

# 85 Dan

## Names (also known as)

Laish (Judges 18:29), Leshem (Josh. 19:47), Tel Dan, Tel elQadi

## Etymology

Strong's root: to rule; by implication to judge (as umpire); also to strive.

BDB: to judge, contend, plead, to act as judge, minister judgment, to plead a cause, also to execute judgment, requite, vindicate, to govern, to contend, strive.

## Location/Description

Dan is the northern-most city in the land of Israel, in the area known as the Galilee Panhandle.



To the west is the southern part of Mt Lebanon; to the east and north is Mt Hermon. Melting snow from Mt Hermon provides the majority of the water of the river Jordan. This water passes through Dan, making the immediate area highly fertile. As a result this makes the area around Dan seem somewhat out of place, when everywhere else in the region around it is arid.

Due to its location close to the border with Lebanon and at the far north of the territory which fell under the British Mandate of Palestine, the site has a long and often bitterly

contested modern history, most recently during the 1967 Six-Day War.



Scripturally, the city of Dan, with its northern location, became synonymous with the northern extent of the land in the use of the phrase, 'from Dan even to Beersheba' (Judges 20:1, Deut. 34:1 and 10 other references).

## Key Scriptural references

### Old Testament

1 Kings 12:29-30; 2 Kings 10:29



## Famous characters

Jonathan the grandson of Moses  
Jeroboam

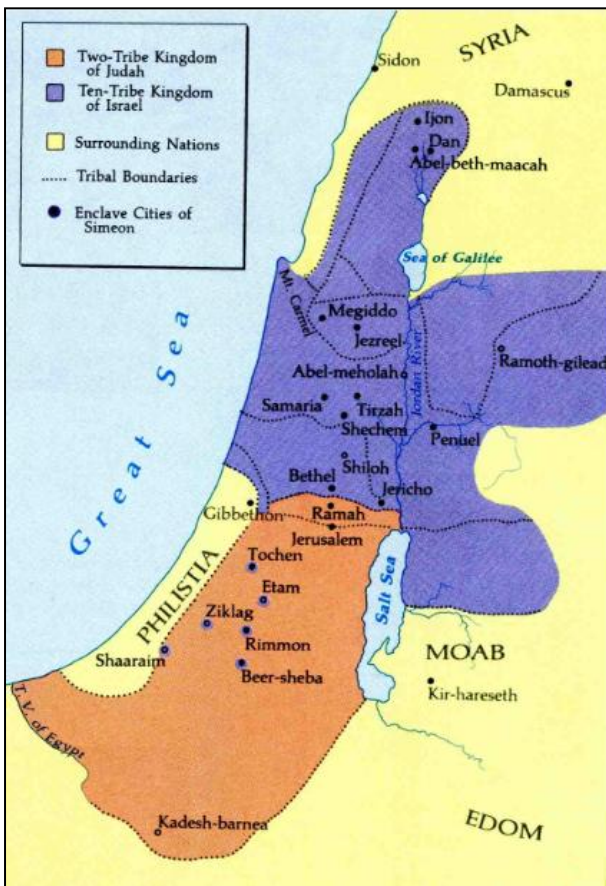
## Brief history

The city of Dan was established by the tribe of Dan in Judges 18. The tribe of Dan had failed to establish their inheritance and sought to establish it in Mt Ephraim. The tribe of Dan sent out spies to determine where to go and discovered Laish, "a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth". In

establishing this area as their inheritance, they also established at Dan Micah’s graven image and an idolatrous system of worship with Micah’s ‘priest’ – Jonathan the grandson of Moses (Judges 18:30 – “Manasseh” here should be Moses. It was changed by copyists to protect the reputation of Moses). This apostasy established Dan as a centre for deviation from the purity of the truth and Jeroboam was to exploit it several hundred years later.

After spending time in Egypt, Jeroboam returned to rule the Northern Kingdom, bringing with him the idolatry of Egypt. In the early days of the reign of Jeroboam, the city of Dan was chosen as one of the centres of his idolatrous worship. Jeroboam established a religion that mirrored the truth, (“Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt”), but elevated convenience (“It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem”).

in Dan was the one that the people went to worship before. For those living in Shechem, it would have been much easier to simply go to Jerusalem, and worship in the appointed way. However the people of Jeroboam’s kingdom, chose to go over twice as far and over more difficult terrain to indulge in Jeroboam’s apostasy. The city of Dan embodies the vast extent that the flesh will go to satisfy its lusts and desires, and yet how reluctant it is to obey the Word of God.



**Sources:**

The Kings of Israel and Judah - Jim Cowie  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan>

(Compiler – Jeff Cooper)

Jeroboam’s religion had priests, and feasts, he offered, sacrificed, and burnt incense. It had the outward show of being the same as the worship in Jerusalem, yet catered to the desires of the flesh. Of the two calves that were established in Dan and Bethel, the one