



VIEW EAST: NAHAL SAMACH LOOKING TOWARD THE GOLAN HEIGHTS AND EIN KESHATOT ON THE EDGE OF THE PLATEAU (NOT PICTURED; SEE "EIN KESHATOT SYNAGOGUE" ON PAGE 33).

BELOW: I TRIED TO HIKE ALONG THE STREAMBED AS I CLIMBED TOWARD EIN KESHATOT. UNFORTUNATELY, I LOST AN EXPENSIVE PAIR OF GLASSES CROSSING THE STREAM THROUGH THE THICK BRUSH.





VIEW EAST: THE KURSI MONASTERY (BOTTOM CENTER) LIES IN THE BROAD VALLEY AT THE END OF NAHAL SAMACH. KURSI (BIBLICAL GERGESA) WAS THE LOCATION OF THE SWINE MIRACLE (MATT. 8:23–34; SEE “GERGESA (KURSI)” ON PAGE 265).

NAHAL SAMACH

(SEE MAP ON PAGE 274)

The day I hiked from Kursi to Ein Keshatot was beautiful but warm. I crossed the street from the park, thinking I could pass through the farm and follow the hills on the valley’s north side. That was a mistake. There was no easy way to cross the stream at that point. I did it the hard way through the thickets, not knowing there was a trail that avoided the farm area. It was an eventful day because I tried following the stream most of the way. The brush was so thick in places that it was impossible to pass from one side of the stream to the other, except on hands and knees. That’s how I lost my glasses—they got knocked off my head without my realizing it. I tried to retrace my steps to find them, but it was impossible.

I ran into a group of men crossing the valley in jeeps and small vans. When they got stuck in the stream, I passed them. They caught up to me on the road closer to Ein Keshatot (see the top photo on page 273). I reached them again after they stopped for lunch, to which they invited me as I walked by. These few words do not capture the memories of that day and so many others like them, which I will cherish forever. I have found few pleasures as enjoyable as hiking the Holy Land alone, off the beaten path.

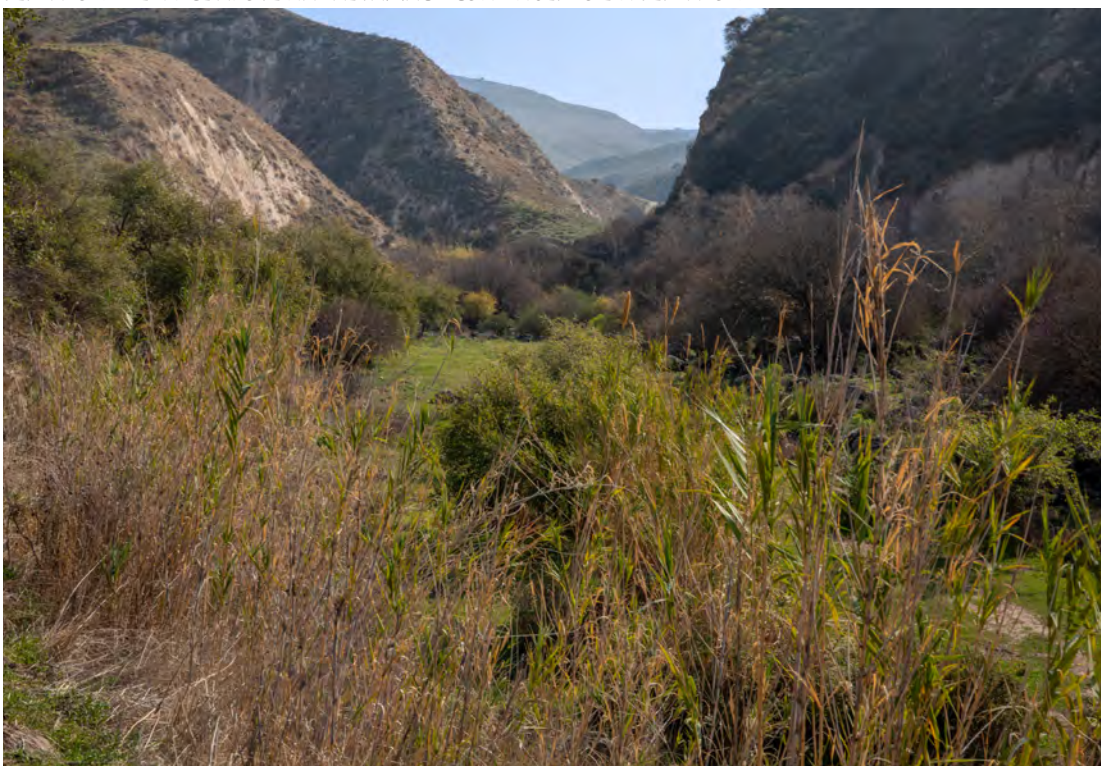
I ENCOUNTERED THIS BEAUTIFUL SABRA CACTUS WITH RIPENING FRUIT AT THE START OF THE DAY.





VIEW EAST: I TOOK THIS PHOTO AT ABOUT THE HALFWAY POINT BETWEEN KURSI AND EIN KESHATOT. I HAD JUST PICKED UP THE TRAIL, WHICH FOLLOWS THE STREAM (RIGHT-SIDE THICKET), CROSSING IT SEVERAL TIMES BACK AND FORTH.

BELOW (VIEW SOUTHEAST): THIS PHOTO SHOWS WHERE NAHAL SAMACH AND NAHAL EL AL CONVERGE BELOW EIN KESHATOT. THE RIDGE ABOVE NAHAL SAMACH CONTINUES TO EIN KESHATOT.





VIEW WEST: THIS PHOTO SHOWS THE CLIMB COMING OUT OF NAHAL SAMACH. THE ROAD CONTINUES TO EIN KESHATOT ON THE EDGE OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, 1.5 MILES (2.4 KILOMETERS) FARTHER.

BELOW (VIEW EAST): THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN JUST BELOW THE GOLAN HEIGHTS ON THE RIDGE BETWEEN NAHAL SAMACH AND NAHAL EL AL.

