

By Bassam
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TEL DOTHAN



Tel Dothan archeological site is located in *Khirbet al-Hafireh* agricultural hamlet. A vast fertile plain three kilometers east of Arraba Village and a continuation of the wide Arraba plain which is separated from it by the Jenin-Nablus main road (Road 60). (32.410178°, 35.237273°)

ancient city of Dothan appears twice in narratives of the Old Testament.

An American archeological mission, led by Dr. Joseph Free of Wheaton College, Illinois, excavated the site over a period of twelve summers between 1953 and 1964. The excavations uncovered

two abandoned houses leads up to the tel, where you can enjoy the fresh breeze and the grand view of Arraba plain to the west and north, and see the surrounding villages of Merkeh, Arraba, Ya'abad, Kfeiret, Ber al-Basha, Al-Shuhahda, and Qabatieh in the east.



Al-Hafireh is an agricultural hamlet of around 15 houses with 70 inhabitants. Orange orchards were abundant in the fertile plain, but in 1992, a snowstorm destroyed all the citrus orchards. A sad scene for such a green, fertile oasis tucked between hills. The northern hill is an ancient biblical site, Dothan (two wells), that dates back to the Early Bronze Age.

But Al-Hafireh has more than two wells. The first one lies in the middle of the plain and is the well that is believed to be the site where Joseph was hidden by his brothers and sold to the Ishmaelites, called *Jeb Youssef* by the locals.ⁱ Al-Hafireh has ten springs that used to irrigate the vegetable fields and the citrus orchards situated on around 250 acres. Currently, water is a scarcity!

Dothan was a city known from the Bible's patriarchal narratives dealing with Joseph (Genesis 37)ⁱⁱ and the period of Elisha (2 Kings 6).ⁱⁱⁱ The

stone and metal artifacts over two millennia from the Early Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age, the Iron Age, and the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine eras. If you are in the United States, plan to visit the Wheaton College Archeological Museum, where you can see all 14,000 artifacts from Tel Dothan.

Approximately 250 meters past the Arrabeh roundabout on the main Jenin-Nablus road, turn right and drive 900 meters east to reach Joseph's well. From there, a small road between

That was my little home. I grew up there, worked the land with my late farmer father, played under every tree, and plowed every inch of the land. I swam in every little spring and made huge bonfires during winter. I lost my 18-year-old sister in the nearby well, and my parents took their last breaths on its soil.

For more information and guidance, please contact Bassam Almohor at almohor@gmail.com, or through WhatsApp: 00972-52-458-4273 or Facebook @palestinstreetlife.



ⁱ Joseph 10 (Qur'an) – "Said a speaker among them, 'Do not kill Joseph but throw him into the bottom of the well; some travelers will pick him up - if you would do.'"

ⁱⁱ Genesis 37:17 – "The man said, 'They have left here, for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan."' Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan."

Genesis 37:2 – "They sat down to eat bread, and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing spices and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt."

ⁱⁱⁱ 2 Kings 6:13 – "He said, 'Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him.' It was told him, saying, 'Behold, he is in Dothan.'"