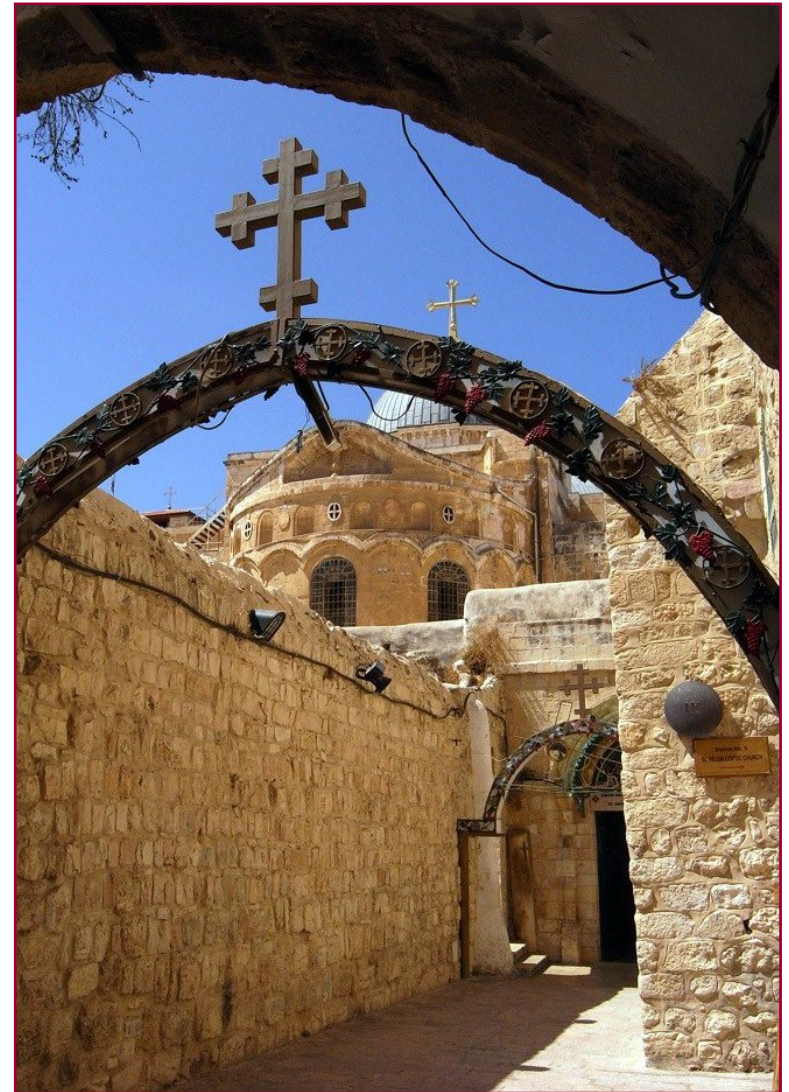


Notes:



Israel, 2023

March 1-13

Sponsored by

**Epiclesis: An Ancient-Future Faith Community
and
Anchor Baptist Church**

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Image, right: Alley in the Jewish Quarter

Image, cover: Via Dolorosa

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Our Personal Guide: Moti Kaufer



Moti writes about himself, *Upon completion of my military service, I guided desert tours in Sinai. I returned to "civilization" and completed my academic education: Geography and Political Science in Israel, and Hotel Management at the University of Houston, Texas. I am a graduate of the Society for the Protection of Nature Guiding School, and the Bar-Ilan University Tour Guides' School. My specialties are biblical tours, religions, Second Temple period, and 20th century history of the Middle East.*

What online reviewers are saying:

Moti is an outstanding professional....

Moti Kaufer is easily one of the best tour guides to have.

[He] made our trip unforgettable. We would not hesitate to hire him again.

When we left Israel, we knew that we have a new friend there, Moti, and that we will come back.

We always felt safe in Israel and Moti is a terrific companion. We highly recommend [him] to anyone who wants an in depth, informative, and pleasant tour of Israel....



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Find all the latest, up to date trip information (including audio-visual resources, tutorials, educational videos, etc.) on our custom webpage:
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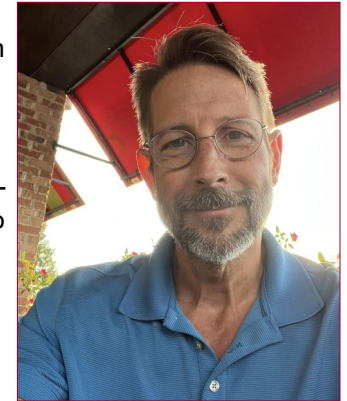
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Word from Pastor Carl

Softly and tenderly, Jesus is calling... come home. The sentiment of this old hymn expresses the overwhelming sense I had four years ago arriving in the Holy Land for the first time. It felt like coming home. I've heard the same thing from numerous travelers to Israel. As Pastor Chris and I began to dream about a return trip, we had in mind that this experience was worth sharing. What a joy and honor to take this journey into sacred space with you.



Each day will seem a bit like Christmas as we unpack another gift of God's grace. We'll step back into Salvation History, and the stories we've learned and cherished will come to life. We'll walk where the giants of our faith have been. And we'll retrace the steps of Jesus, from His birth to His miraculous ministry and to the place of His Passion. As we touch the sacred sites so central to our faith, they'll touch us back— and we'll be transformed as our eyes are opened to see as never before. Our study of the Scriptures will be changed forever!

