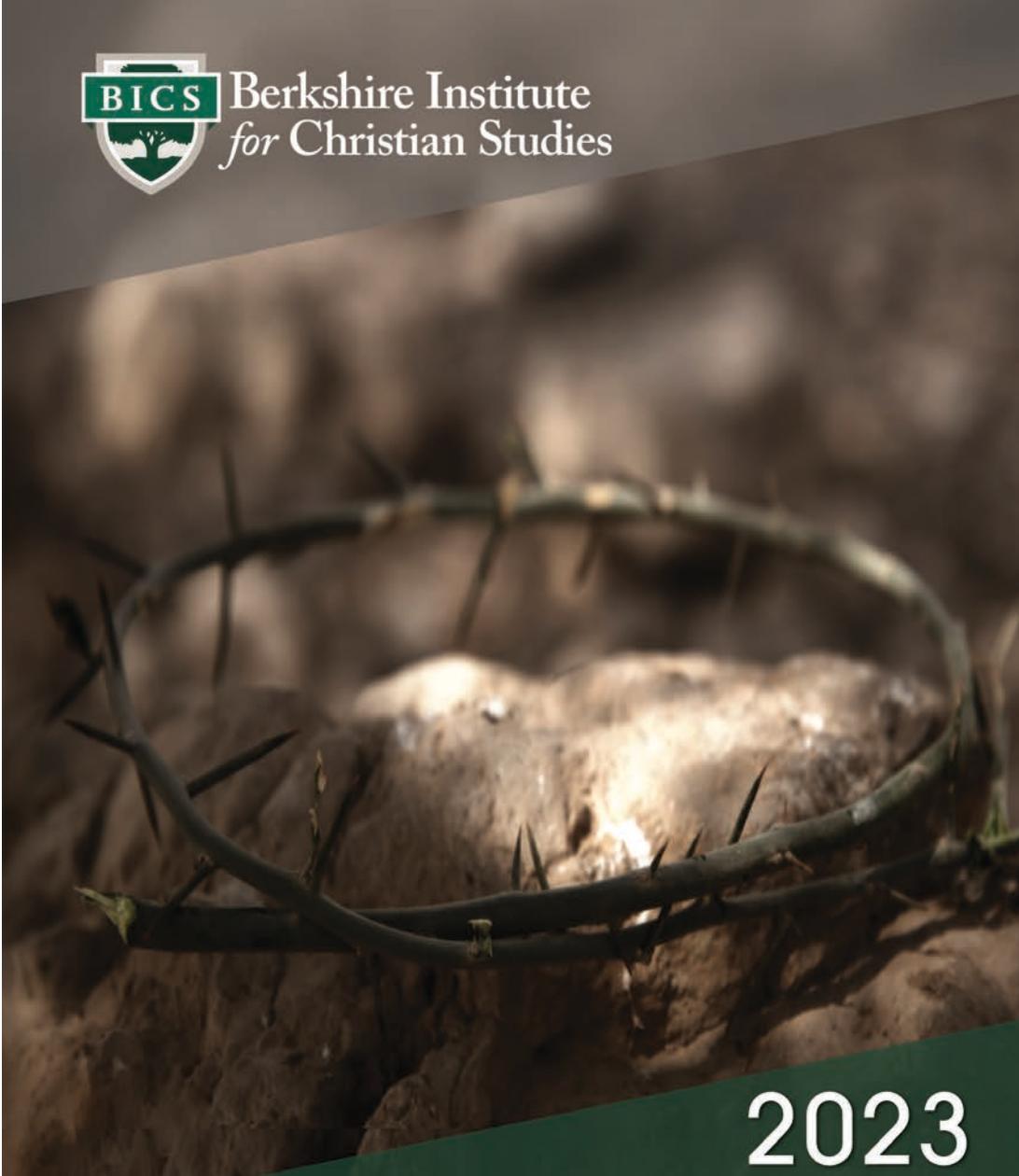




Berkshire Institute
for Christian Studies



2023

BIBLE LANDS

Travel Guide

CROWN *of* KING

*"To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins
by his blood... to him be glory and dominion
forever and ever. Amen." - Revelation 1:5-6*

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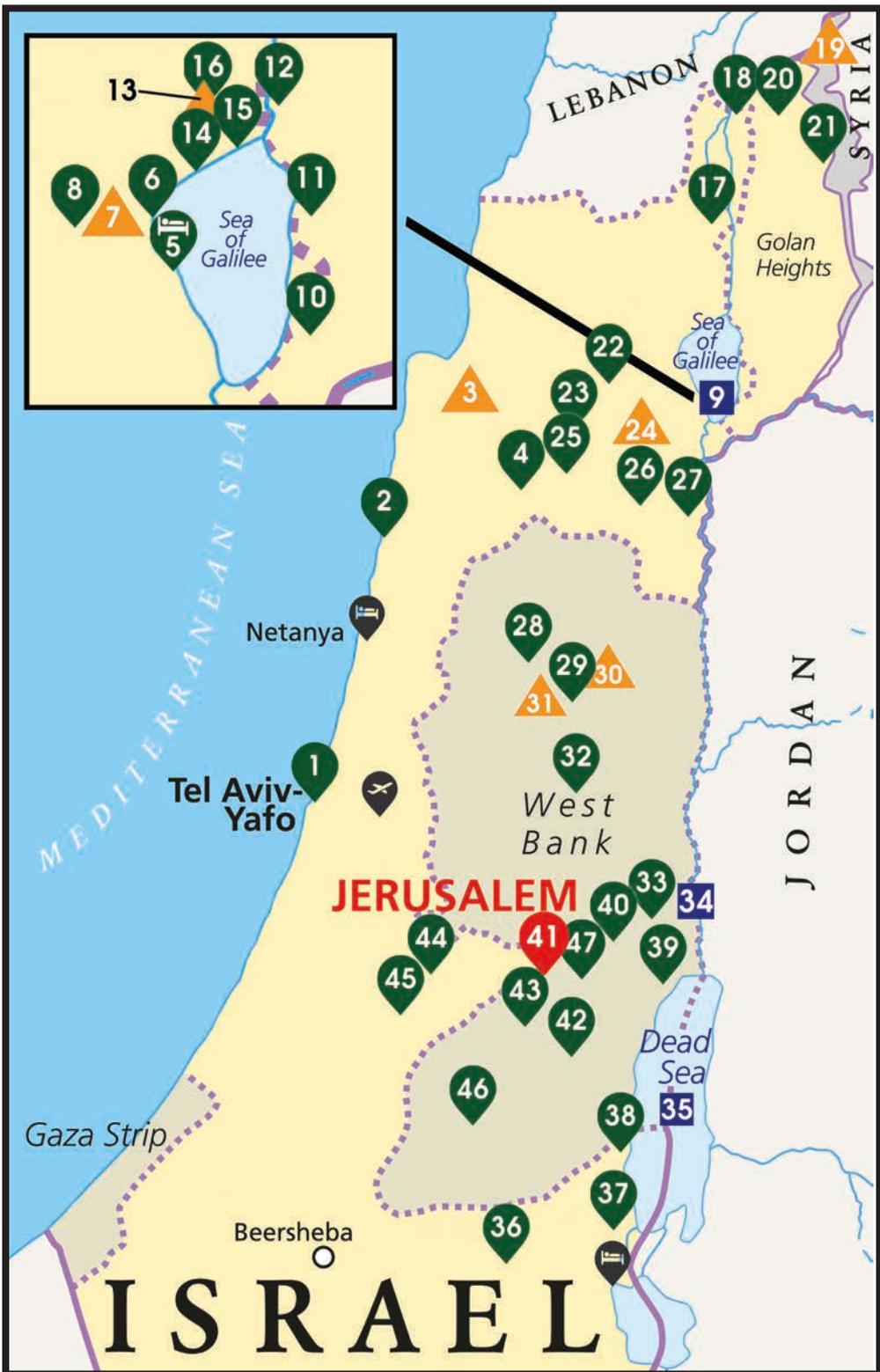


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I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked

Larnelle Harris

I walked today where Jesus walked,
In days of long ago.
I wandered down each path He knew,
with reverent step and slow.
Those little lanes, they have not changed,
A sweet peace fills the air.
I walked today where Jesus walked,
And felt His presence there.

My pathway led through Bethlehem,
A memory's ever sweet.
The little hills of Galilee,
That knew those childish feet,
The Mount of Olives, hallowed scenes,
That Jesus knew before.
I saw the mighty Jordan row,
As in the days of yore.

I knelt today where Jesus knelt,
Where all alone He prayed.
The garden of Gethsemane,
My heart felt unafraid.
I picked my heavy burdens up,
And with Him by my side.
I climbed the Hill of Calvary,
I climbed the Hill of Calvary,
I climbed the Hill of Calvary,
Where on the Cross He died.

