

## DAMASCUS

3 hr drive Veirut-Dam. Leave fertile valleys of Lebanon for steppes, barren fields. Near Damascus see Barada River which transforms country. Seems also to be called Pharpar River. Naaman boasted of it, 2 Kg 5:12. Cf. dirty Jordan.

Syria. <sup>4 1/2</sup> mill. <sup>71,224</sup> 66,000 sq mi. Damascus oldest continually inhabited city in world. Arabs conquered in 634 A.D. Father of John the Damascene surrendered the city to Arabs in order to save Xn churches. Before this city was Xn. Soon became center of Mohammedanism, chiefly bec children simply went along with it, tho 1st generation after conquest has resisted. 350 mosques now. 13 churches. (2 Prot)

Bible references. Abraham passed thru, Gen 14:15 cf 15:2. 100 mi from Ur.  
David conquered it, 2 Sam 8:5-6 c. 1042 BC.  
Naaman, 2 Kg 5. c. 895 BC.  
Elisha visited and prophesied there, 2 Kg 8:7-15, c. 892 B.C

Pauls' conversion. Straight St. Small Arab shops and apts on 2nd floor.  
P went to house of Judas on this street, Acts 9:11.

House of Ananias is about block from middle of Straight St. God down (level of city lower in P's day) to chapel holding about 60 people. Acts 9:10.

Probably 3 yrs later P back in Dam (break comes at Acts 9:23) and had to be let down over wall in basket, v. 25. Reconstruction of supposed place in wall made about 85 yrs ago. Fairly new church there (Greek Cath). Displays few splinters of bone supposedly P's!

Damask-Damascus silk. Beads which Moslems use are rosary. 33 beads and he uses each one 3 times to mention the 99 attributes of God.

Ramadan. Greatest feast-fast of Moslem yr. May occur at any time bec use lunar year of 354 days. 29 day observance. From earliest dawn till sunset, faithful may not eat or drink anything. Dawn is when a white and black hair can be distinguished at arm's length. Esp. hard in summer bec get thirsty.

El-Azem Palace. 18th c. built by last giv. of Dam. Classical Arab architecture.

Omayyad Mosque or Grand Mosque. Over house of Rimmon where Naaman worshipped before cured of leprosy. Roman temple to Jupiter also there. 1st Xn ch built in 4th c to Jn Bap. Chapel inside mosque contains what is said to be head of Jn. Almost totally destroyed by fire in 1069, ravaged in 1334, fire in 1893. Now being restored. Mosaics. 4th most holy site for Moslems. Outside court and not far from mosque is resting-place of Saladin. Crusaders could not conquer him and he caused Holy Land to be left in hands of Moslems.