We're praying that you'll be open to what the Spirit will show you and that you'll have an extra dose of grace and flexibility. Even the best laid plans have occasional zigs and zags. Most of all, we pray that you'll grow deeper in your love for the Lord as you step onto sacred soil. Israel awaits us! Welcome home!

Blessings,
 Pastor Carl Peters

Anchor
 Baptist
 Church



This trip is sponsored jointly by Epiclesis: An Ancient-Future Faith Community and Anchor Baptist Church. Credit and extra special thanks for the overall organization and coordination of the trip goes to John Brown of The Obed Project.



Word from Pastor Chris



It's a thrill of a lifetime to go to Israel. Right from the beginning, I've told many of you that this would be a legacy trip— *one that would never be forgotten.*

But in the planning process, I've realized that the bigger blessing is that I get to do this trip with you! That you are coming along on this amazing, unforgettable journey is truly an honor for me. Welcome!

Two important words, not about Israel necessarily, but critical nonetheless: Trust and flexibility. We're all investing a lot of money and time in this trip, and it'd be easy to let a detail here or there make us feel disappointed. I have the utmost trust in John, Teresa and their team, both here and in Israel. I am putting my full faith in their ability to help construct and manage the trip. And, all along the way, I plan to be flexible. We all know things can change, and that's to be expected. So basic, plain ol' worldly flexibility will be really important.

But there's a *holy* flexibility, too. What do I mean? My heart's desire is that we will encounter God— *and in a myriad of ways that can't be scheduled or planned.* Let's pledge now to be flexible in a holy kind of way, and sensitive to what God is doing, where He is leading, and what He is saying. What better place to do that than in the Land of our Lord?!

So blessed to be making this journey with you...

The Lord be with you!
Pastor Chris

Israel Trip Participants

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Special dietary needs - How are they dealt with?

We know that gluten-free can be accommodated, but would need to know about specific and/or severe dietary needs in order to get those questions answered in advance.

What about medical requirements, shots, etc., needed before going?

No special shots or inoculations are needed. We are unaware of any need for proof of Covid shots or of any extra protocols. It would be handy, of course, to have that information with you if you have been vaccinated.

Can the itinerary or schedule change?

Yes, and it probably will (especially when we're in Jerusalem). Your trip will be so much more pleasant if you are flexible. Reasons may include speed of the group, teaching/worship times, traffic, local schedule changes, etc. Also, we may hear of an opportunity not on the itinerary we can take advantage of if we're flexible.

Will there be a lot of walking?

Yes, indeed, and plenty of stairs. This fact can surprise American visitors who are used to ADA compliance in public spaces. Bring good shoes, sunglasses/sunscreen, hat, etc. For those people who want to walk in the Hezekiah Tunnel in Jerusalem, some inexpensive water shoes will be very helpful. Note: There are also plenty of options for rest (or to opt out) for people who have mobility problems.

The material says that all tips are included. Does that really include all tips-- all the guides, hotel staff, etc.?

All tips are included in the price.

What about guides using microphone/headset on walking tours?

Yes. Our tour guide uses a microphone/headset system.

Will there be Air Conditioning in all hotels and all buses?

Yes, there is AC on the buses and in the hotels. However, most hotels don't run the AC in March.

Word from Dr. Teresa Gardner

Why go to Israel? I can think of two great reasons:

The first reason is because when you go, the Bible truly does come alive.

Though I've been 51 times, I still vividly remember my first trip to Israel and the overwhelming realization that all of those places we read about in the Bible are real places! We drive past where the sun and moon stood still for Joshua and the valley where David slew Goliath, walk through gates where Abraham walked, and around the caves where David hid from Saul, where the 12 tribes crossed over into the Promised Land, and where John baptized Jesus. We spend time in Capernaum and on the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus taught, on the same Sea of Galilee where Jesus called his disciples, walked and calmed the storms, and at so many other places in the Galilean ministry of our Lord. Wow! And, then, there is Jerusalem— awesome, glorious, the city of our great King! The place where our Lord and Savior died and rose again. And for the rest of our lives, when we read about the places in the Bible, we will see them.

And the second reason? Because you will never be the same. With each trip, it is as though God is your personal tour guide— pointing out what He wants you to see and understand, sharing His heart for the land and people, and how we fit into this historic and prophetically fulfilling time in His Story. At each biblical site, I believe we experience at least three things: the history of the location, the biblical account and significance of the location, and what the Lord wants to say to us about Who He is and how He wants to work in our own lives. For He is the same yesterday, today and forever!

I can't wait to experience it all over again with you!

Shalom...
Dr. Teresa Gardner



Brief Itinerary Overview

Please remember that this schedule is subject to change. We are especially mindful of potential flight changes which would affect our travel to some degree, though not our basic schedule.

- **Wednesday, March 1**

Three groups depart the U.S. for Israel (See flight details in the “Trip Information” section of this booklet, p. 18).

- **Thursday, March 2**

Groups arrive in Israel between 4-5 PM local time. Drive to Hotel (See hotel details in the “Trip Information” section of this booklet, p. 20).

Tel Aviv to Tiberius and Sea of Galilee Area

- **Friday, March 3**

Caesarea Maritima, Mt. Carmel, Cana of Galilee, Nazareth. On to the Galilee and our beautiful sea-side hotel: Galei Kinneret.