I knelt today where Jesus knelt,
And felt Him close to me.

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MY NOTES



Berkshire Institute
for Christian Studies

***Quick Reference
Guide
for Biblical Sites
and Places***

BIBLE LANDS
Travel Guide

"Ask for the ancient paths; ask where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16

Introduction

The land of Israel is 10,762 square miles in area (shaped like New Jersey and approximately the size of Massachusetts) and has several distinct regions, including the Coastal Plain, Shephelah (rolling hills), Upper & Lower Galilee, Central Mountain Range, Jordan River Valley, and the Negev Desert. Serving as a land bridge to Europe, Asia, and Africa, Israel is replete with various plants, trees, and wildlife. Besides the Mediterranean Sea, Israel enjoys two additional bodies of water - the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea - both fed by the fresh waters of the Jordan River.

Known biblically as “The land flowing with Milk and Honey” (Ex. 3:8), ancient Israel was famous for its seven species: Wheat, Barley, Grapes, Figs, Pomegranates, Olives, and Dates/Date Honey (Deut. 8:7-9a).

The name *Israel* comes from the combination of two Hebrew words (*sarita*: wrestle/contend, and *'el*: God). Jacob’s name was changed to Israel after he wrestled with the angel (Gen. 32:28), and it became the covenant name of both God’s land and His people based on His promise to Abraham (Gen. 17:1-8). The name was changed to *Syria Palestina* by Emperor Hadrian in AD 135 after the Bar Kokhba revolt when he combined the Province of Judea with neighboring regions to the north under Roman control.

Today, Israel is a beautiful country with a population of approximately 9.1 million consisting of Jews (75%), Arabs (21%), and those identifying as “other” (4%), and is home to three major faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. According to the Oslo Peace Accord of 1995, the West Bank is divided into three administrative divisions: Area A (administered by the Palestinian Authority), Area B (jointly governed by the P.A. and Israel), and Area C (contains Jewish settlements and is administrated by Israel).

On behalf of the Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies, we welcome you to the Land of Promise, and invite you to draw near to God as you travel the ancient roadways and walk where the great men and women of faith have trod. May God richly bless your pilgrimage as you experience the “5th Gospel” first-hand!

1 Joppa/Jaffa (“Beautiful”)

Originally built on a rocky ledge overlooking the Mediterranean, Joppa served as an important seaport in ancient times. It was allotted to the Tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:46) and was significant in that it was the only natural harbor between Egypt and Acco. It was the site of substantial shipping in both Old and New Testament times. Cedar logs from Lebanon were floated from Tyre and Sidon to Joppa and then transported over land to Jerusalem for use in Solomon’s Temple (2 Chronicles 2:16). In the Old Testament, Joppa was famous as the city where Jonah sailed from to flee God’s command to go to Nineveh (Jonah 1:3). In the New Testament, Joppa was the location where Peter raised Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead (Acts 9:36-42), and where he received the vision of the clean and unclean animals at the home of Simon the Tanner (Acts 10:9-16).

2 Caesarea Maritima (*Caesarea by the Sea*)

Located on the coast, the port city of Caesarea was founded by Herod the Great in 22 BC (named after Caesar Augustus) and was the seat of the Roman government in Israel until the Byzantine era. It was the home of the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate, whose name was discovered on an inscription there, validating the truthfulness of Scripture through extra-biblical evidence. In the New Testament, Caesarea was significant in that it was the place where Philip and his four daughters preached/prophesied and later settled (Acts 8:40; 21:8-9), where the first Gentile convert, Cornelius, and his household received the Gospel and where the “Gentile Pentecost” took place (Acts 10), where God struck down Herod Agrippa I (AD 43) in the Theater for accepting the worship of men (Acts 12:19-24), where Paul visited on three occasions on his way to Jerusalem (Acts 9:30; 18:22; 21:8-16),

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and where he spent two years in prison, making his defense in the “Place of Hearing” before Felix, Festus, and King Herod Agrippa II before appealing to Caesar in Rome (Acts 23:23-27:2). Some suggest that Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians while imprisoned for two years here in Caesarea, while others place the writing from Rome. Caesarea is the most frequented of the National Park sites in Israel, with over 800,000 visitors per year.

3 **Mt. Carmel** (“*Vineyard of God*”)

Part of a mountain range 13 miles long extending to the Mediterranean Sea, Mount Carmel enjoys a lush climate year-round. From antiquity, the heights of Carmel were home to altars of foreign gods, most famously for the worship of Baal. Mount Carmel was often a point of comparison in the Old Testament, as in Song of Songs 7:5 (the majesty of a bride’s head) and Isaiah 35:2 (a symbol of beauty, fruitfulness, and majesty). In Isaiah 33:9, Amos 1:2, and Nahum 1:4, Mount Carmel is prophesied to wither as an indication of God’s judgment on the land. However, Mount Carmel is best known for the great contest between Elijah and the Prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:19-26. Here, Yahweh revealed Himself as the true God, consuming the sacrifice by fire from Heaven (1 Kings 18:38-39). The Catholic Monastery on Mt. Carmel (*Muhraqa*) can be traced back to the 13th century and is said to be built over Elijah’s Grotto.

4 **Megiddo** (“*Place of Troops*”)

Situated on the southern end of the Jezreel Valley, Megiddo guarded a strategic pass to Mt. Carmel and today boasts some twenty-five levels of occupation throughout its history. Here Joshua defeated the king of Megiddo in his conquest of Canaan (Joshua 12:7, 21). It was later given to the tribe of Manasseh, who failed at driving the Canaanites out (Judges 1:27). During

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the time of Solomon, Megiddo was fortified as an essential defense post, as evidenced in the six-chambered “Solomonic Gate” (1 Kings 9:15; 10:26) and was later the site where Josiah, the last good king of Judah, was killed in 609 BC by Pharaoh Neco as he attempted to prevent the Egyptian army from marching through the land (2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chronicles 35:20-24). In addition to a remarkable grain silo, so-called “Solomon’s Stables” (mangers) were discovered here and attributed to the reign of Jeroboam. It is believed that nearly 500 horses were housed in these stables, recalling the sin of trusting in military might rather than in God (Psalm 20:7). Megiddo boasts an impressive water tunnel from the time of Ahab and is understood as the location of the last great gathering of the armies of evil before the return of Christ at Armageddon (Revelation 16:13-16), which in Hebrew means *Hill of Megiddo* (*Har-Megiddon*).



Magdala (“Tower”)

Situated on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, Magdala became famous as the home of Mary Magdalene (Matthew 27:56, 61; 28:1; Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2; John 20:1,18). Scripture records that Jesus and His disciples came here after feeding the 4,000 (Matthew 15:39). Beyond a fishing and boat-building village, Magdala is also believed to have been a place where fish was salted (from its alternate Greek name *Tarichaea* meaning salted fish). Likely, the boy’s fish given to Jesus for feeding the 5,000 were preserved here at Magdala (John 6:1-14). By the mid-first century, Magdala had a thriving population of approximately 30,000. Excavations in 2008 by the Franciscans uncovered several small pools (possibly used to salt fish), an ancient harbor, a first-century synagogue where Jesus most certainly taught (Matthew 4:23, Luke 4:44), and the “Magdala Stone,” which is perhaps the earliest known artistic rendering of the Second Temple. At the time of the

Jewish Revolt (AD 66-70), Magdala served as the base for the Zealots who opposed Roman rule. In 1986, not far from Magdala, a fishing vessel from the time of Christ was discovered in the silt and named, *“The Jesus Boat.”*

7 Mt. Arbel (*“House of God’s Ambush”*)

Mt. Arbel is situated near the western shore of the Sea of Galilee and rises some 1,300 feet above the surrounding area. According to the historian Josephus, Mount Arbel was where the Romans squelched the last of the Hasmonean rebels who sought refuge in its cliffs (*“Little Masada”*). Josephus records the following:

“Now these caves were in the precipice of craggy mountains, and could not be come at from any side, since they had only some winding pathways, very narrow, by which they got up to them; but the rock that lay on their front had beneath it valleys of a vast depth, and of almost a perpendicular declivity; insomuch that the King (Herod the Great) was doubtful for a long time what to do, by reason of a kind of impossibility there was of attacking the place. Yet did he at length make use of a contrivance that was subject to the utmost hazard; for he let down the most hardy of his men in chests, and set them at the mouths of the dens. Now these men slew the robbers and their families, and when they made resistance, they sent in fire upon them and burned them, and as Herod was desirous of saving some of them, he had proclamation made, that they should come and deliver themselves up to him; but not one of them came willingly to him; and of those who were compelled to come, many preferred death to captivity. And here a certain old man, the father of seven children, whose children, together with their mother, desired him to give them leave to go out, upon the assurance and right hand that was offered them, slew them after the following manner – He ordered every one of them to go out, while he stood himself at the cave’s mouth, and slew that son of his who perpetually went out. Herod was near enough to see this sight, and his bowels of compassion were moved at it, and he stretched out his right hand to the old man, and besought him to spare his children; yet he did not relent at all upon what he said, but over and above reproached Herod on the lowness of his descent, and slew his wife as

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well as his children, and when he had thrown their dead bodies down the precipice, he at last threw himself down after them. By this means Herod subdued these caves and the robbers that were in them. He then left there a part of his army, as many as he thought sufficient to prevent any sedition...and returned to Samaria." (Josephus, *War of the Jews*, 446)

The only biblical reference to Mount Arbel is Hosea 10:14, which references the battle between the Israelites and the Assyrians in the 8th century BC.

