

Theological Geography Class 4

Pre-trip to Jordan

Theological Geography Day 3

Starting in Jerusalem we will head north out of the city on the Ridge Road to visit Shiloh, Shechem, Sychar, Jacob's Well in Palestinian city of Nablus, Samaria, Sebaste, Ahab's palace, Mt. Gerizim

This journey will recall Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and his brothers, and particularly Joshua and the conquest of the Promised Land but will also connect the stories of the northern kings Omri and Ahab and Jezebel and the prophet Elijah and of course Jesus.

Shiloh, is the location of the central sanctuary of Israel. Deut 12:5-6; Josh 18:1,10; 22:12; Jud 18:31; 1 Sam 1:3,24; 3:21; 4:3,4,12; 14:3; Ps 78:60; Jer 7:12,14; 26:6,9? Shiloh is the place God chose to make his habitation and the place his name and glory would dwell. It also becomes a place that like the Garden of Eden becomes a "Good Bad Example". Jeremiah refers to Shiloh as a warning to Judah of the coming destruction of Solomon's Temple in Jer 7 which Jesus uses as the model of his Temple clearings as warnings of judgement to come in Jn 2 and Mt 21; Mk 11; Lk 19.

Shechem is the place Abraham is Promised the land and builds his first altar. Gen 12. Jacob builds or rebuilds an altar at Shechem in Gen 33 and Gen 35. Jacob buys a plot of land here and his daughter Dinah is raped here. Gen 34 Her brothers plot their revenge on the Hivite Shechem. After Jacob moves south to Bethel and then to Hebron, his sons are in this area with their livestock when he sends his favorite son Joseph to check on them and they capture and sell him to Ishmaelites as a

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slave. Following the Exodus and conquest of the land Joseph's remains carried from Egypt are buried here. Josh 24:32

During the period of the monarchy, following the death of King Solomon, it was here that the kingdoms divided as the northern tribes rejected Solomon's son Rehoboam and David's line as king. 1 Kings 12:1-19; 2 Chr 10:1-11. During the period of the divided kingdom, two northern kings become powerful and prosperous. Omri and his son Ahab build their capital here. 1 Kings 16:23,24; 1 Kings 22:39 (Ahab's Ivory Palace). They dominate their neighbors from here (reflected in the Moabite Stone a replica of which was seen by our Jordanian travelers the previous week in Amman) and enter into alliance with the Phoenicians (Lebanon) reflected in the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel of Zartheth and Sidon...she was the daughter of the king of Sidon and a priestess of the cult of Baal and Ashtoreth. In the same area we will see the ruins of Ahab's palace we will also see a Greek theatre and Jim will teach us the difference between a Greek and Roman theatre. King Herod in gratitude to Caesar Augustus renamed the city Sebaste and built a temple in his honor.

After the conquest of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC by the Assyrian Empire, Mosul/Nineveh capital, they resettle the best brightest of Israel elsewhere and put Assyrians in Israel who then intermarry with the local population...these blended people become known as the Samaritans. The Samaritans remain as a distinct people to this day. We will see their Synagogue and the facility they use to keep Passover. They were despised by the Jews and they were hostile to the Jews. Jesus chooses to go this way (Ridge Road) on a festival

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pilgrimage...I would suggest, specifically to meet this woman...he meets her at Jacob's Well, which we will visit (an Orthodox Church has in recent times been built over Jacob's well) she becomes the unlikeliest evangelist but most effective evangelist to the Samaritans in history. She is emblematic of the rescue of the Outcast and a sign that the Kingdom has come...because the King has come...see Zeph 3:19; Is 56:8; Mic 4:6,7. Jn 4

The discussion between Jesus and the woman is reflective of the very real dispute between Samaritans and Jews over where God made his name/glory to dwell...Samaritans believed Mt. Gerizim is where Abraham offered Isaac not Jerusalem and that Mt. Gerizim is the real Temple Mount. The Samaritans built a Temple on Mt. Gerizim in the mid 5th Century BC which was destroyed by the Hellenistic Jewish king John Hyrcanus in the 2nd Century BC.

Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal are set apart by Moses as the place Israel, upon entering and beginning to take possession of the land, are to come and there rededicate themselves to Yahweh and renew the covenant. Deut 11:29; 27:12; Josh 8:30; Josh 24; Jud 9:4-7. This rededication takes place in Josh 8:30ff. During the intertestamental period, the Samaritans build a temple on Mt. Gerizim, the ruins of which we will visit.