- **Saturday, March 4**

Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee (right), Capernaum, Mount of Beatitudes, Tabgha and Church of the Primacy of Peter, Greek Orthodox Church of the 12 Apostles.

- **Sunday, March 5**

Caesarea Philippi, Tel Dan, Opportunity for lunch at Druze restaurant, Up to the Golan Heights, Overlook into Syria.



Israel Trip Quick FAQs

Is this trip safe?

Yes. We are not going to places with known issues requiring extra security (using armored buses, etc.). The reality on the ground is that the country is a safe destination for tourists because Israel is a world leader in security. Our guide is in constant contact with tour managers and government officials who give updates on all kinds of news and information, from traffic congestion to potential safety issues. Obed’s motto is “Adventure without Danger.”

Regarding money: What is the best way to travel - Credit Card, Debit Card, cash exchanged in advance?

Most credit cards are accepted, U.S. dollars work almost everywhere, and there will be opportunities to exchange money. Keep in mind that if you use U.S. dollars, change will be returned in shekels.

Is trip insurance available?

Yes. The AIG Gold Policy is what the Obed Project recommends, but AIG has another one called “Travel Guard Plus.” Feel free to call (800) 826-4919 and ask for a comparison between the two. Another tour participant (and frequent international traveler) recommended an Allianz travel insurance policy, called One Trip Basic Plan. It covers trip cancellation and emergency medical and repatriation (up to \$50,000). Find more information at Allianz: (866) 884-3556.

What about airline delays or cancellations?

Airline schedules, delays, or cancellations are completely out of our hands. Mechanical, schedule, or other delays/cancellations result in some obligations to us on the airline’s part. Weather delays do not. We’ll pray, be flexible, and handle things as they come.

Do I need a current U.S. Passport?

Yes, it is a must. Your passport must be valid all the way through 9/15/2023 (Israeli requirement). No other IDs or Visas are required.

What about cellular phone service/WiFi?

Unlocked smartphones can be outfitted with a pre-paid SIM card beforehand, or purchased once you are in Israel. Locked phone owners will must arrange for international plans/minutes with their carriers. Note: Roaming charges are very expensive. (Teresa reports that she turns off her cellular data before arriving).

Wireless internet is available on the buses, hotels, and in many places we visit (free in most places).

Most people communicate while in Israel using messenger apps like Facebook and WhatsApp.

When not on the bus, and as we're walking/touring together, you must take care to keep up with the group. The leaders will help shepherd and guide us, of course, and we're not going to let anyone get lost. You can help out by maintaining the general pace and speed of the majority of the group and by not taking an inordinate amount of time making photographs or shopping when we are moving as a group.

Stay Hydrated!

You must drink a lot of water, both on the plane and while touring, even if you don't feel thirsty. The biggest health problems most often reported have to do with people becoming dehydrated. Carry water with you at all times. Water bottles are available on the bus for a small fee.



Audio-Visual Helps

We have assembled (and are constantly adding) a wide variety of wonderful helps, tutorials, and educational items on the Israel Trip webpage we've created just for you:



<http://www.epiclesis.org/2017/08/come-israel-pastor-chris/>

Categories include articles, Bible references, maps, tips for packing or food, short historical/educational videos, longer documentaries, websites, and photo albums. Find the page at www.Epiclesis.org under the "News" section, or type the specific web address listed above into your internet browser.

One more thing: Scroll all the way down to the bottom of the webpage to see all the links.

Notes:

• Monday, March 6

Cliffs of Arbel, Magdala, Kursi, free time in beautiful Tiberius, or just enjoy the gorgeous hotel and surroundings.

Off to Jerusalem

• Tuesday, March 7

Jesus Baptismal Site across from Jericho (with opportunity to renew baptismal vows), Ein Gedi, Qumran, Drive by the Dead Sea, view of St. George Monastery at Wadi Qelt, Jerusalem Model/Shrine of the Book. Off to our beautiful (and ideally-located) hotel: Dan Panorama.

• Wednesday, March 8

Yad Vashem (Holocaust Museum), Bethlehem.

• Thursday, March 9

City of David and overview of archeological digs, Hezekiah's Tunnel (wet or dry tunnel options), Pool of Siloam, Pilgrim's Road, Herodium or guided free time in Jerusalem. PM: Light Show/Tower of David.

• Friday, March 10



Rabbi's Tunnel, St. Anne's Church, Via Dolorosa, Southern Steps, Western Wall (left), Evening Shabbat Walk and back to the Western Wall.

- **Saturday, March 11**

Mt. of Olives, Dominus Flavius, Garden of Gethsemane/Church of the Nations, St. Peter Gallicantu, Upper Room, Dormition Abbey, Garden Tomb.

- **Sunday, March 12**

Walking Tour of Old City, Jaffa Gate, Jewish Quarter, Cardo, Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Right), Free time in Jerusalem.



Saying Goodbye

- **Monday, March 13**

Check out of hotel, off to the airport.
Handy travel note: Each of the three groups will leave the hotel at different times.

The California group leaves first and flies out at 5:20 AM.

The Louisville group leaves next and flies out at 10:30 AM.

And the Knoxville group flies out at 10:10 PM. This means that the Knoxville group will have extra time in Jerusalem and Dr. Gardner will accompany them, guide them, etc., as they decide together what they'd like to do.