Valley of the Doves (Alternately, *Valley of the Winds*)

The Valley of the Doves is a 22-mile road from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee. No doubt Jesus and His disciples walked this ancient pathway on many occasions (Matt. 4:13; Luke 4:31; John 2:12).

Tiberias

Located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, Tiberias was named after Tiberius Caesar by Herod Antipas in AD 17-20 and was made the capital of his tetrarchy. Known for its therapeutic hot springs, Tiberias became a popular resort for the Romans. Although the Gospels do not record Jesus ever visiting Tiberias, it may be assumed that many of its inhabitants journeyed across the Sea of Galilee to seek healing and to witness the miracles of Jesus (John 6:1; 21:1). In the year AD 200, the *Mishnah* (the compilation of the oral law) and later the *Talmud* (the Rabbinic interpretation of the law) were completed here in Tiberias.

Sea of Galilee ("*Province*")

Referred to in the Bible as the Sea of Kinnereth (Numbers 34:11, Deuteronomy 3:17, Joshua 13:27), the Lake of Gennesaret (Greek – *Harp*; Luke

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5:1), and the Sea of Tiberius (John 21:1), the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 4:18) is a fresh water lake that is approximately 13 miles long, 7 miles wide, and boasts a maximum depth of 160 feet. At 700 feet below sea level, the Sea of Galilee is the world's lowest freshwater lake. Home to over 18 species of aquatic life, the Sea of Galilee was the source of income for many in the region as fish were caught, salted, and sold here. While the Sea of Galilee boasted some 16 bustling ports and harbors in ancient times, today, it is home to only four. This body of water played a significant role in at least two miracles of Jesus; when He calmed the storm in the boat (Matthew 8:23-27) and when He walked on water (Matthew 14:22-33). In addition, Jesus warned His listeners that it is better to have a millstone tied around one's neck and thrown into the sea than to cause a child to sin (Matthew 18:1-6). Given its proximity to Capernaum, it is likely that the Sea of Galilee was the body of water (sea) that Jesus was referencing.

10 Kfar Haruv (*"Village of the Carob"*)

Located on cliffs over 1,000 feet above the Sea of Galilee, Kfar Haruv is a kibbutz established on the Golan Heights in 1973 with a population of roughly 400 people. BICS enjoys an easterly overview of the Sea of Galilee from this beautiful vantage point.

11 Kursi (*"Chair"*)

Kursi is located on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee in the Gentile land of the Gadarenes/Gerasenes. With its steep hills that descend into the lake nearby, Kursi is traditionally identified as the place where Jesus cast the demons into a herd of pigs, thus freeing the man from his satanic bondage (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:26-37).

12 **Bethsaida et Tell** (“House of Fishing”)

Located east of the upper Jordan River and north of the Sea of Galilee, Bethsaida was rebuilt during the reign of Philip the Tetrarch and renamed *Julius* after the daughter of Augustus Caesar. Bethsaida was the hometown of Peter, Andrew, and Philip (John 1:44) and was near the location where Jesus healed a blind man (Mark 8:22-26) and fed the five thousand (Luke 9:10-17). Bethsaida was included in the cursing of three cities by Jesus (with Chorazin and Capernaum) because it refused to repent despite the miracles He performed there (Matthew 11:20-22). In the Old Testament, Bethsaida is said to have been an important city in the kingdom of Geshur, and the home of David’s wife, Ma’acah (Michal the mother of Absalom—cf. 1 Chronicles 3:3). Remnants of this ancient city can be seen in a wall system and a stele depicting a god with a bull’s head (believed to be the moon god Sin) found near the massive gate complex. Bethsaida was destroyed by the Assyrians in 732 BC and later rebuilt and occupied through the 3rd century AD. Later finds, such as the *Fisherman’s House* and the *Winemaker’s House*, were uncovered from the time of Jesus. An alternate site (*el Araj*) closer to the Sea of Galilee has recently been discovered from the 1st century and is currently undergoing excavations.

13 **Mt. of Beatitudes** (“Mountain of Happiness/Blessedness”)

Near the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, the Mount of Beatitudes is believed to be where Jesus delivered the famous Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-13). Because of its natural amphitheater, which slopes gently toward Galilee’s shore, Jesus would have been able to speak comfortably to thousands without artificial amplification.

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14 **Tabgha** (“*The Seven Springs*”)

Tabgha is located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee at the foot of the Mt. of Beatitudes. Because of its seven hot springs, which flowed into the lake here, the shores of Tabgha became one of the essential fishing sites on the Sea of Galilee. It is said to be where Jesus called His disciples to follow Him and become “fishers of men” (Matt. 4:18-24; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11). Most famously, however, it is known as the place where Jesus appeared to His disciples after the Resurrection and where He reinstated Peter after his denial (John 21:1-24), commemorated at the Church of the Primacy of Peter. Inside this small chapel is said to be the rock where Jesus and His disciples enjoyed breakfast. Outside are ancient steps believed to be in use at the time of Jesus. The Roman Catholic Church of the Multiplication is also situated nearby as a possible location of Jesus’ feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21).

15 **Capernaum** (“*Village of Nahum*”)

Perhaps the most important town during the time of Christ, Capernaum was located on the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee, where its prosperous fishing industry caused it to flourish. At the time of Jesus, it boasted a 2,500-foot paved promenade supported by an 8-foot seawall. Here vessels could unload cargo from piers that extended approximately 100 feet onto the lake. In addition, the Via Maris (International Highway from Mesopotamia to Egypt) passed by Capernaum, allowing control of this vital trade route. That Capernaum was a prominent town is evidenced in the presence of a Roman centurion and detachment of soldiers (Matthew 8:5-9), a customs station/toll booth (Matthew 9:9), and a high official of the king (John 4:46). Jesus made Capernaum His hometown after His rejection at Nazareth

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(Matthew 4:13-16). It was here that He performed many miracles, such as the healing of the man with unclean spirits in the synagogue (Mark 1:21-26), the healing of Peter's mother-in-law (Mark 1:30-31), the healing of the Centurion's servant (Matthew 8:5-13), the healing of the paralytic man (Mark 2:1-13), the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead and the healing of the bleeding woman (Mark 5:22-43), the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46-54), the healing of two blind men and a demoniac (Luke 11:14-26) as well as countless others (Matthew 8:16-17; 9:35-36). Christ performed more miracles in Capernaum than in any other city, yet its inhabitants refused to believe (Matthew 11:23-24). Capernaum is near where the fishermen Peter, Andrew, James, and John were called to follow Christ (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-21) and where Matthew Levi was called from his tax collector office to be a disciple of Christ. In the synagogue, Jesus famously declared Himself to be the "Bread of Life" (John 6:24-71). Of interest is the discovery by Italian archaeologists in 1968 of a modest dwelling dating to the first century revealing fishhooks and graffiti references to "Peter." This structure, believed to be the home of St. Peter (*sacra insula*), was found buried within the remains of an octagonal Byzantine church containing ancient writings in the plaster walls mentioning Jesus as "Lord" and "Christ" in Aramaic, Greek, Syriac, and Latin.

16 Chorazin ("Secret/Mystery")

Located approximately 2 miles north of Capernaum, Chorazin was excavated by British archaeologist Jacob Ory in 1926. Made popular by its cursing of Jesus (Matt. 11:21), Chorazin was considered part of the "Gospel Triangle," where Jesus performed most of His miracles. Of note here is a synagogue from the 3rd century which showcases a "Seat of Moses" unearthed by archaeologists in 1926 (Cf. Matthew 23:1-3).

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17 Hazor (“Enclosure”)

Located on a strategic hill along the International Highway, Hazor served as Israel’s first line of defense from enemies attacking from the north. During the Period of the Conquest, Joshua captured the city from King Jabin and destroyed it by fire (Joshua 11:1-13). Later, during the period of the Judges, Israel defeated the king of Hazor (also with the title-name *Jabin*) under the leadership of Deborah and Barak (Judges 4-5). Solomon rebuilt Hazor during the United Kingdom, and it served once again as a northern defense post for the kingdom. Many years later, the inhabitants of Hazor were taken into captivity by Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, due to God’s judgment (2 Kings 15:29).

