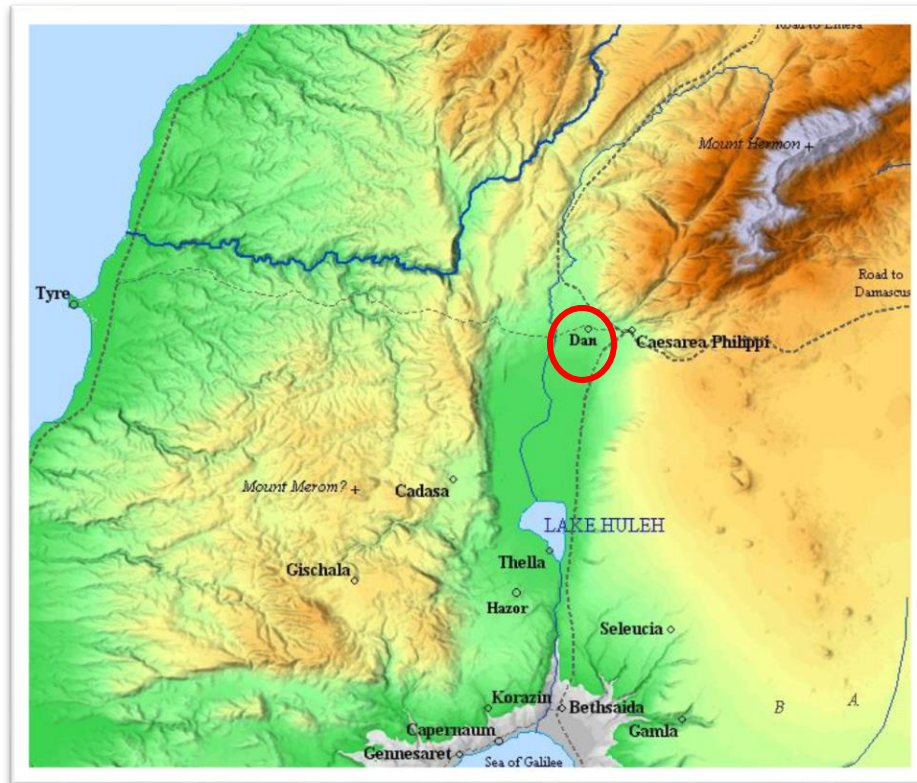




Tel Dan Fact Sheet

Location: In the Golan, at the base of Mt Hermon, near Caesarea Philippi.



Meaning of Name: “judge”

Bible References: 21x

- *Gen 14:14* – Abram pursues kings who kidnapped Lot to Dan
- *Josh 19:47/Judges 18:27-31* – Danites conquer town of Leshem/Laish and rename it Dan
- *1 Kings 12:26-30* – Jeroboam sets up golden calf in Dan

History: The city of Dan was originally the city of Leshem, also called Laish. Its location in the fertile valley at the foot of Mt Hermon made it an ideal location for settlement. Two springs found there are the source of the Dan river, which in turn is the largest source of the Jordan river. It was a Canaanite and Zidonian city that had a reputation for being “quiet and secure” (*Judges 18:27*). Abram passed this area while chasing Lot’s captors into Syria (*Gen 14*). After Israel divided into two kingdoms, Jeroboam was worried that his people would be turned back to



Rehoboam and Judah when they went up to Jerusalem for the feasts, so he established places of worship in Bethel and Dan (*1 Kings 12:26-30*). The city was smitten during the conflict between Benhadad of Syria and Baasha of Israel (*1 Kings 15:20*). It was finally destroyed by Tiglathpileser in 734 BC during the Assyrian invasion. Dan was often used in scripture as the northernmost reference point in the phrase “from Dan to Beersheba”.



Canaanite Gate

Archaeological Significance: There is no

short supply of archaeological evidence

in Tel Dan. A limestone slab from the Hellenistic period was found with the inscription “to the god who is in Dan”, cementing the location as the biblical city. One of the major finds was a 7-meter-high brick gate from the Canaanite period; this gate has been dated to the time period when Abram would have passed by the city in *Gen 14*. Much of the Israelite city has been

found and reconstructed as well, including

the gate, a platform for the seat of the king or judge, and a bench where the elders of the city would have sat.

Remains from the “high place” that Jeroboam had built has also been found and re-created, complete with a replica of the four-horned altar and the platform called the “bamah” (the high place itself).



View of altar from the high place

Consider This:

- The testimony of Dan:
 - It was founded by people who were discontent with God’s provision (*Josh 19:47*)
 - It was fortified by people who deserted God’s plan (*1 Kings 12:27-30*)
 - It was finished by people who were destroyed by God’s punishment (*Amos 8:14*)