Medications

You may want to take over-the-counter medications for headache, motion sickness, upset stomach, or diarrhea, etc., in your carry-on bag. Be sure to take a sufficient supply of any prescription medications. You may also want to have a copy of your prescriptions with you. Most standard medications may be purchased in Israel, but you will need the technical description of anything special.



A further word about stomach/nausea/diarrhea medicines: The food in Israel is delicious, but it's certainly different than what most of us eat in the US. We have found that the different cheeses, for example, have a different bacterial nature than ours and sometimes visitors can experience difficulties. Be prepared with some over-the-counter helps.

Money

Most major U.S. credit cards are widely accepted in Israel and there are ATMs that give out shekels. Most places will take either American currency or Israeli shekels. We suggest having some small bills with you (at least \$25 in dollar bills), because it's much easier than using large bills or credit cards for purchasing items along the way.



As of 12/13/2022, the exchange rate was 3.40 Israeli New Shekels per dollar.

Traveling as Part of a Tour Group

Pray for the tour and each participant. Flexibility and a sense of humor are a must since some inconveniences and schedule changes will occur. It's very important to cooperate fully with your guide and tour hosts. The tour schedule is full, and it is important to be on time (stay on schedule with the group). It is imperative that participants always let leaders know where they are. Roaming on your own can be dangerous.



While on the bus, be respectful to the guide and others who want to learn (stop talking when the guide is speaking on the microphone). We will also want to keep the bus neat and tidy.

Electric Current/Adaptors

The electricity in Israel is 220 volts, not 110. If you plan to take electric appliances (hair dryer, electric razor, etc.), you will need both a voltage converter and an adapter plug.



However, IF your appliances are dual-voltage, you will only need an adapter plug. Hotels sometimes have 110-volt outlets for low wattage appliances (marked “For Shavers Only”); Do not use them for other high wattage appliances. Teresa recommends the “Conair Travel Smart Adapter Plug for Southern Europe & Middle East” from Amazon.

Charging Smart Phones? Consider a multi-port USB travel charger with adapter plug.

The Bottom Line: In many/most cases, all you’ll need in Israel is the small USB charging block that you normally use with your phone, etc. That amazing little block does the voltage converting for you and all you’ll need is a little adapter in order to plug it in Israeli outlets. Pastor Chris has several and you’re welcome to reserve one with him ahead of time.

See more recommendations on the trip webpage.

Miscellaneous

An extra pair of glasses, contact lenses, or prescription sunglasses are a good idea. A hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen are recommended.

We recommend that you bring a smartphone/device charging battery.

You may want to bring a travel pillow for the flight. (Pack it in your carry-on!) A small, battery-powered travel alarm and flashlight are also handy items.

Local time in Israel is GMT+3 hours. This means that Jerusalem will be 10 hours ahead of Pacific Time and 7 hours ahead of Eastern Time.



More Detailed Itinerary

Please remember that this schedule is subject to change.

• Wednesday, March 1

Depart U.S. for Israel. (See complete flight details in the “Trip Information” section of this booklet, p. 18).

• Thursday, March 2

Groups arrive in Israel between 4-5 PM local time. Drive to Hotel (See hotel details in the “Trip Information” section of this booklet, p. 20).

• Friday, March 3

We’re up early this morning to begin our pilgrimage in Israel and experience our first day of travel. First stop: Beautiful Caesarea Maritima, then we’re off to Mount Carmel (Mt Carmel highway, right). We’ll drive through the Jezreel Valley to Cana of Galilee and Nazareth, then end up at our lovely seaside hotel in Tiberius.



Some Places of Interest to Note (alphabetical order).
Please also see audio-visual resources on our trip webpage.

Tel Aviv to Tiberius and Sea of Galilee Area

Armageddon or Jezreel Valley is the location of many battles and victories by the Israelites and believed by many to be the site of a major, future battle in Christian eschatology (See Revelation 16:13-16).

Cana of Galilee is the traditional location of the first miracle of Jesus: the wedding miracle of water to wine. The location is disputed and there are four potential sites including one in modern day Lebanon (See John 2:1-11; 4:46).

Caesarea Maritima began as a small port built by the Phoenicians in the 3rd century BC. The city rose to greatness under Herod and was named after Caesar Augustus. Cornelius was the first Gentile converted here and Paul was imprisoned while here. (See Acts 10:1-48; 18:18-22; and chapters 23-26).

Megiddo overlooks the fertile Jezreel Valley and is one of the most important archeological dig sites in Israel. Standing at a crossroads, its excavations have revealed over 25 civilizations dating back to 3,500 BC. (See 2 Chronicles 35:20-24).

Mt. Carmel, “Vineyard of God,” is a mountain range which includes the peak (Mukraka) where Elijah triumphed over the prophets of Baal. It overlooks the Valley of Armageddon. (See 1 Kings 18:17-46).

Nazareth is the hometown of Jesus, and the name may be derived from a Hebrew word for “branch,” alluding to the prophetic words from Isaiah regarding the Messiah. These days the city is Israel’s largest Arab city and one of the largest Christian sites of worship in the Middle East. (See Luke 2 and 4:16, and Matthew 4:13).

Tel Aviv is a modern city established in 1909 by 60 families. The nation’s second largest city stands as symbol of vitality and the determination of contemporary Israel. The name was taken from Ezekiel 3:15.