18 Tel Dan (“Judge”)

The northernmost boundary-city of Israel in the Old Testament (“from Dan to Beersheba”), Dan boasts a rich history starting with Abraham (“*Abrahamic Gate*”) as he traveled through here from Hebron to rescue his nephew, Lot, who had been captured at Sodom (Genesis 14:13-16). Known initially as *Laish*, this strategic city was first settled by the Sidonians but was later captured by the Israelites. The Book of Judges notes that the tribe of Dan was not satisfied with its allotment near Judah and relocated here (Judges 18). Tragically, Israel succumbed to idol worship as Jeroboam I, the first king of the northern kingdom, set up a golden calf both in Dan and in Bethel to prevent the people from going to Jerusalem to worship (1 Kings 12:26-33). In 1993–1994, archaeologists discovered a stele in the city gate inscribed with the words, “House of David” – which marks the first time David is mentioned outside the biblical text. It is possible that the area surrounding Dan, with its rich wildlife and flowing streams, inspired the writing of Psalm 42.

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•**The City Gate**

Tel Dan is a wonderful example of an ancient city gate structure. In antiquity, city gates were often centers for debate and commerce and were sometimes named for the items traded or sold there (i.e., Fish Gate, Sheep Gate). Because the elders often carried out important business there, to “sit at the gate” was to attain a certain social status. Elders would administer justice there (Deut.21:19; Josh. 20:4; Ruth 4:1), and its king would meet with his subjects at the city gate (2 Samuel 19:8; 1 Kings 22:10). Further, priests and prophets would deliver discourses and prophecies at the gate of the city in the hope of persuading the people to obey God (Neh. 8:1; Jer.17:19-20; 36:10). In the New Testament, Jesus healed a paralytic near the Sheep Gate of Jerusalem (John 5:2-9), and prayer (Acts 16:13) and burial (Luke 7:12; Heb. 13:12) are typically seen as occurring outside the city gate. In Bible times, city gates often consisted of wooden double doors attached to posts that turned in large stone sockets (Judges 16:3). These gates would be closed at night and barred with heavy beams or iron rods (1 Kings 4:13). Because the gate complex was vulnerable to attack, they would often have either steps or a sharp right-angle turn to make it easier to defend. Typically, the gate complex consisted of double towers with two, four, or six rooms on either side of its passage into the city that, among other things, contained soldiers standing watch (i.e., Megiddo). Throughout Scripture, the city gate was a symbol of power (Matt.16:18) and safety (Is. 28:6), and to “possess the gate” was to seize the whole city (Gen. 24:60). God promised Abraham that his descendants would one day possess the gates of his enemies (Genesis 22:17).

•**Almond Tree**

Counted among the most beautiful of Israel, the almond tree is the first

to blossom and the last to bear fruit. Its nectar produces a dangerous poison (*amygdalin*) which bees are mysteriously drawn to but are not harmed by. The Hebrew word for almond is *shaked*, which means “to watch.” The almond bud is used symbolically in the Bible to represent God’s watchfulness over His people and an emblem of His faithfulness (Exodus 25, Numbers 17:8; Jeremiah 1:11-12; 31:28).

19 **Mount Hermon** (“*Mountain of the Chief*”)

With snow-covered peaks year-round, Mount Hermon rises to an impressive height of over 9,000 feet above sea level. In addition to its snowmelt, three principal sources converge at Mt. Hermon (the waters of *Hasbani*, *Banias*, and *Dan*) to supply the Jordan River with an abundance of valuable fresh water. In Biblical times this mountain was referred to as *Ba’al Hermon*, *Senir*, *Sirion*, *Sion*, and later by Josephus as *Mt. Lebanon*. In addition, its majestic features and beauty were referenced by both Solomon (Song of Songs 4:8) and by the Psalmist (Psalm 133:3). Given the proximity of its location to the narrative, Mount Hermon is the likely candidate for the place where Jesus was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John (Matt. 17:1–9, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28–36).

20 **Caesarea Philippi** (*Banias*)

Originally called *Panion* or *Panias* after the Greek nature god Pan, the pagan city of Caesarea was renamed by Herod the Great’s son, Philip, to honor the Emperor of Rome and made the capital of his tetrarchy. In the New Testament, Caesarea Philippi marked the northernmost boundary of Jesus’ ministry and the region where Peter famously professed Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21). In addition to remnants of the Temple of Pan (“*Gates of Hades*”) and vari-

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ous shrines, palatial ruins were discovered here attributed to Agrippa II, the king who admitted to Paul in Caesarea Maritima, “*You almost persuaded me to become a Christian*” (Acts 26:28).

21 **Quneitra Overlook** (“*Arched Bridge*”)

From high atop the Golan Heights, BICS travelers will view the abandoned Syrian village of Quneitra. Deemed as a buffer zone between Israel and Syria since 1974, the city is under the control of the United Nations.

22 **Cana** (“*Place of Reeds*”)

At the time of Jesus, Cana was the home of Nathaniel (John 21:2) and, most famously, the place where Jesus performed His first miracle of turning water to wine at the wedding feast (John 2:1-11). Jesus healed the Nobleman’s dying son from Cana in Capernaum because of his great faith (John 4:46-54).

23 **Nazareth** (Hebrew: *netzer* - “*Branch/Shoot*”)

Located on a ridge overlooking the Jezreel Valley, Nazareth was a small village at the time of Christ and is not mentioned in the Old Testament. Most famously, it is known for the place the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce that she would be the mother of Jesus. After the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus returned to Nazareth, where Jesus’ boyhood and young manhood were spent growing “in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52). When told that Philip had found the One spoken of by Moses and the prophets - Jesus of Nazareth - Nathaniel surprisingly asked, “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” (John 1:46).

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•**Nazareth Village**

Established in the year 2000, this open-air museum recreates the first-century village of Nazareth. Replete with olive trees, terraces, an ancient wine press, replicas of first-century houses, a synagogue, mikveh, an olive press, and a carpenter's shop, the Nazareth Village reenacts daily life at the time of Jesus. Here, the BICS travelers will enjoy a special "biblical lunch."

•**St. Gabriel's Church**

Built during the Crusades, St. Gabriel's Church is a Greek Orthodox church commemorating the site where the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would become the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26-33). The church sits atop the spring, feeding *Mary's Well* 150 yards away.

•**The Church of the Annunciation**

Also known as the *Basilica of the Annunciation*, the Church of the Annunciation is said to be built over the childhood home of Mary, where she received word that she would become the mother of Jesus. The *Grotto of the Annunciation*, venerated by the Roman Catholic Church, is believed to be the cave where Mary and her parents lived. The Church of the Annunciation was built by Constantine's mother, Helena, along with the *Church of the Nativity* and the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre* in the 4th century, to commemorate important events in the life of Jesus.

•**Tomb of the Just One**

Located under the Sisters of Nazareth convent, this little-known site was first discovered in 1884 and is thought to be where the Holy Family settled and lived. This first-century house is located nearby a tomb that the Crusaders identified as the "Just One of Nazareth," presumably the burial place of Joseph (cf. Matthew 1:18).

● **Nazareth Synagogue**

Built by the Crusaders in the 12th century, this synagogue is said to stand over the site of the 1st-century building where Jesus learned as a boy. Later, Jesus preached His first recorded sermon here, but the people grew angry and attempted to throw Him from a cliff (Luke 4:16-30). The Synagogue is currently under the management of the Melkite Greek Catholics.

● **Mt. Precipice**

Also known as the *Mount of Precipitation*, the *Mount of the Leap of the Lord*, and *Mount Kedumim*, Mount Precipice is located along the edge of the Jezreel Valley. It is believed to be where the angry mob tried to kill Jesus after He declared Himself to be the Messiah in the synagogue (Luke 4:29-30). From this vantage point, a view of Mt. Tabor (Deborah and Barak – Judges 4) is possible, as well as the areas of Endor (1 Samuel 28:7-25) and Shunem (2 Kings 4:8-37).

▲ **Mt. Tabor** (“Height”)

Located conspicuously at the center of the Jezreel Valley, Mount Tabor rises in isolation to a height of 1,850 feet near where the International Highway takes its northern turn toward the Sea of Galilee. Mount Tabor held biblical significance in that it was allotted as a unique city for the Levites (1 Chronicles 6:77) and was where Deborah and Barak gathered the Israelites to fight against the army of Jabin (Judges 4:6, 12-16). Unfortunately, a misinterpretation of Matthew 17:1 has caused Mt. Tabor to be incorrectly identified as the place where Jesus was transfigured. Because some have translated, “Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves” as, “Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, his brother, and led them up on a high mountain which

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was apart" (KJV), Mt. Tabor has been selected because it is a mountain that stands conspicuously "alone" in the Jezreel Valley. While there is a reason for debate (Matt. 17:1, 14), some scholars believe that the Mt. of Transfiguration should more accurately be associated with Mt. Hermon in the north.

