



VIEW NORTH (PHOTO 2): THIS SPOT IS NEAR THE EASTERN END OF THE VALLEY, LOOKING UP AT MT. NITAI. YOU CAN ALSO SEE THE LOWER CAVES WHERE THE JEWS HID FROM THE FORCES OF KING HEROD IN 39–38 BC.

BELOW (VIEW EAST—PHOTO 3): I TOOK THIS PHOTO LOOKING BACK AT THE SEA OF GALILEE (TOP CENTER), HIKING TO REACH MT. ARBEL (TOP RIGHT) FROM THE WEST AFTER CLIMBING OUT OF THE VALLEY (SEE THE TOP PHOTO ON PAGE 189).





VIEW WEST (PHOTO 1): THE HIKE UP WADI HAMAM BETWEEN MT. NITAI (RIGHT) AND MT. ARBEL (LEFT), PART OF THE ROUTE BETWEEN CANA OF GALILEE AND CAPERNAUM (SEE THE MAP ON PAGE 193 FOR PHOTO LOCATIONS).

WADI HAMAM

(VALLEY OF THE DOVES—SEE MAP ON PAGE 151)

The ancient route connecting the coast of Palestine through Lower Galilee to the Sea of Galilee ran through Wadi Hamam (Valley of the Doves), which represents the route’s eastern half. The western half ran through the Beit Netofa Valley past Cana of Galilee (see “Cana of Galilee” on page 105). Like the armies and merchants that often traveled it, Jesus knew this road and its history. Mt. Arbel, the mountain cliff above Wadi Hamam’s eastern end, has a history of rebellion and bloodshed, which is why I cannot see the mountain cliff as the site of Christ’s great commission (Matt 28:14–20; see “The Great Commission” on page 184).

At the western end of Wadi Hamam is a small memorial park dedicated to Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister of Israel who was assassinated in 1995 (see “Yitzhak Rabin” on page 193). The story of his assassin and other men who have spent their lives pursuing the wrong goals remind me of two talks by President Nelson: “Peacemakers Needed” and “The Answer Is Always Jesus Christ.” He gave the talks in April 2023, in the same General Conference of the Church. In the first, he said, “Contention never leads to inspired solutions.” History provides many examples of uninspired solutions that preceded the outbreak of war. In the second talk, President Nelson said, “Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.”

President Nelson’s two short declarations characterize the purpose of Christ’s great commission. The reason we sustain modern Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators is evident in President Nelson’s closing testimony: “My dear brothers and sisters, I bear witness that Jesus Christ directs the affairs of His Church. I testify that following Him is the only way to enduring happiness.”



VIEW EAST—PHOTO 5: THE HIKE AS YOU APPROACH MT. ARBEL (TOP CENTER) AND THE SEA OF GALILEE. WADI HAMAM IS BEAUTIFUL ANY TIME OF THE YEAR, BUT ESPECIALLY IN THE SPRING.

BELOW (VIEW WEST—PHOTO 6): I TOOK THIS PHOTO AFTER CLIMBING DOWN THE SOUTHERN SLOPE OF MT. NITAI (RIGHT), WHERE THE VALLEY BEGINS TO OPEN EN ROUTE TO THE BEIT NETOFA VALLEY AND CANA OF GALILEE.





VIEW EAST (PHOTO 4): THE VALLEY OF WADI HAMAM BETWEEN MT. NITAI (LEFT) AND MT. ARBEL (RIGHT) AND THE SEA OF GALILEE (TOP CENTER). IT IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE VALLEY OF THE DOVES, WHICH IS A TRANSLATION FROM THE ARABIC.

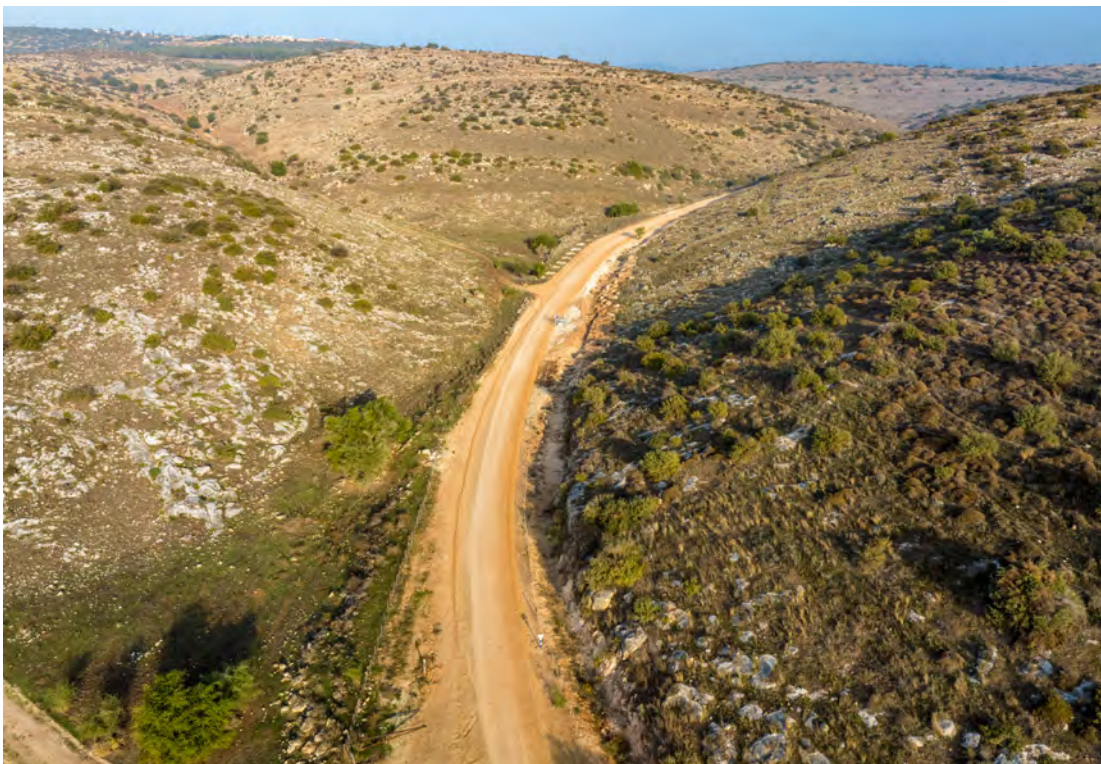
BELOW (VIEW WEST): THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN NOT FAR FROM THE ABOVE PHOTO, FACING THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. THIS WAS THE ROUTE THAT CONNECTED CANA OF GALILEE TO THE SEA OF GALILEE AND CAPERNAUM.





