

Biblical Study Tour of Israel

A Shoresh Study Tours Itinerary

Led by Jay and Liz Abramson

April 4 - 15, 2022

We will travel through the land, from coast to desert to mountains, to visit the places where important Biblical events took place, and dig deep into the Scriptures in their original context to learn about God's faithfulness to His people, in the past, present, and future. Our tour includes sites from the Old and New Testaments as well as the history of modern Israel. In addition, we will learn about God's work amongst believers in the land today. Jesus will always be the center of our studies, as we seek a better understanding of His ministry, His place among the Jewish people, and the application of His teachings in our lives.

Day 1 Monday, April 4, 2022

ARRIVAL IN THE LAND OF PROMISE

We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport near **Tel Aviv**, where we will be met by our guide and bus driver for the trip.

From the airport we will travel to the **ancient port of Jaffa**, the location of Simon the Tanner's house and the point from which Jonah tried to escape his calling to warn the people of Nineveh. From here we drive to our hotel on the **Mediterranean Coast** where we may have an opportunity to stroll on the beach or swim before dinner. Later we may have a brief meeting for introductions, some orientation, and prayer. Overnight: Leonardo Hotel, Ashkelon, Mediterranean Coast

Day 2 Tuesday, April 5

THE LIVES OF THE PATRIARCHS

We begin our journey by climbing up through the strategic lowlands into the **Mountains of Judea**. Next we shall continue in the steps of the Patriarchs to the southern desert region called the **Negev** in the Bible (a name it still carries today). Here we will visit a **Bedouin museum** where we examine their nomadic culture in order to shed light on the lives of Abraham and the Patriarchs. Our next stop will be **Tel Arad**, a pre-Abrahamic major city and later an Israelite fortress. Our last stop will either be the **Fountain of Tears** sculptures, a work exploring the relationship between Jesus and the victims of the Holocaust or we may drive to UNESCO site of Beit Guvrin to view the ancient caves there. We will try to end the day in time to relax in the spa at our **Dead Sea** hotel or enjoy a float in the therapeutic mineral rich waters.

Overnight: David Spa Hotel, Dead Sea

Day 3 Wednesday, April 6

THE JUDEAN DESERT - Seeking Refuge in the Wilderness

Our theme today is the wilderness and what it signified to the ancient Israelites. We begin our day at **Masada**, Herod the Great's magnificent fortress palace in the desert, and the site of the last stand of the Zealots, a Jewish revolutionary group at the time of Jesus. From Masada we drive north to the beautiful subtropical oasis of **Ein Gedi**, where David hid from Saul. Depending on conditions, we can walk into the nature reserve and possibly to the waterfalls. We may see some wildlife, including the furry rock badger and the graceful ibex. We will also discuss the temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness. Our last site will be

Qumran, likely the home of the Essenes, a First Century Jewish sect which may have influenced early Christianity, and the site of the most exciting archaeological discovery ever made in Israel – the Dead Sea Scrolls. Later in the day we will travel north up the spectacular **Syrian African Rift Valley**, crossing the **Jordan River** before we arrive at our hotel on the shores of the **Sea of Galilee**.

Overnight: Ma'agan Holiday Village, Sea of Galilee

Day 4 Thursday, April 7

AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE – Daily Life and Religion in the Time of Jesus

Our day will be spent visiting various sites around the Sea of Galilee as we try to picture daily life and religion in the First Century, and seek to better understand the miracles and teachings of Jesus in His original Jewish context. We will start the day at **Chorazin**, the well-preserved ruins of a typical Galilean village, where we study village life, Jewish religion, and the Pharisees. Our next stop will be the **Mount of Beatitudes**, traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, where we will consider the Kingdom of God in Jesus' teachings. After a short walk or drive down the hill we will arrive at **Capernaum**, the town where Jesus lived during the majority of His ministry. At lovely **Tabgha**, which commemorates the multiplication of loaves and fish, and where Jesus met the disciples after the resurrection, we will enjoy a contemplative time on the shore of the Lake. Later in the afternoon we will visit Kibbutz Ginosar to see the **"Jesus Boat"**, a Galilean fishing boat from the First Century. From here we will set sail for a **boat ride on the Lake** to enjoy the views and some worship, prayer and reflective time. After dinner we will meet with a local believer. Overnight: Ma'agan Holiday Village, Sea of Galilee

Day 5 Friday, April 8

NORTHERN ISRAEL – "Who Do Men Say That I Am?"

Today we explore Northern Israel, one of the most beautiful regions of the country. We will seek to understand what the Jewish people of 2,000 years ago expected of the Messiah, and how that was fulfilled in Jesus. We begin by climbing up to the magnificent **Golan Heights**. In the morning we will visit a reconstructed Talmudic village at **Katzrin**, where we will take another close look at life in New Testament times and the use of everyday imagery in Scripture. Next we will travel along the lower slopes of **Mount Hermon** – Israel's highest mountain, and the most likely site of the Transfiguration. Our next stop is **Caesarea Philippi**, in the region where Peter made his famous confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Along the way we will pass **Druze Villages** before coming to **Mt. Bental**, a lookout spot near the border with Syria and the area of the **road to Damascus** where the Apostle Paul met the Lord. Our final stop is the **Dan Nature Reserve**, where we see the incredible archaeological remains of the **OT city of Dan**, including the city gate from the time of Abraham, and consider ancient Israel's apostasy. We will also enjoy a pleasant walk by a stream and discuss the meaning of "living water" in the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' teaching. Overnight: Ma'agan Holiday Village, Sea of Galilee