25 **Jezreel Valley** ("God Sows")

A crossroads between the two major routes east/west and north/south (from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River Valley and from the Galilee to Judean Hill Country), the Jezreel Valley was the location of many battles. It is believed that the armies of Satan will gather here to wage war against the Lord in the last days. After viewing the area, both Napoleon Bonaparte of France (1800) and Lord Kitchener of Great Britain (1874) agreed that the Jezreel Valley was among the world's greatest and most strategic battlefields.

26 **Harod Spring** ("Terror")

Located at the foot of Mount Gilboa, the *Spring of Harod* ("Ein Harod") is believed to be the place where Gideon selected his 300 men to fight against the Midianites based upon how they drank water from the stream (Judges 7:1-25).

27 **Beth Shean** ("House of Security")

Also known as Scythopolis, Beth Shean is located at the junction of the Jezreel Valley and the Jordan River Valley. Due to its lush climate, Beth Shean has been occupied for thousands of years and boasts at least 18 different occupation levels. Joshua attempted to capture Beth Shean from the Philistines. Still, their iron chariots proved too much to overcome (Joshua 17:16).

After King Saul lost his life in the battle on Mount Gilboa (1 Samuel 31:1-6), the Philistines “put his armor in the temple of Ashtoreth and hung his body on the wall of Beth Shan” (1 Samuel 31:10). Under Solomon, the Israelites eventually gained control of Beth Shean and established it as a garrison city (1 Kings 4:12). Once the leading city of the Decapolis, archaeologists have discovered evidence of an Egyptian Governor’s house (14th century BC), a Philistine Temple of Dagon (1 Chronicles), a temple dedicated to Ashtoreth (1 Samuel), in addition to a spectacular Greco-Roman city replete with a theater, bathhouse, and temple dedicated to Dionysus, the Greek god of wine. A massive earthquake in AD 749 destroyed the city.

28

Samaria/Sebaste (“Lookout”/ “Augustus”)

Built in the 9th century BC by King Omri, Samaria was the last capital of the northern Kingdom of Israel. Located on a hill, Samaria became an ideal location to defend itself from attack (hence the name “lookout”). It was the place where King Ahab built a temple for his Phoenician bride Jezebel to worship Baal (1 Kings 16:32), and also his ivory palace (1 Kings 22:39). It is where God delivered Samaria from an attack by the King of Aram (1 Kings 20:1-21), and the place where the dogs licked up King Ahab’s blood after he was killed, fulfilling what was prophesied about him in 1 Kings 22:1-40. It is also the location where King Ahaziah of Israel fell through the lattice of his palace’s upper chamber and eventually died (2 Kings 1:2-17), where Elisha led the blinded Aramean army to receive their sight (2 Kings 6:8-23), and where he predicted relief of the famine (2 Kings 6:24-7:20). God warned of Samaria’s destruction through His prophets (Hosea 7:1; 8:5-6; 10:5-7; Amos 3:12; 4:1; 6:1; Micah 1:1, 5-7), which was ultimately fulfilled when the Assyrians destroyed it in 721 BC (2 Kings 17:3-16). Later, Herod the Great executed two sons (Alexander and Aristobulus) by strangulation

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here for insubordination. Tradition also maintains that John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod Antipas and buried here after being held at Machaerus in Jordan (Matthew 14:10). Of note are the remains of a Hellenistic Tower, the ruins of the Temple of Augustus, and a Roman street once lined with 600 columns.

29 Shechem/Nablus/Tel Balata (“Shoulder”)

Shechem was built on the slopes of Mount Ebal, a long-time strategic city and the first capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. God appeared to Abraham here and announced to him that this was the land He would give to his descendants (Genesis 12:6). In response, Abraham built the first altar to the Lord at Shechem (Genesis 12:7). Jacob also built an altar to the Lord here upon his return from Mesopotamia (Genesis 33:18-20), and where, according to tradition, he dug a deep well (John 4:12). Here vengeance is taken by Simeon and Levi on the men of Shechem for the rape of their sister Dinah (Genesis 34). Joseph visited Shechem before his brothers sold him into slavery (Genesis 37:12-36), and it is also believed to be the location where he was laid to rest after his death in Egypt (Joshua 24:32). At the end of his life, Joshua gathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel at Shechem and left them with the famous charge: *“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”* (Joshua 24:15). Later, during the time of the Divided Kingdom, Rehoboam went to Shechem to be crowned king over all Israel (1 Kings 12:1) but ruled only Judah. Jesus famously spoke with a Samaritan woman at the well here in Sychar and offered to quench her thirst with water from a well *“that will spring up to eternal life”* (John 4:14).

•Tel Balata (“Mound of the Acorn”)

Tell Balata is situated in a mountain pass between Mount Gerizim and

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Mount Ebal and boasts a rich archaeological history, including a Middle Bronze wall and gate from the time of Abraham, remains of the temple of Baal Berith (Judges 9), and the “Joshua Stone” (Joshua 24:25-28). Here BICS remembers the covenant of the Blessings and Curses instituted by Joshua with Israel.

• **30 Mt. Ebal (“Bare”)** and **31 Mt. Gerazim (“Separate / Cut Off”)**

Located north of Shechem, Mount Ebal was where Moses instructed the Israelites to observe a religious ceremony once they crossed into the Promised Land (Deut. 27:4-5). Later, under the leadership of Joshua, that ceremony was enacted which included building an altar (Joshua 8:30), sacrificing offerings to the Lord (v. 31), writing the law of Moses on stones (v. 32), and reading the law to the assembly (vv. 33-35). When Joshua read the blessings of the law, the six tribes of Israel on Mount Gerizim (Deut. 27:12) responded with “Amen”; when he read the curses of the law, the six tribes of Israel on Mount Ebal (Deut. 27:13) responded with “Amen.” Thus, Mount Ebal became known as the *Mount of Cursing*. During the time of Alexander the Great, the Samaritans built a temple on Mount Gerizim which was later destroyed. However, the Samaritans continued to worship on that mountain until the time of Christ, as evidenced in Jesus’ interaction with the woman at the well (John 4:20-21).

32 Shiloh (“Peace/Tranquility”)

Located between Bethel and Shechem, Shiloh was where Joshua divided the tribal allotments to the fledgling Hebrew nation (Joshua 14). Later, Shiloh served as the religious center before the United Kingdom. It was the site of the first permanent location of the Tabernacle (Joshua 18:1) and thus the central place of worship for the Israelites during the period of the Judges

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(Judges 18:31). It was at Shiloh that Hannah prayed for a son (1 Samuel 1:3, 11) and where Samuel eventually performed his duties as priest and prophet (1 Samuel 1:9; 2:18-21; 3:1-21). During a battle with the Philistines, the Ark of the Covenant was captured but never returned there (2 Samuel 6:2-17), a sign that God had forsaken Shiloh as the center of His worship (Psalm 78:60).

33 Jericho (“Fragrant,” alt. “Moon,” Hebrew: “City of Palms”)

Said to be among the oldest inhabited cities in the world, Jericho is located at the northern end of the Dead Sea and is an oasis amid a dry and hot region. Old Testament Jericho is identified as *Tel es-Sultan* and is where Rahab hid the spies (Joshua 2) and where the Israelites eventually marched around the city before capturing it (Joshua 6). During the Period of the Judges, Jericho was the location of the palace of Eglon, the king of Moab who oppressed Israel but who was later killed by Ehud (Judges 3:12-30). During the days of Elijah and Elisha, Jericho was a community of prophets (2 Kings 2:5). There, with God’s help, Elisha purified the bad water of the spring so the people could drink (2 Kings 2:19-22). New Testament Jericho was the location of Herod the Great’s winter palace and later the place where he died. In addition, it is said to be near the area where Jesus was tempted (Matthew 4:1-11) and where blind Bartimaeus was healed (Mark 10:46-52). NT Jericho was the site of Zacchaeus’ conversion (Luke 19:1-10) and where pilgrims traveled their last day’s journey to Jerusalem (Songs of Ascent - Psalm 121). The road between Jericho and Jerusalem is likely the setting of Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), as some believe Jericho to have been a residence-city for priests serving in the Temple.

