

The Gospels identify Nazareth, 16 miles west of the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee, as Mary's home and as the village of her annunciation (Luke 1:26). Joseph left Nazareth with Mary for Bethlehem to be counted in the census (Luke 2:4), and it was to Nazareth they returned after the rites of purification in the Temple in Jerusalem (Luke 2:39). Consequently we infer that Nazareth was also Joseph's village. Jesus grew up in Nazareth (Matthew 2:23; Luke 4:16), and, according to Luke, the incident of the 12-year-old Jesus in the Temple culminated with a return to Nazareth (Luke 2:51). Jesus left Nazareth at the beginning of his ministry when he was baptized by John the Baptist (Mark 1:9). Jesus returned to Nazareth to teach in the synagogue, but was not well received (Luke 4:16-30). Modern Nazareth, seen here, completely engulfs ancient Nazareth.