Day 6 Saturday, April 9

LIGHT TO THE NATIONS – Jews, Gentiles, and the Messiah

Today we travel west and then down the coast, visiting a number of Biblical sites that testify to God's faithfulness to His word, past, present, and future. Our first visit of the day will be ancient **Nazareth**, Jesus' boyhood home and place of His early ministry. We continue along the route of the ancient **Via Maris to Megiddo**, one of King Solomon's cities, and according the Book of Revelation possibly the assembly point for the armies

marching to the battle of Armageddon. We then travel to **Mount Carmel**, with a spectacular view over the North of Israel, near the spot where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. We complete our day at the fabulous ruins of the Herodian city of **Caesarea Maritima**, the site of the conversion of Cornelius and the location from which Paul left the shores of Israel and set sail on his journey to Rome.

Overnight: Seasons Hotel, Netanya, Mediterranean Coast

Day 7 Sunday, April 10

SAMARIA: ANCIENT ISRAEL

Today we journey into the northern homeland of the Patriarchs, of the Israelites under Joshua, and later the breakaway Kingdom of Israel. Sites visited may include: **Mt. Gerazim** (the "Mount of Blessing" from Joshua's time), **Mt. Kebir** and **Alon Moreh** (scenic overlook and one of Abraham's campsites), **Jacob's Well**, and **Shiloh** (long-time location of the Tabernacle and the ark of the covenant). We will focus on our roots in the Old Testament, which are vital to our understanding of the New Testament. In the late afternoon we will enter Jerusalem, the City of the Great King. Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 8 Monday, April 11

JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF JESUS - The Temple at the Center

Today will be devoted to learning about Jerusalem in Jesus' day, when the Temple in Jerusalem was the center of Jewish life. We will study how worship was performed in the temple, the Sadducees and Jesus' attitude towards them, and generally enrich our insight into many important events in the gospels and book of Acts. An early start will take us up to the **Temple Mount** (conditions permitting), where we'll consider some of Jesus' activities there, as well as the claims of Islam. After a visit to the **Western Wall** place of prayer, Judaism's most holy site, we will take a trip to the subterranean **Western Wall Tunnels** to walk at what was street level in the time of Jesus. We then make our way through the **Jewish Quarter** of the Old City to see the **Herodian Villas**, the palatial mansions that were the home to the Sadducees, the ruling priesthood at the time of Jesus. We complete our day at the excavations near the base of the Temple Mount and discuss Pentecost on the **Southern Steps** where Jesus walked.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 9 Tuesday, April 12

THE RESTORATION OF HOPE - A Garland Instead of Ashes

Today we study both a great tragedy and the wonder of the Lord's redemptive power. We will examine the systematic annihilation of six million Jews in the Nazi genocide, God coming to earth in the form of a man to save His people from their sins, and the loving witness of Christians committed to the Biblically prophesied physical restoration and spiritual rebirth of the Jewish people. We travel to **Yad VaShem**, the Israel Memorial Museum to the Holocaust. Here we examine the spiritual and theological roots of the most notorious genocide in history and the connection between the Church, Jesus and the Jewish people. From here we take the short drive to **Bethlehem**, where we will visit the **Church of the Nativity**, which marks the probable site of the birth of Jesus, and the "**Shepherd's Fields**" where the angels heralded the advent of Messiah. Later, we will enjoy a tour of the **Christ Church Heritage Centre** to learn about CMJ's 200-year history of ministry to the Jewish people.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 10 Wednesday, April 13

FREE DAY IN JERUSALEM

Today is free for rest, reflection, shopping, or for the energetic, perhaps a walk on the walls of the Old City. *Shoresh will provide a list of interesting options for those who want to explore on their own.* This evening we will expand our understanding of the role of the Lamb of God by celebrating a **Jewish Passover Seder meal** together, making Biblical connections to the “last supper” that Jesus shared with his disciples.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 11 Thursday, April 14

IN THE STEPS OF JESUS – Crucifixion, Death, Burial and Resurrection

Today we focus on sites related to the Biblical passages concerning Jesus’ last week in Jerusalem. Our goal is to understand why He was crucified, how He was buried, and what it meant to the Jewish people of the First Century that He was raised from the dead. We begin our day with a panoramic overlook of Jerusalem from the **Mount of Olives**, the site of Jesus’ ascension to heaven and His future second coming. After viewing a **tomb from the time of Jesus**, we will walk down the Mount of Olives to **Gethsemane**. Next we cross the **Kidron Valley** and enter the Old City through **Stephen’s Gate**, stopping to examine the remains of the **Pool of Bethesda**. From here we walk to the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, the most likely site of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. We end our tour with a reflective time at a site that wonderfully illustrates Jesus’ burial and resurrection, the peaceful **Garden Tomb**.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 12 Friday, April 15

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Early Morning Departure: Straight Home

We say farewell to Jerusalem and descend through the mountains of Judea to the airport on the coastal plain to catch the flight home.

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE:

- *Most days on this itinerary involve a regular amount of walking and/or climbing. Therefore this trip cannot generally accommodate those who have significant difficulty with climbing stairs or walking a half a mile at a time. Please be in contact with the trip leaders if you have any concerns about this.*
- *Itinerary and accommodation subject to change if conditions necessitate.*
- *It is mandatory for each participant to have travel insurance to cover medical costs or trip cancellations.*