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- **Judean Date Palm** (*Phoenix Dactylifera*)

Jericho, the City of Palms, was well-known in ancient times for its sweet and succulent dates. Historically, the date palm is recognized as a symbol of Judean fertility but thrived as far north as the Sea of Galilee and the Hula Valley region. Its fruit has long been considered a staple food and its branches were treasured as a source of shade and shelter from the hot Judean climate. In addition, the Hebrew people used it for medicinal purposes as they believed it to cure disease and promote longevity. The date palm appeared on the Hebrew shekel and is referenced several times in the Old Testament (Psalm 92; Song of Solomon 5:11; 7:7-8). King David named his daughter Tamar after the date palm to testify to her beauty and significance (2 Samuel 13). In 2005, a seed (affectionately called "*Methuselah*") was found among a cache in Herod's Palace at Masada (dating between 155 BC and 64 AD) and was planted at *Kibbutz Ketura* in southern Israel. Currently, "*Methuselah*" is the oldest verified human-assisted germinated seed and stands over four feet tall.

34 Jordan River/Baptismal Site

Spanning a meandering distance of 223 miles (but only 124 miles "as the crow flies"), the headwaters of the Jordan River begin at the base of Mount Hermon in northern Israel and flow into the Sea of Galilee. Meaning *descending from Dan*, the Jordan River gradually drops in elevation until it reaches its lowest point at the Dead Sea, some 1,300 feet below sea level. Currently, the banks of the Jordan River provide the functional border between the West Bank of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Jordan River of today is merely a shadow of her former self in Biblical times with Israel regulating its flow from the southern end of the Sea of Galilee. It is perhaps most famous among Christians as the site where Jesus was

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baptized by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17). Identified by Josephus in the 1st century as the Bethany Beyond the Jordan of the Bible (John 1:28), subsequent excavations have verified the integrity of the site in Jordan as a result of the Byzantine and Crusader Church ruins found there. Israel constructed their own site on the western bank of the river to commemorate this important event. It remains as the third holiest site in Christendom after the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In addition to being the place where Jesus was baptized, it is said to be the location where the Israelites crossed into the Promised Land (Joshua 3), where the prophet Elijah was translated to Heaven by a whirlwind and a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:9-14), and where Elisha made the axe head float (2 Kings 6:1-7).

35 Dead Sea

Roughly 45 miles long and 11 miles wide, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth at an elevation of 1,350 feet below sea level. At the northern end, its depths reach a staggering 1,200 additional feet below the surface, the height of the Empire State building. With over 33% of its makeup consisting of salt and minerals (compared to 3-4% for most oceans), the Dead Sea was a valuable resource for potash, bromine, magnesium chloride, and other minerals, but was worthless as a source of drinking water. Besides its lack of aquatic life, it was said to be dead because of the absence of any natural outlets. The Dead Sea was known in the Bible as the *Salt Sea* (Numbers 34:3,12), the *Eastern Sea* (Joel 2:20), and simply, *The Sea* (Ezekiel 47:8). The first-century historian Josephus refers to the Dead Sea as Lake Asphaltitus. During the period of the Exodus, the Dead Sea was established by God as the eastern border of Israel's land (Numbers 34:3,12). David likely crossed the Dead Sea when he took his family to Moab to flee from King Saul (1 Samuel 22:3-5). The combined armies of Ammon, Moab, and Edom crossed

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the Dead Sea and attempted a surprise attack on King Jehoshaphat at Jerusalem, but God thwarted their efforts (2 Chronicles 20). The Dead Sea has been compared to those who trust in human partnerships rather than on reliance on God and to a bush abiding near *“the parched places in the desert - in a salt land where no one lives”* (Jeremiah 17:6).

36 Arad (“Fugitive”)

Significant for its location, which controlled the southern road from Judah to Edom, Arad was inhabited by the Canaanites and Israelites throughout its long history. During the period of the Exodus, the King of Arad attacked the Israelites near the end of their wilderness wanderings (Numbers 21:1-3) but was defeated by Moses and the Hebrews. During the Period of the Conquest, the descendants of Jethro (the Kenites) relocated from Jericho to Arad (Judges 1:16). Arad was also an essential link for trade to the south and supplied the Egyptians with tar and other vital minerals for embalming and waterproofing taken from the Dead Sea region. Most significantly, Arad is known for its intact temple, replicating the much larger temple in Jerusalem. Equipped with a sacrificial altar and a Holy of Holies, it is believed that this unsanctioned temple was covered over sometime during the reforms of kings Asa (1 Kings 15; 2 Chronicles 14-16), Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:41-50; 2 Chronicles 17-20), Hezekiah (2 Kings 18-20; 2 Chronicles 29-32), or Josiah (2 Kings 22–23:30; 2 Chronicles 34–35). Sadly, Arad stands today as an example of religious syncretism (the combined worship of Yahweh with a pagan deity) - a practice that plagued God’s people throughout their history.

•Acacia Tree

The Acacia tree is typically found in the desert and sports an umbrella-like canopy that provides crucial shade from the oppressive heat of

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the wilderness. In addition, its deep roots access subterranean water sources that other plants cannot reach. Besides its usefulness to weary travelers, the Acacia Tree is said to have medicinal value in the resin that drips from its branches (*Arabic Gum*). Known alternately as *Shittim Wood*, this tree is mentioned twelve times in the Bible, most famously as the wood used to build the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 16:15; 25:10, 13; 27:1; 37:25).

•Bedouin Tents

Important to Middle Eastern hospitality, the traditional Bedouin tent is woven from goat hair which contracts and forms a tight seal during rain-fall. In the summer's heat, the Bedouin tent's inside remains cool, while in the cold winter, it is quickly warmed by a small fire. Food staples of the Bedouin include *fetir*, made with flour, water, and salt and is cooked on a flat pan over an open fire, and *moraras* (much like a pancake), made from flour, water, samna fat, sugar, or honey, which are enjoyed along with rice and various fruits and vegetables. The Bedouin lifestyle today is much like it would have been for Abraham and the other Patriarchs.

•Broom Tree (*Retama raetam*)

Indigenous to the desert, the white broom tree is a shrub with a broad canopy. In Bible times, the broom tree was used for cooking as it is known to retain its heat long after it has become dead ash. The prophet Elijah sought relief under a broom tree after fleeing from wicked Queen Jezebel (1 Kings 19).

37 Masada (“Stronghold/Fortress”)

Located near the Dead Sea's western shore, Masada's cliffs rise to a formidable height of approximately 1,300 feet, making it a natural fortress

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against the enemy's attack. It is possible that David visited this stronghold both when he returned from Moab with his 400 men (1 Samuel 22:3-5; 1 Chronicles 12:1-16) and when he fled from Saul after confronting him at En Gedi (1 Samuel 24:22). It is also likely that David had Masada in mind when he penned Psalm 18:2 and Psalm 31:3, referring to God as his "fortress." During the Intertestamental period, the paranoid King Herod further fortified Masada by constructing an 18-foot wall around its top and building a fortress and winter palace that he believed to be impregnable. Later, when the Romans took Jerusalem in AD 70, Jewish Zealots, under the direction of Eliezar Ben Yair, fled to Masada, where they attempted to resist submission to the pagan empire. After a lengthy siege, the Romans finally penetrated the fortress in AD 73 but, according to Josephus, discovered to their dismay, that 960 men, women, and children chose suicide rather than bow their knees to the idolatrous oppression of Rome. Masada is a national symbol of Israel's strength and resilience today. Archaeological evidence reveals that a 2.5-mile circumvallation wall ringed the area around the desert fortress. The wall, composed of rough stone blocks with a rubble core, measured more than 5 feet wide and 10 feet high. Fifteen towers lined the eastern and northern stretches of the circumvallation wall, while eight camps laid down around the wall served as bases and garrison points for the Roman troops. A cache of seeds from the 1st century was also found here and have been used to produce a date palm tree called Methuselah" (see date palms).

En Gedi ("*Spring of the Wild Goat*")

En Gedi is an oasis along the Dead Sea's barren western shore. Fed by natural hot springs, En Gedi yielded an abundance of much-needed fresh water and vegetation amid this arid region. Proof that this area was historically

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rich in agriculture, Solomon was compared to a cluster of henna blossoms growing in the gardens of En Gedi (Song of Songs 1:14). En Gedi was allotted to the tribe of Judah during the Period of the Conquest (Joshua 15:61) and was the location where David hid from King Saul in a cave (1 Samuel 23-24). David penned Psalms 57 and 142 in reflection on this event. In addition, much wildlife from biblical times remains in this beautiful area, such as the Ibex (*wild goat* - Psalm 18:33) and the Coney (*rock badger/hyrax* - Deut. 14:7).

