was back into the darkness of demon affliction and arguments among the disciples (Matt 17:14–19; Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:37–50). Nevertheless, Jesus continued to challenge them to greater faith, and even that exhortation drew on the image of this massive, immovable mountain: “If you had faith you could move this mountain” (*Hermon*)(Matt 17:20). From there, the evangelists tell us that Jesus and his disciples went through Galilee to Capernaum (Matt 17:22–24; Mark 9:30–33). Phillips, E. A. (2016). Peter’s Declaration at Caesarea Philippi. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels* (p. 296). Lexham Press.

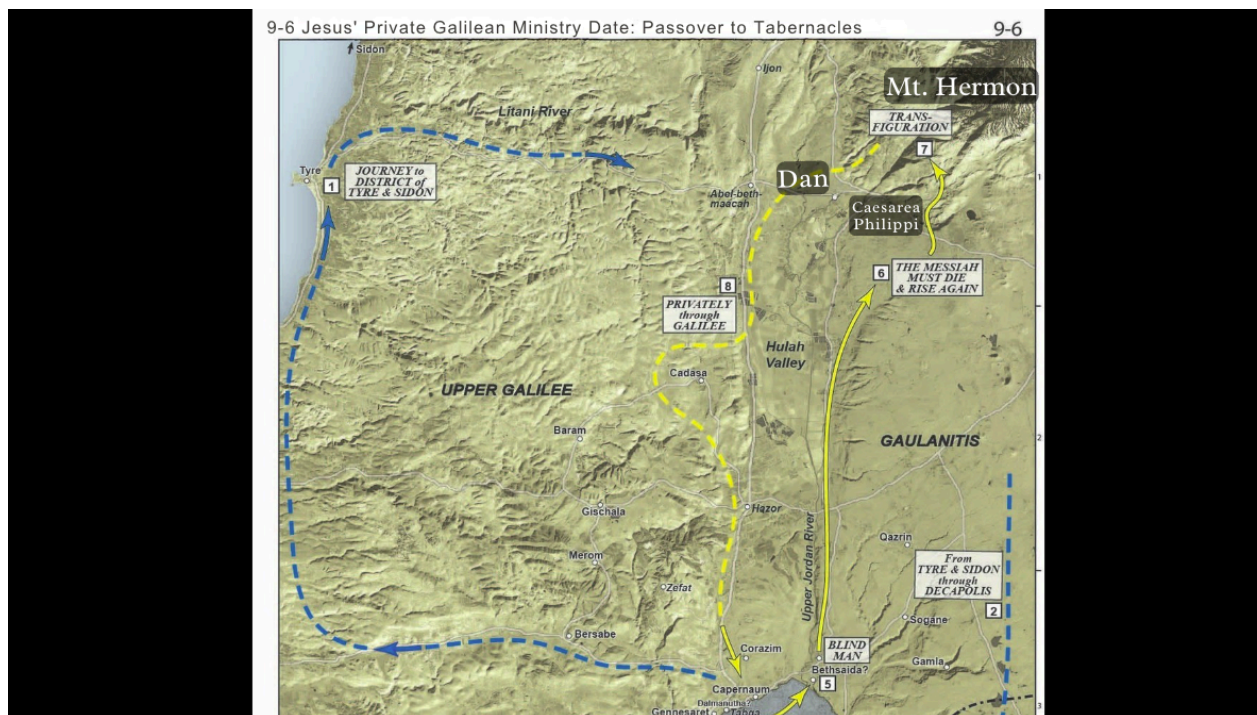
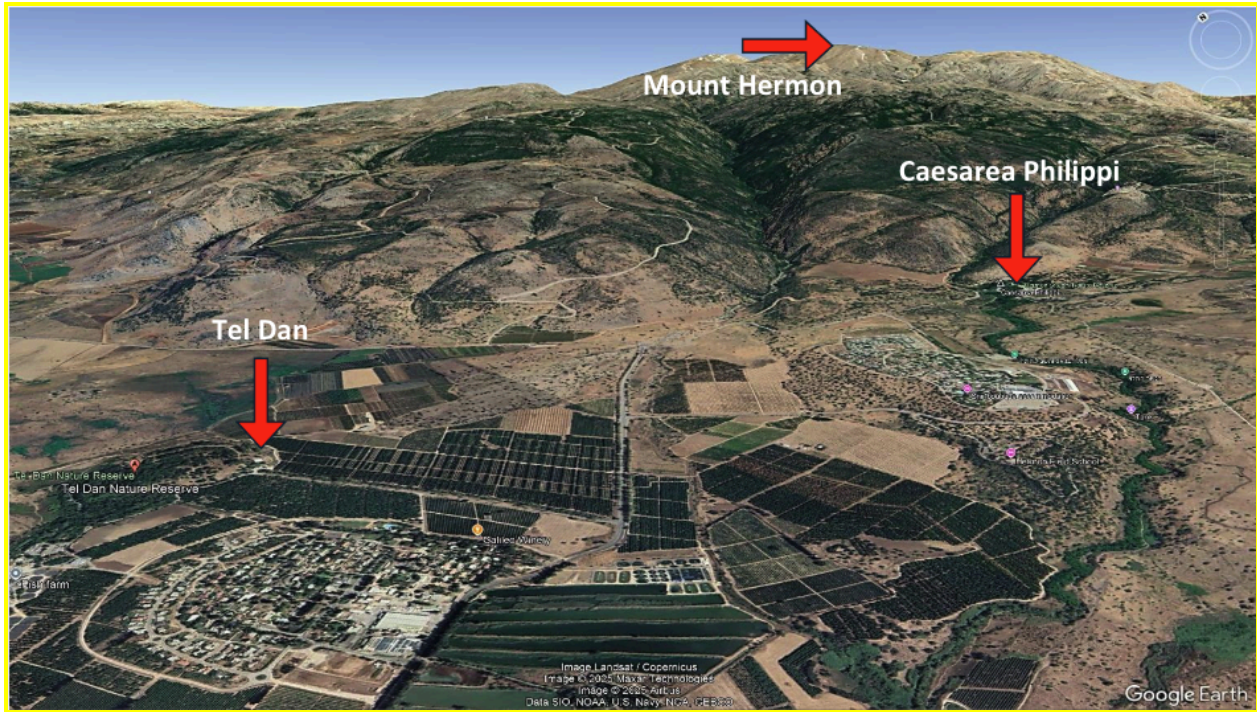
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<<Caesarea Philippi 3 (1).mp4>>