• **Saturday, March 4**

We’re in Tiberius and the Sea of Galilee area for a few delightful days. Today’s itinerary includes a thrilling boat ride (which will include dancing if we’re lucky). We’ll see the picturesque water-side town of Capernaum (the home of Peter and the site of many important events in Jesus’ life).

Our day will include a memorable trip, with plenty of time for reflection, to the beautiful Mount of Beatitudes.

We’ll round out the day with a trip to the site of the restoration of Peter, the traditional location of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and the lovely Greek Orthodox Church of the 12 Apostles (with its breathtaking view of the Sea).

• **Sunday, March 5**

We’re heading up into the mountains today for a memorable visit to Caesarea Philippi, the dramatic site where Jesus asks the compelling (and timeless) question, “Who do you say that I am?” This is one of our many stops in Israel that will make Scripture come to colorful life.

only in the overall group, but perhaps also in the mix of friends from your own church, who will have different ideas than you do about acceptable food and drink. We will show grace and deference to others on this trip as we dive in and try different things during our meals, etc. There must be no judgement here as we enter into the spirit of adventure.

See also food tips on our trip webpage.

Climate

The following are historic average temperatures (highs/lows in °F) for March: In Tel Aviv: 68/53; The Sea of Galilee: 72/52; And in Jerusalem: 61/46.



Clothing

Israel is a very casual country and comfort will be key on our trip. Keep in mind that you will either be walking or riding a bus/plane for long stretches of time. Jeans, slacks, and even shorts are appropriate, and wash and wear items are very helpful. Consider a light sweater or jacket for the airplane.



Note: Many religious sites prohibit both men and women from entering if their knees or shoulders are not covered. You must have appropriate clothing to wear when we visit those sites. You will be notified ahead of time when these rules apply.

As the weather and temperature can vary a great deal, it is helpful to wear layers. Remember to pack a bathing suit to use at the Jordan River if you plan to renew your baptismal vows.

More about Shoes

Comfortable walking shoes with nonskid soles are a must for this trip. There will be a great deal of walking during the tour, often over uneven terrain and smooth (perhaps wet) stones. You may want to bring a pair of water shoes (for Hezekiah’s Tunnel, for example) or hiking sandals.



Packing

DO NOT PACK YOUR PASSPORT OR AIRLINE INFORMATION. KEEP THOSE ITEMS WITH YOU.

You may want to make an inventory of what you pack. Keep a copy in your carry-on and leave one at home. It is also a good idea to carry a copy of your passport.



You will need to keep your passport with you at all times, as well as airline boarding passes and any money you may take. Therefore you might want to bring a backpack or shoulder bag.

Some things that you may want to pack in your carry-on (to take on the plane): a change of clothes, essential toiletries (do not take glass or aerosols), necessary medications, tissues, snacks, neck pillow, sleeping mask, and a good book.

TRY VERY HARD NOT TO OVERPACK. MOST FOLKS DO.

Be aware of airline baggage restrictions and that you must personally handle your own luggage in the airports/through customs. Leave enough room to pack purchases made in Israel.

Please go to the United Airlines Website for current security, baggage, and weight restriction information.

Do not forget your Bible. You may also want to bring materials for taking notes and journaling.

See all our many packing tips videos on the trip webpage.

Meals in Israel

A full Israeli breakfast and evening meal is included in the price of the tour (you pay for specialty drinks specifically ordered from a waiter). The food is delicious! Some of the foods served may be new to you. All of the food served to you in the hotel should be safe to eat. However, if you purchase foods in open-air markets, use common sense. You may want to consider bringing along some snack foods to eat on the bus (or airplane) while traveling. **Note:** Lunches are not included in the price of the tour.



One important word about having a gracious and loving spirit about food and drink: Our trip will have us rubbing shoulders with people and customs and food from around the world and from many different faith traditions. There will be faithful Christians not

We'll also stop for an intriguing visit to Tel Dan, an ancient, important location in the life of Abraham as well as the Tribe of Dan, and then up to the militarily-strategic Golan Heights to look over into Syria.

Our day will hopefully include a terrific opportunity to have lunch at a traditional Druze restaurant. The Druze are a unique religious and ethnic group with a unique tradition that dates back to the 11th century and incorporates elements of Islam, Hinduism, and even classical Greek philosophy.

• Monday, March 6

It's our last day in Tiberius and the beautiful Galilee. Today we'll visit the Cliffs of Arbel for a stunning panorama of the entire Sea. We'll also take in Magdala, an ages-old city by the shore, site of the recently-discovered "Migdal Synagogue" that dates from the Second Temple Period, and the "Magdala Stone," the oldest depiction of a 7-branched menorah found outside Jerusalem. All four gospels refer to a follower of Jesus called Mary Magdalene, which is usually assumed to mean "Mary from Magdala," although there is no biblical information to indicate whether it was her birthplace or her home.

After a visit to Kursi, traditional location of the driving out of the demons, we'll have some free time in beautiful Tiberius.

**Some Places of Interest to Note (alphabetical order).
Please also see audio-visual resources on our trip webpage.**

Tiberius and the Sea of Galilee Area

Caesarea Philippi is located at the southern base of Mount Hermon. Home to the springs of Banias, one of the sources that feeds the Jordan River, the city was constructed by Philip, son of Herod the Great. This is the place where Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" (See Matthew 16:13-20).