VIEW WEST (PHOTO 10): A CULTIVATED FIELD NEXT TO THE DIRT ROAD RUNNING SOUTH FROM MASAD, JUST BEFORE DROPPING INTO WADI HAMAM.

BELOW (VIEW NORTH—PHOTO 11): THE UPPER REACHES OF WADI HAMAM EAST OF THE ARAB-CHRISTIAN TOWN OF ELIABUN AND THE BEDOUIN VILLAGE OF MASAD (TOP LEFT). SEE THE MAP ON PAGE 193.





VIEW SOUTH (PHOTO 7): THE TRAIL ENTERS THE CANYON HERE, AND THE CLIFFS ON EACH SIDE GROW STEEPER AS IT APPROACHES MT. ARBEL.

BELOW (VIEW WEST—PHOTO 8): THE UPPER TRAIL (LEFT) LEADS TOWARD THE HORNS OF HATTIN (SEE THE TOP PHOTO ON PAGE 192). THE LOWER TRAIL CONTINUES EAST ALONG WADI HAMAM TO THE SEA OF GALILEE.





VIEW SOUTH (PHOTO 3): A SMALL MEMORIAL PARK DEDICATED TO THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL, YITZHAK RABIN (1922–1995). RABIN WAS ASSASSINATED BY A JEWISH EXTREMIST WHO OPPOSED THE OSLO ACCORDS.

BELOW (VIEW EAST): A STAND IN THE PARK (SEE ABOVE PHOTO) PROVIDES A BRIEF HISTORY OF YITZHAK RABIN'S LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS A ZIONIST COMMITTED TO ISRAEL.





VIEW NORTH: THIS TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP SHOWS THE GPS LOCATION OF THE PHOTOS IN THIS SECTION. PHOTO 9 MARKS THE LOCATION OF BOTH PHOTOS ON PAGE 192. PHOTO 4 MARKS IT FOR BOTH PHOTOS ON PAGE 189.

PHOTO NOTES

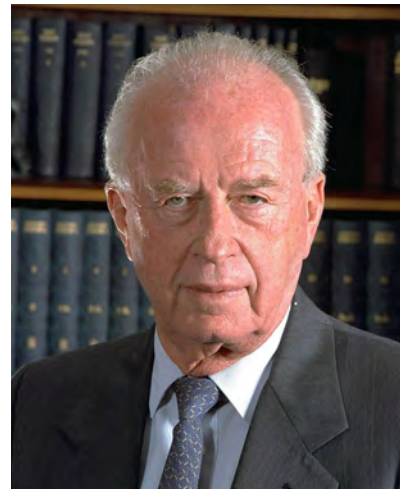
To get the photos in this section, I rode the bus from Haifa to a bus stop below Masad (top left). From there, I hiked to the Sea of Galilee following Wadi Hamam. Eilabun (top left) is at the east end of the Beit Netofa Valley in Lower Galilee. At the west end of the valley is Khirbet Qana, known as Cana of Galilee in the New Testament (see “Cana of Galilee” on page 105). The orange boxes mark the photos in this section, starting at the east end below Mt. Arbel and ending near the west end of Wadi Hamam.

YITZHAK RABIN (1922–1995)

Rabin was the first elected native-born prime minister of Israel. As a teenager he joined the Palmach, a commando force of Jewish immigrants who protected the settlements before the establishment of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. Rabin rose through the ranks of the Palmach to serve as chief of operations during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. After the creation of the State of Israel, he joined the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), where he served a distinguished twenty-seven-year career. For example, he oversaw Israel’s victory in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Rabin served as Israel’s ambassador to the United States from 1968–1973. After Golda Meir resigned, following the intelligence failures of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Rabin was appointed prime minister of Israel. During the 1980s, he served as Israel’s defense minister. In 1992, he was reelected as prime minister, running on a platform that embraced the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. In that position, he signed the Oslo Accords, which consisted of two interim agreements with the Palestinian leadership. He also signed a peace treaty with Jordan in 1994.

Rabin was assassinated in 1995 by a Jewish extremist named Yigal Amir who opposed the Oslo Accords and Rabin’s peace initiative with the Palestinians. After conviction, the Israeli court sentenced Amir to life in prison.



YITZHAK RABIN IN 1994.