

What is the significance of Dothan in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Dothan-in-the-Bible.html>

Dothan was a city in central Israel, approximately 12 miles north of Samaria in the hills of Gilboa. Today it is known as Tell-Dothan, located on the south plains of Jezreel. The word Dothan means “two wells,” and both wells are still in existence.

Dothan is first mentioned in Genesis 37:17 as near the place where Joseph was mistreated by his brothers. At first, they planned to kill Joseph, but Reuben persuaded them to throw him into a cistern instead. Because Dothan was on the caravan route from Egypt to Syria, Judah later suggested that they sell Joseph to Ishmaelite traders (Genesis 37:19-20, 26-27). The brothers agreed. So Dothan marks the place where young Joseph left everything familiar to him and became a slave in Egypt (Genesis 37:36). The modern name of one of the wells in Dothan reflects the event: it’s called Jubb Yusuf, which means “the pit of Joseph.”

Dothan is mentioned again in the historical narrative as Elisha’s home (2 Kings 6:13). It was in Dothan that God opened the eyes of Elisha’s servant so that he could see the horses and chariots of fire surrounding them (2 Kings 6:17). Elisha had warned the king of Israel that the king of Aram was going to attack Israel. However, when the king of Aram found out what Elisha was doing, he sought to capture the prophet. When Elisha’s servant saw the Arameans that had come against them, he was afraid. But Elisha told him not to be afraid because “those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Then Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.” The Lord answered, opening the servant’s eyes, “and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (2 Kings 6:16-17).

As the army of Arameans approached, Elisha prayed that the Lord would strike them with blindness (2 Kings 6:18). The Lord again answered, and the army was blinded. Elisha then led them from Dothan to Samaria, the capital of Israel, before asking the Lord to open their eyes. In the capital, the king of Israel wondered if he should kill the hapless captives, but Elisha counseled him to prepare food for them instead. When they were finished with the feast, the Arameans returned to their master, and Aram ceased raiding Israel. Then Elisha went back to his home in Dothan.