Capernaum is a city on the Sea of Galilee where Jesus made his home when he was in the area. Many of his miracles were performed here. (See Matthew 8:5-17; 9:1-13, 18-38; 11:20-24; 12:9-14).

The **Church of the Primacy of Saint Peter** is a Franciscan church located in Tabgha, Israel, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It commemorates and traditionally marks the spot of Jesus' reinstatement of Peter and the place where Jesus cooked fish on the shore. (See John 21).

The **Golan Heights** is a mountain range in northern Israel bordering Syria and is of great strategic and military importance.

The red-domed **Greek Orthodox Church of the 12 Apostles** on the edge of the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum has become an icon of the Holy Land, though it is more often photographed than visited. The church takes its name from the Gospel account of Jesus choosing the disciples which took place on a mountain in this area of Galilee. (See Luke 6:12-16; Mark 3:13-19).

Kursi is an archaeological site containing the ruins of a Byzantine monastery and identified by tradition as the site of Jesus' "Miracle of the Swine." (See Matt 8:28-34).

Magdala, which means "tower," was a very important trade center and wealthy town during the time of the Romans. Also an important archeological site, the town was a rival to Tiberias up until the time of Herod Antipas. The "Magdala" in Matthew 15 and the parallel passage in Mark 8, may possibly refer to this town

The **Mt. of Beatitudes**, situated in the hills above the Sea of Galilee, is the traditional site where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. (See Matthew chapters 5-7).

Mt. Bental is one of Israel's favorite mountain peaks to visit due to the great panoramic views of the Golan and even Syria. Also site of a battle for the Golan Heights.

Nof Ginnosar is a kibbutz on the Sea of Galilee where an ancient boat dating to the time of Jesus was found and is now preserved.

The **Sea of Galilee (Yam Kinneret)** is the lowest freshwater lake on earth and the largest lake in Israel. This body of water is fed by the Jordan River which has its beginning with three springs located in the north. Much of Jesus' ministry in the Galilee was centered here. (See Matthew 2:19-23; 3:13; 4:12-25; 17:22-23; 19:1-2).

Tabgha is situated on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee and the traditional site of the "loaves and fishes" miracle. A 4th century church here features a floor mosaic of fish and bread. (See Mark 6:30-46).

Tel Dan (and Abraham's Gate) is a nature preserve where one of the three springs that flow into the Jordan River originates. Also the site where Abraham entered the city gates of Laish, the tribe of Dan settled here some six centuries later. (See Genesis 14:12-16).

Tiberias is an ancient city established about 20 AD and named in honor of the 2nd Roman Emperor. Herod Antipas made it the capital of his realm in the Galilee.

Yardenit is a baptismal site prepared and operated by the a local Israeli Kibbutz on the Jordan at the southern shore of the Galilee.

Important notes about airline tickets and check-in:

- There will be no paper tickets. All that you need at check-in is your passport.
- Arrive at the airport 2-3 hours before the flight. Arrive at your gates, post-security, 1 hour before the flight.
- When we get to Israel, please try to stay with your group as much as possible when traveling through the security processes. Remain in common areas after passing through security to allow the rest of your group to catch up.
- Louisville travelers, you'll be going from the Lexington area with Carl to the Louisville airport. You will proceed through security together and assemble at your designated gate.
- Knoxville travelers, please arrive at your designated gate, post-security, at TYS one hour before departure. Your group will have designated shepherds, Jerry and Suzanne Trivette, who will be in touch with Pastor Chris throughout your travels/airport changes. Dr. Teresa Gardner will meet you personally when you arrive at Tel Aviv (as she will each group).
- Sacramento travelers, meet Pastor Chris at your designated gate, post-security one hour before the flight.



Hotel Accommodations

We have contacted all the hotels and each report having hairdryers and irons (though the hairdryers might not be as powerful as you're used to). All of them have laundry service (for send out) but it is expensive. Many hotels have electrical adaptors, but they are in high demand.



Oct. 2: Tel Aviv: Dan Panorama: Toll-Free from the US: 1-800-223-7773/4.

Oct. 3-6: Tiberias/Galilee: Hotel Galei Kinneret: 04-670-7070.

Oct. 7-12: Jerusalem: Dan Panorama: 011-972-2-569-5695.

Mon., March 13th: 10:10 PM: Depart Tel Aviv, flight UA91.
Arrive Newark: 4:25 AM; March 14.
Depart Newark: 10:11 AM, flight UA1796.
Arrive Dulles: 11:50 AM.
Depart Dulles: 2:11 PM, flight UA5317.
Arrive Knoxville: 4:53 PM.

Louisville:

United Airlines

Wed., March 1st: 4:59 PM : Depart Louisville, flight UA3576.
Arrive Newark: 7:10 PM.
Depart Newark: 11:00 PM, flight UA90.
Arrive Tel Aviv: 4:20 PM; March 2nd.

Mon., March 13th, 10:30 AM: Depart Tel Aviv flight UA85.
Arrive Newark: 4:45 PM.
Depart Newark: 7:59 PM, flight UA3573.
Arrive Louisville, 10:34 PM.

Sacramento:

United/Lufthansa

Wed., March 1st: 8:51 AM: Depart Sacramento, flight UA2285.
Arrive Denver: 12:13 PM.
Depart Denver: 4:25 PM, flight LH481.
Arrive Munich: March 2nd, 10:00 AM.
Depart Munich, 11:25 AM, flight LH680.
Arrive Tel Aviv, 4:05 PM.