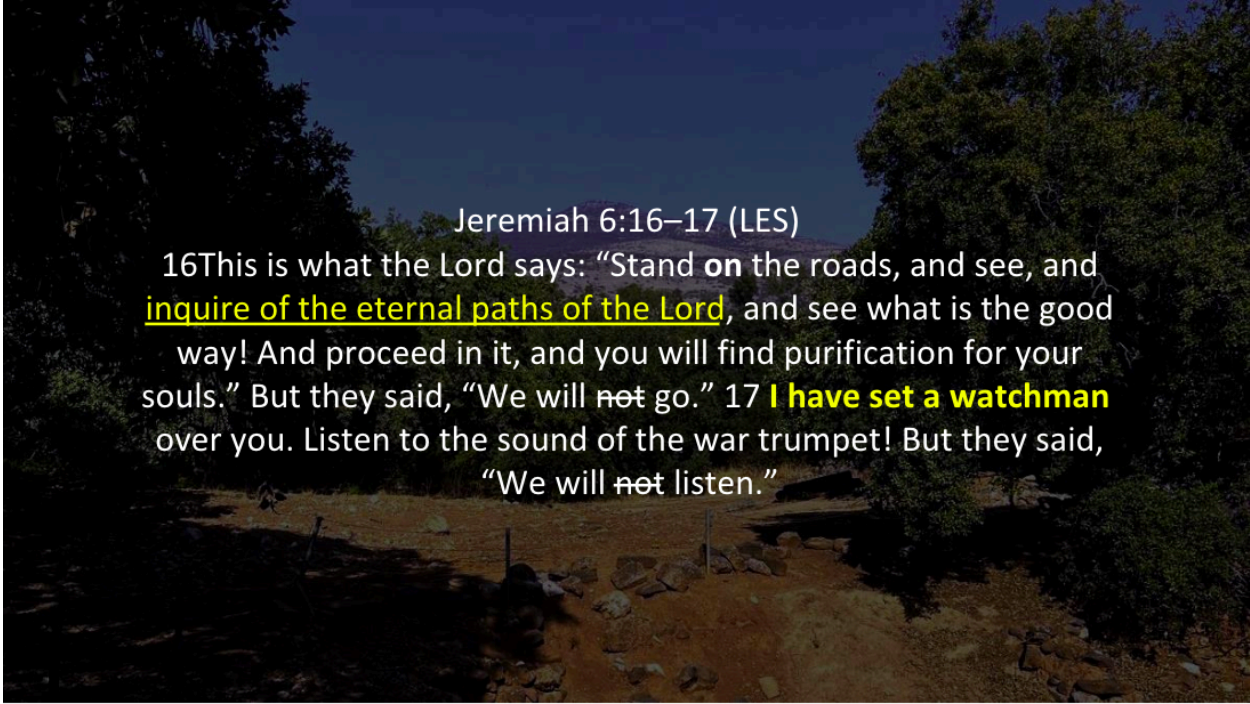
Map

<<Northern Israel Video.mp4>>

Ariel view video



Close:



Jeremiah 6:16–17 (LES)

16 This is what the Lord says: “Stand on the roads, and see, and inquire of the eternal paths of the Lord, and see what is the good way! And proceed in it, and you will find purification for your souls.” But they said, “We will not go.” 17 **I have set a watchman** over you. Listen to the sound of the war trumpet! But they said, “We will not listen.”

Encountering Israel: Deepening Convictions

1. Gihon — **Awakening**

God initiated salvation; His life begins to flow through the man of God, and the heart of man is opened.

2. Hermon — **Confrontation**

The enemy resists, identity is contested, and through this process, conviction is forged.

3. Kidron — **Decision**

Daily choices shape destiny, and salvation becomes, not just a moment, but a path both lived and walked upon.

4. Valley of Kings — **Pressing**

God refines through pressure; obedience is perfected, and anointing is produced.

5. Adullam — **Formation**

Seasons of hidden obscurity develop kings—disciples become leaders, and what was just a calling becomes ingrained character.

6. Tabernacle — **Assembly**

The dwelling of God is built with unlikely materials that are stripped down and covered with hammered gold.

7. Hebron — **Purpose**

God's promises require a lifelong fight of faith that forms us into people who are raised to resurrection hope.

8. Megiddo — **Prevailing**

Our preparation now will cause us to prevail in the final and ultimate battle at the end of days.

9. Caesarea Maritima — **As You Go**

Our mission is to move forward with unwavering conviction, boldly bearing witness to the hope of The Resurrection.