39 Qumran (“Moon”)

Located on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, Qumran is thought to have been inhabited by the Essenes, a small Jewish sect during the first century. Qumran rose to notoriety when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered here by a shepherd in 1947. Contained in large clay jars, ancient scrolls (most notably the scroll of Isaiah) were found when a young boy allegedly threw a stone into one of its caves looking for his goat. It is believed that as the Romans approached to capture Qumran from the Essenes in AD 68, these holy scrolls were hidden in caves with the intent of retrieving them later. Upon their discovery, they were sold to a local antiquities dealer and now find their residence in the *Shrine of the Book* at the Israeli Museum.

40 Wadi Qelt (“Valley of Gushing Water”)

Running east to west, Wadi Qelt is the central passageway from Jericho to Jerusalem. Pilgrims often traveled this road to Jerusalem, singing Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120-134) as they approached the Holy City. However, in ancient times, this was a dangerous road to travel as thieves would lie in ambush along its flanks, as seen in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Because of its perilous reputation, some believe Wadi Qelt to

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be the “*valley of the shadow of death*” spoken of by David in Psalm 23:4. Today, it is the location of the uniquely positioned *St. George’s Monastery* as well as one of the oldest Jewish synagogues in the world.

Mt. Scopus (“*Lookout*”)

Overlooking Jerusalem from the northeast and a part of the Mount of Olives, Mount Scopus was the location of the Roman siege camp by Titus and the 10th Roman Legion, which led to the destruction of the Holy City in AD 70 (cf. Luke 21:20). As the first glimpse of Jerusalem, the BICS Bible Lands Seminar commemorates the story of Melchizedek and Abraham on Mount Scopus with a “*Genesis Welcome*” (Genesis 14:18-20).

Mt. of Olives

The Mount of Olives is a north-south ridge east of Jerusalem that rises to 2,676 feet as it overlooks the Holy City. Separated from Jerusalem by the Kidron Valley, the Mount of Olives – as its name indicates – was a rich olive grove in ancient times. Sadly, King Solomon built high places for pagan deities here (1 Kings 11:5-7), and consequently, the Mount of Olives was given the nickname “*Mount of Corruption.*” Nevertheless, the prophet Zechariah predicts that the Messiah will return to this mountain to vindicate His people in the end times (Zechariah 14:4). The Mount of Olives was frequented by Jesus and His disciples when they visited Jerusalem but is perhaps best known for the events of Passion Week.

•**Tombs**

Used as a cemetery for over 3,000 years, the Mount of Olives contains some 150,000 Jewish graves. Based on the promise that the Messiah will return to the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4), many Jews believe that they will be among the first to be resurrected by being buried here.

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Because of the harsh climate and rocky terrain, visitors to these tombs leave rocks rather than flowers to honor their dead. In rebuking the Pharisees, Jesus compared them to “*whitewashed tombs*,” noting that they were more concerned about their outer appearance than their rotting insides (Matthew 23:27-28). Tombs in ancient times were often whitewashed to prevent anyone from accidentally bumping into them in the dark, thus making the person unclean. Menachem Begin (former Prime Minister of Israel) and Eliezer Ben-Yahuda (said to have revived the dead Hebrew language in 1922) are buried here.

● **Palm Sunday Road**

From Jericho to Bethphage and across the Mt. of Olives, Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 (Matthew 21:1-11).

● **Dominus Flevit Church (“The Lord Wept”)**

Fashioned in the shape of a teardrop, this Roman Catholic Church was constructed in the 1950’s to commemorate Jesus’ weeping over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44).

● **Church of Mary Magdalene**

Built by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1886 by Tsar Alexander III to honor his mother, Empress Maria Alexandrovna, this church was erected to commemorate her patron saint, Mary Magdalene. Known for its seven distinct gilded onion-shaped domes, the Church of Mary Magdalene stands noticeably on the Mt. of Olives. The enormous canvas hanging above the iconostasis illustrates the legend in which Mary Magdalene traveled to Rome to tell Emperor Tiberius of Jesus’ unfair trial and unjust sentence. It is said that Mary held an egg in her hand, representing life. It turned red when she handed it to the Emperor, thus becoming a living symbol of Jesus’ blood and the Resurrection. Some have traced

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the Christian custom of dying eggs on Easter to Mary's presentation of this red egg as a tribute to the Emperor.

Garden of Gethsemane (*"Garden of the Olive Press"*)

Located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane was a favorite spot for Jesus and His disciples to pray and rest. Today, ancient olive trees dot the mountainside, but it is unlikely that they date to the time of Christ as it is said that the Romans cut down all the trees in this area in their siege of Jerusalem in AD 70.

•**The Church of All Nations**

Commemorates the site where Jesus agonized in prayer the night before His crucifixion, was betrayed by Judas and was later arrested by the Temple guards (Matthew 26:36-56, Luke 22:39-54).

•**Grotto of Gethsemane**

Identified since the 4th century as the location of Judas' betrayal (Luke 22:48), the Grotto of Gethsemane has been maintained by the Franciscans since 1361. It is also said to be where Jesus and His disciples stayed when they frequented Jerusalem. After His Resurrection, the Mount of Olives is where Jesus ascended to heaven as witnessed by the disciples, with the promise that He would return in like manner one day (Acts 1:9-11).

41 Jerusalem (*"Place/Abode of Peace"*)

Identified as one of the oldest cities in the world, Jerusalem has been of longstanding importance to the Jewish people. The Bible records that Abraham encountered Melchizedek, King of Salem, in this area as he returned from rescuing Lot from the five kings of the north (Genesis 14). Later, David

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captured the city from the Jebusites and eventually made it his kingdom's capital (1 Chronicles 11:4-9). During its long history, Jerusalem is said to have been destroyed at least twice, besieged 23 times, attacked 52 times, and captured/recaptured some 44 times. While the ancient city was fortified by the Jews beginning with David (c. 1000 BC), the existing walls were constructed by Suleiman the Magnificent of the Ottoman Empire in 1538. Within those walls today, Jerusalem is divided into four quarters: the Armenian, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Quarters.

Temple Mount

One of the holiest sites for Jews, the Temple Mount is rich in biblical history. Most notably, it is the location of both Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:1-37) and later the Temple built by Herod the Great (John 2:19-20). The Second Temple, rising to a height of 150 feet, was visible for miles as the sun shone on its brilliant white stone. Previously known as Mount Moriah, it was where Abraham was called to sacrifice Isaac, but where God miraculously intervened with a ram (Genesis 22:1-19). Later, it is where David purchased the threshing floor of Araunah to build an altar (2 Samuel 24:18-25). It is the site of many events, such as the cleansing of the Temple (Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-46; John 2:13-17), the healing of the blind man (John 9:1-41) and the lame beggar (Acts 3:1-10). Finally, it is the location where Jesus was dedicated by His parents and met by Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:21-38), where Mary and Joseph found Jesus learning as a young boy (Luke 2:41-50), and where later Jesus commended the widow for giving everything she had as opposed to the rich who merely gave from their abundance (Luke 21:4). Paul was seized here after being accused of bringing a Gentile into the Temple courts but was later released because he was a Roman citizen (Acts 21-22).

● **Golden Gate/Beautiful Gate**

Located on the eastern wall of the Temple Mount, the Golden Gate/ Eastern Gate (1 Chronicles 26:14; 2 Chronicles 31:14) was built over the location of the original Solomonic eastern gate (“*Kadim*”) of Jerusalem. It is believed by the Jews to be the gate through which the Messiah will enter (Ezekiel 44:103; Psalm 24). The Golden Gate was sealed in the 8th century AD by the Muslims, and it is believed that graves were placed around it to prevent the Messiah from entering. However, Christians know that the Messiah has already passed through this gate during His triumphal entry into the city around AD 30 (Matthew 21:1-11) and eagerly await His second advent.

● **Solomon’s Portico/Royal Portico**

Named for King Solomon and rebuilt by King Herod, Solomon’s Portico (Colonnade) was a large, roofed structure supported by multiple columns. It was located along both the eastern (Solomon’s Portico) as well as the southern (Royal Portico) walls of the Temple Mount and served as the backdrop for many events in Scripture, such as Jesus’ sermon about His sheep knowing His voice (John 10:1-21), the cleansing of the Temple (John 2:13-17), Peter’s great sermon (Acts 3:11-26), and the gathering of the disciples amidst persecution (Acts 5:12-24). In addition, it was here on the southeastern side of the Temple Mount (the pinnacle of the Temple) that Satan tempted Jesus to jump some 450 feet down into the Kidron Valley (Luke 4:9-12), saying that God would protect Him from harm (Psalm 91:11-12). As the highest place on the Temple Mount, Priests would stand here each morning, watching for the first signs of dawn to signal the start of the morning sacrifices. Today, the Muslim *Al-Aqsa Mosque* stands where Solomon’s Portico once resided.