Mon., March 13th: 5:20 AM: Depart Tel Aviv, flight LH691.
Arrive Frankfurt: 9:00 AM.
Depart Frankfurt: 10:05 AM, flight LH454.
Arrive San Francisco: 1:30 PM.
Depart San Francisco: 7:01 PM, flight UA5612.
Arrive Sacramento: 7:47 PM.

• Tuesday, March 7

Today, we're off to Jerusalem, but by way of several other wonderful sites first! It'll be a very busy day.

First we head to the traditional site of Jesus' baptism at the Jordan where you'll have the opportunity to renew your own baptismal vows in the water. This location is also significant in the story of Elijah and the desert wanderings of the Children of Israel.

We'll drive to the Ein Gedi Reserve (right), where David fled from King Saul, and take in views of the Dead Sea. We'll spend some time at Qumran, the moving site of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, then head up to Jerusalem with a view along the way of the famous St. George Monastery at Wadi Qelt.



When we arrive in the Holy City, we'll visit the large, outdoor, 3D Jerusalem Model (which will help orient you to the city) and the stunning Shrine of the Book which houses the Isaiah Scroll, dating from the second century BC, the most intact of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Aleppo Codex, dating from the 10th century AD, the oldest existing Hebrew Bible.

Finally, we're checking into our beautiful hotel, the ideally-located Dan Panorama, our home for the next few days.

The Dead Sea Area

**Some Places of Interest to Note (alphabetical order).
Please also see audio-visual resources on our trip webpage.**

The **Dead Sea or Salt Sea** lies 1,292 feet below sea level and covers an area of 360 square miles with its greatest depth at 1,300 feet. Because of its high mineral content of 30%, nothing can live in the Dead Sea. Today on its southern shoreline is a wonderful hotel/resort area. (See Genesis 13:8-13; 19:1-28; Ezekiel 47:7-10).

Ein Gedi is an oasis fed by many fresh springs and is situated on the western shore of the Dead Sea. This is the area where David hid out from Saul and his armies. (See 1 Samuel 23:24-29; 24:1-22).

- **Wednesday, March 8**

It's our first full day in Jerusalem. First on the agenda for today, the very moving Yad Vashem (Holocaust Museum), then we're off to Bethlehem. It may surprise you how close the birthplace of Jesus is to the City of Jerusalem.

- **Thursday, March 9**

Today is full of wonderful sites around the Holy City. We're going to tour the ancient City of David and view its archeological digs, and you're going to have the opportunity to walk Hezekiah's Tunnel (with wet or dry options). Those who don't want to experience the tunnel will be guided to the Pool of Siloam, the tunnel's end, to meet the group.

The newly-discovered "Pilgrim's Road," the first century road that leads up to the Temple Mount, is on the agenda for today.

We're also off to Herodium, former site of an extravagant palace of Herod the Great and eventual location of his tomb. If you don't choose to go to Herodium, which is an option at this point in our planning, you may have some free time in Jerusalem. At night we'll all take in the truly stunning light show, "The Jerusalem Night Spectacular," at the Tower of David.

- **Friday, March 10**

There's still much more to see! On the schedule for today are these wonderful sites in Jerusalem:

The magnificent Rabbi's Tunnel (a very important excavation underneath and along the Western Wall), the Western Wall (right), St. Anne's Church, the Via Dolorosa, and the (famous) Southern Steps of the Temple Mount.



Trip Information

Please note: We have posted many, many helpful tutorials and audio-visual helps on our trip webpage related to packing, food, and other travel-related items.

Current Flight Information (as of 12/14)

This information is subject to change. All times are local. Estimated total flight time is included.



Please Take Careful Note: The airlines can and do make changes, (they have done so already along the way) including cancellations, and John at the Obed Project is constantly working with the carriers and his travel agencies to keep us on track and with the best possible connections.

You may note in this current schedule some connection times/layovers that are not as ideal as we might like; this situation may change again, of course, but they are the result of shifting airline schedules, cancellations, etc. Be of good cheer: John is hard at work and making the best of a complicated and ever-changing set of circumstances.

Departure Date: Wednesday, March 1

Traveling Groups in alphabetical order:

Note: Dr. Teresa arrives in Israel, March 1st at 4:20 PM (United flight #90 from Newark), and will depart with the Knoxville group on March 13th.

Knoxville:

United Airlines

Note for Knoxville travelers: Jerry and Suzanne Trivette will act as guides and liaisons between Pastor Chris and the Knoxville group as they travel. Because of recent (and unpreventable) flight changes, the Knoxville group will not be meeting up with the Kentucky group before leaving the US. The Knoxville group will be met in Tel Aviv by Dr. Gardner.

Wed., March 1st: 2:28 PM: Depart Knoxville, flight UA4848.

Arrive Dulles: 4:05 PM .

Depart Dulles: 10:45 PM, flight UA72.

Arrive Tel Aviv: 4:30 PM, March 2nd.

- **Monday, March 13**

Our time in the Holy Land is coming to a close today as we turn our minds toward heading home. Each of the three groups will leave the hotel at different times, with the California group leaving first (and very early).

Since the Knoxville group flies out last (and quite late) they'll have some extra bonus time with Dr. Teresa today.

