

Israel Familiarization Tour

A Shoresh Study Tours Itinerary

February 13-23, 2018

Hosts: Daryl Fenton and Theresa Newell

On this Familiarization Tour for those in ministry, we will focus on the life of Jesus from his home in Galilee to Jerusalem, giving particular attention to the influence of Jewish thought and culture of the period on the origins of The Christian faith. Our goal is a better understanding of Jesus' ministry, his place among the Jewish people, and the application of His teachings for us today. The FAM tour will also include sites from the Old Testament as well as the history of modern Israel. The tour is designed to prepare clergy or lay leaders so they can lead future trips if they feel so called.

Day 1: Monday, February 12th

DEPARTURE FROM USA

Day 2: Tuesday, February 13th

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 our hotel on the **Mediterranean Coast**. Time permitting, we may have an opportunity to stroll on the beach before dinner. Later we will have a brief meeting for introductions, some orientation, and prayer.

Overnight: Seasons Hotel, Netanya, Mediterranean Coast

Day 3: Wednesday, February 14th

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

We will begin with a short meeting after breakfast. Today we travel north up the coast and then eastwards inland to the Galilee, visiting a number of Biblical sites that testify to God's faithfulness to His word, past, present, and future. We begin 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. We then travel up the coast to **Mount Carmel**, with a spectacular view over the North of Israel, near the spot where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. We conclude our day at ancient **Nazareth**, Jesus' boyhood home and place of His early ministry.

Overnight: Maagan Holiday Village, Sea of Galilee

Day 4: Thursday, February 15th

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 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. Our final stop is the **Dan Nature Reserve**, where we see the incredible archaeological remains of the Israelite **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. After dinner we will meet with a local believer.

Overnight: Maagan Holiday Village, Sea of Galilee

Day 5: Friday, February 16th

AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE - Daily Life and Religion in the Time of Jesus/Yeshua

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. Overnight: Maagan Holiday Village, Sea of Galilee

Day 6: Saturday, February 17th

THE JORDAN VALLEY - "In the World But Not of It"

Today we leave the Galilee and journey south down the spectacular **Syrian African Rift Valley** to the Dead Sea in the arid Judean wilderness. We will study the cultural tensions that existed at the time of Jesus, both between Greco-Roman culture and Jewish culture (and later the early church), and also between the Jewish religious establishment of the day and various spiritual reformers. At the **Jordan River**, we will discuss the ministry of John the Baptist and his relationship with Jesus. Our next stop is the Biblical city of **Beit Shean** to examine the visually impressive excavations of its Roman-Byzantine period when it was one the ten Hellenistic cities of the Decapolis. From here we continue down the Jordan Valley to the arid Judean Wilderness, passing by the region of **Jericho** - the oldest and lowest city on earth. At the end of the day we make the final ascent to Jerusalem - the City of the Great King. After dinner we will be treated to a short optional stroll for a rooftop panorama of the Old City, with a short talk and testimonies from the Shoresh Director.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 7: Sunday, February 18th

THE RESTORATION OF HOPE - A Garland Instead of Ashes

Today we study both 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, and the loving witness of Christians committed to the Biblically prophesied physical restoration and spiritual rebirth of the Jewish people. After breakfast, 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. Next 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. The afternoon will be 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 8: Monday, February 19th

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. After dinner we will learn about what is involved in working with Shoresh to plan and recruit for a Biblical tour of Israel.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 9: Tuesday, February 20th

BETHLEHEM AND FREE

We start our day in **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. The afternoon 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.*

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 10: Wednesday, February 21

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 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 next visit 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. We will finish our afternoon by enjoying a float in the therapeutic mineral rich waters of the **Dead Sea**.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 11: Thursday, February 22

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**.

This evening we will have a special farewell dinner at an Israeli restaurant in the New City.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem (For those groups with a late night flight, rooms will be held until departure for the airport.)

Day 12: Friday, February 23

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

We will descend through the Judean hills to the airport for our flight home.

Please note:

- *Itinerary and accommodation subject to change if conditions (especially weather) necessitate.*
- *Some days involve a significant amount of walking and/or steep climbing. Every effort will be made to enable tour members to fully participate at all sites, but in some cases that may not be possible.*