Notes:

This evening marks the start of Shabbat, and, if you choose, you'll have the opportunity tonight to walk with Dr. Gardner through the Old City with the throngs of Jewish worshipers to the Western Wall.

- **Saturday, March 11**

Our focus today includes sites on and nearby the Mount of Olives, including the Garden of Gethsemane and its Church of the Nations and St. Peter in Gallicantu. "Gallicantu" means "cock's crow," and it marks the traditional spot of Caiaphas's palace, the place where Jesus may have been held after his arrest, and the spot where Peter denied Christ.

Also in store today is a visit to three traditional, though perhaps not historically accurate sites, the Upper Room, Dormition Abbey, and the Garden Tomb.

- **Sunday, March 12**

Today we'll take a walking tour of the Old City, visit the beautiful Jaffa Gate (right), the lovely Jewish Quarter, the historic "Cardo," the street at the heart of the city, and the stunning Church of the Holy Sepulcher, often an all-time highlight for Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem. There'll be lots of walking today— and lots of opportunity for shopping!



Our plan is to provide some guided free time today as well.

Jerusalem and Vicinity

(Remember that the order and timing of sights may change, especially in Jerusalem).

Some Places of Interest to Note (alphabetical order).
Please also see audio-visual resources on our trip webpage.

In and around the Holy City...

The **Cardo Maximus** is the ancient heart of the Holy City. A restored main street dating back to the 2nd century, it remains a place to stop, browse, and shop even today.

The **Church of the Holy Sepulcher** is the site where most scholars and biblical historians believe Christ was crucified and buried. A site for major Christian pilgrimages since the 4th century, it was recently restored. The inner tomb is enclosed by a separate structure called the Edicule. (See Matthew 27:32-56; Mark 15:21-41; Luke 23:26-46; John 19:16-37).

The **City of David** is place where David established his kingdom and is situated outside the current location of the Zion Gate of the Old City.

The **Friends of Zion Museum** is an exhibit located in the heart of Jerusalem near the Old City that tells the story of how Gentiles have played important roles in aiding the Jewish people.

The **Garden of Gethsemane** is located on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. Opposite the Eastern Gate of the Old City, this is the site where Jesus prayed on the night of his arrest. (See Matthew 26:36-46; John 18:1-11).

Golgotha and the Garden Tomb are located northeast of the Damascus Gate and the site some Christians believe to be the place of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. Also known as Gordon's Calvary, it is now run by a British Society called the Garden Tomb Association. (See Matthew 27:32-56; Mark 15:21-41; Luke 23:26-46; John 19:16-37).

Herodium (or Herodion) is a national park and the site of a former hilltop palace and, ultimately, tomb of Herod the Great. It's about 7 miles south of Jerusalem and 3 miles east of Bethlehem. Herod the Great is an important figure in Bible times, both for his many extravagant building projects and, of course, of his ruthless governance.

Hezekiah's Tunnel is a water tunnel carved under the City of David in ancient times. (See 2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:1-5).

Jerusalem, the Holy City, is located 38 miles east of the Mediterranean and 14 miles west of the Dead Sea. Beautifully situated about 2,740 feet above sea level, today's population is about 870,000. (See Genesis 14:17-24; 2 Samuel 5:6-16; Psalm 48:1-3; John 19: Acts 2).

The **Jewish Quarter** is the part of the Old City occupied by Jews. The other three sections are the Christian Quarter, the Muslim Quarter, and the Armenian Quarter.

Kidron Valley, valley running between the Mt. of Olives and the Old City. It is also known as the Valley of Kings and the Valley of Jehoshaphat. (See 2 Kings 23:4; Joel 3:1-2; John 18:1).

The **Mt. of Olives** is one of the most well-known and biblically significant mountains around Jerusalem and stands 300 feet above the city. (See Matthew 21:1-11; 23:37-39; Acts 1:1-12).

The **Rabbi's Tunnel (Western Wall Tunnel)** is an excavation that began shortly after 1967 and it runs along the retaining wall of the Temple Mount. The tunnel provides an opportunity to see more of the area surrounding the ancient Temple, touch the bedrock of Mt. Moriah, and get closer to the location of the First and Second Temples where the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant once rested.

Shorashim is a bookstore and gift shop in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City owned by two Orthodox Jewish brothers. Spending time in their shop hearing their perspective on Israel (including current events) is a highlight for many visitors to Jerusalem.

The **Shrine of the Book** is a part of the Israel Museum and contains the Dead Sea Scrolls. Also here is the Israel Model, a scale replica of the City of Jerusalem during Jesus' time.

The **Southern Steps** are ancient steps that Jesus had to have traveled to enter Jerusalem and the Temple area.

St. Peter Gallicantu (Caiaphas' house) is the home of the high priest where Jesus was held the night before his crucifixion and the place where Peter denied Jesus. "Gallicantu" means cock's-crow.

The **Upper Room** is the traditional location of the Last Supper and the place where the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost. (See Luke 22:1-30; Acts, 1:13-14; 2:1-42).

The **Western Wall or Wailing Wall (Kotel)** is the holiest site in the Jewish world and is a portion of the massive retaining wall that once stood around and supported the western side of the Temple Mount.

Yad Vashem ("Monument & Name") is the Holocaust Museum and national monument that sits atop Mt. Herzl.