● **Temple Steps**

Known as the *Teaching Steps* or *Rabbi Steps*, these stairs are located

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on the southern end of the Temple Mount and led to the Temple via the Huldah Gates. Over 200 feet wide, this walkway was comprised of a staircase of thirty alternating long and short steps. Some suggest that the fifteen long steps may have been one of the locations where pilgrims sang the fifteen Psalms of Ascent (120-134) as they went up to worship. It is believed that Jesus spent much of His time teaching here while in Jerusalem (Matthew 22-23).

•**Dome of the Rock**

Initially completed in AD 691, the Dome of the Rock is a Muslim shrine that houses the rock from which the Prophet Mohammed ascended “from the far city” to heaven accompanied by the angel Gabriel. Judaism recognizes the site as the place where Abraham offered Isaac up as a sacrifice to God (Genesis 22), the site near the threshing floor of Araunah purchased by David (2 Samuel 24:18), and the location of the Temple, which became the center of Jewish worship.

•**Dome of the Spirit**

In 1975, Dr. Asher Kaufman identified the Dome of the Spirit, located northwest of the Dome of the Rock, as the location of the Holy of Holies of the Jewish Temple. Also known as the *Dome of the Tablets*, this Islamic structure is said to memorialize the tablets of the Covenant inside the Ark in the Holy of Holies and the Spirit of God that dwelt there.

Via Dolorosa

The road, which in Latin means, “*Way of Suffering*,” “*Way of Grief*,” “*Way of Sorrows*,” or “*Painful Way*,” is believed to be the path that Jesus walked on His way to the crucifixion. Beginning at the Antonia Fortress, it spans 2,000 feet and terminates at the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre*. Since the 16th cen-

ture, the Franciscans have maintained the route, venerating the following events:

Station 1: Jesus is condemned to death

Station 2: Jesus carries His cross (Ecce Homo)

Station 3: Jesus falls the first time

Station 4: Jesus meets His mother, Mary

Station 5: Simon of Cyrene carries Jesus' cross

Station 6: Jesus wipes His face on Veronica's cloth

Station 7: Jesus falls the second time

Station 8: Jesus speaks to the pious women

Station 9: Jesus falls the third time

Station 10: Jesus is stripped of His garments (Holy Sepulchre)

Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the cross (Holy Sepulchre)

Station 12: Jesus dies on the cross (Holy Sepulchre)

Station 13: Jesus is taken down from the cross (Holy Sepulchre)

Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb (Holy Sepulchre)

Church of the Holy Sepulchre (*Church of the Holy Tomb*)

Completed by Constantine's mother Helena in AD 330, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is believed to be the site where Jesus was both crucified and buried (Matthew 27:32-28:15). Controlled by the Greek Orthodox Church, Calvary (*Golgotha*) has been identified here as a rocky outcrop just outside

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the Old City wall but near one of its gates, making it an attractive site for Roman crucifixions. The tomb of Jesus is also located inside this massive church complex and is believed to be authentic due to the various first-century burial shafts (*kokhim*) identified here. The tomb structure (*edicule*) houses two rooms. The first, the *Chapel of the Angel*, is superintended by the Greek Orthodox Church and is said to contain a piece of the stone that the angel rolled away from the entrance. The second, the *Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre*, commemorates the location where Jesus was buried and rose again on the third day (Mark 15:42-16:20; Luke 23:50-24:12; John 19:1-20:9).

Garden Tomb/Gordon's Calvary

Seen by some as an alternate site for the burial place of Jesus, the Garden Tomb is visited by thousands of pilgrims each year. Identified by General Charles Gordon in 1882 as Golgotha (Aramaic – *Golgotha*, Latin – *Calvary*) because of its geological features resembling a skull, it was later purchased by British Christians and venerated as the place where Jesus was crucified. Located nearby is a tomb cut from the rock as well as evidence of an ancient olive press and cistern, giving credence to the argument that this was at one time a garden (John 19:41a). However, despite its tranquil setting, it is unlikely that Gordon's Calvary is authentic due the fact that the tomb is said to date to the 8th-7th century BC. Furthermore, Scripture is clear that Jesus was placed in a "new tomb in which no one had yet been laid" (John 19:41b), thus disqualifying the Garden Tomb as the genuine site of the Resurrection.

42 Herodion

Located near Bethlehem, the Herodion is the site of one of Herod the

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Great's fortresses which later became his burial place. To mark his victory over the Parthians in 40 BC, Herod built and named the Herodion after himself. This fortress/palace appears to be yet another mountain among the many of Judea, even though it stands conspicuously alone on a small plain. However, approximately half of the Herodion was artificially constructed to conceal the small but lavish city inside, which contained, among other things, towers, ornate rooms, cisterns, baths, and a theater. In 2007, archaeologist Dr. Ehud Netzer discovered Herod's beautifully decorated red granite sarcophagus, which was smashed into pieces in a mausoleum on the side of the Herodion. Josephus attributes this to the Jewish revolt against the Romans sometime between AD 66 and AD 73. In addition to Herod's rosette-decorated sarcophagi, Netzer also discovered the remains of two white limestone sarcophagi, which he believes likely belonged to Herod's fourth wife, Malthrace, and his son Archalaus' wife, Glaphyra. Sadly, Dr. Netzer's life ended here in 2010 when a railing he was leaning on broke, plummeting him to death.

•King Herod's Death

According to Josephus (*War of the Jews*, pp. 468-469), Herod the Great died at 70 from chronic kidney disease complicated by Fournier's gangrene. Suffering from depression and distemper, fevers, intolerable itching, colon pain, tumors on his feet, an inflamed abdomen, rotting genitalia, convulsions, and loss of eyesight, King Herod often sought relief from the hot baths of Jordan and even resorted to soaking in hot oil. Knowing that the end was near, Herod assembled the country's most prominent men and had them held as prisoners. He instructed his sister Salome, "I know well enough that the Jews will keep a festival upon my death; however, it is in my power to be mourned for on other accounts and to have a splendid funeral if you will be but subservient to my commands. Do you but take care to send soldiers to encompass these men

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who are now in custody, and slay them immediately upon my death, and then all Judea, and every family of them, will weep whether they will it or not." Salome dismissed the prisoners at his death, conducted a grand funeral, and buried him at the Herodion.

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Bethlehem ("House of Bread")

Located approximately 5 miles south of Jerusalem, this little town held major significance in God's metanarrative of salvation. During the period of the Patriarchs, Rachel died near Bethlehem after giving birth to Benjamin (Genesis 35:16-20) and was buried here. The story of Ruth and Boaz took place in the wheat and barley fields of Bethlehem (book of Ruth), and later David was born, tended his sheep, and was anointed King of Israel here (1 Samuel 16:1-13; 17:12). In Micah 5:2, the prophet foretold the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem, which found its fulfillment in Jesus (Luke 2:1-7).

•The Shepherd's Field

Believed to be where the angels appeared to the shepherds announcing the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-20), the Shepherd's Field (Khirbat Siyar al-Ghanim) is superintended by the Franciscans. Here, caves overlooking lush fields are revered as the place where shepherds rested and sought refuge from storms while tending their sheep and near where the angelic announcement took place.

•Church of the Nativity

Noted as one of the best-authenticated sites in the Holy Land, the Church of the Nativity was initially constructed by Helena around the year AD 330 and later rebuilt by Emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD. Its earliest traditions suggest that the *Grotto* (cave) which lies underneath the basilica, is the location of the birth of Jesus. In the cave, there is both a manger (feeding trough) and a fourteen-pointed star which

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symbolizes the number of generations from Abraham to David, from David to the Babylonian Exile, and from the Exile to the birth of the Messiah (Matthew 1:1-17). In addition to its messianic significance, the Church of the Nativity is said to be the place (*St. Jerome's Cave*) where Jerome translated the Vulgate from Hebrew and Greek to Latin, beginning in AD 386. Later, the church survived an invasion of the Muslim armies due to the fresco outside of the church depicting the three wise men dressed similarly to them. Currently, the Church of the Nativity is under the shared control of the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian ecclesiastical authorities.

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Beth Shemesh (*"House of the Sun"*)

Situated on the eastern end of the Sorek Valley, Beth Shemesh was the historical border between Judah and Philistia. During the Period of the Conquest, Beth Shemesh was allotted to the Levites as one of their cities of inheritance (Joshua 21:16). Most famously, Beth Shemesh is remembered as the place near where Samson lived (Judges 13-16), and where the ark of the covenant was returned to the Israelites after its capture by the Philistines (1 Samuel 6:1-21). It is here that the Kohathites, descendants of Aaron, lived (Joshua 21:4). While the Kohathite priests were allowed to carry the ark, they were prohibited from looking inside it (Numbers 4:20). It was because of this sin that the men of Beth Shemesh were struck down (1 Samuel 6:19); a reminder that the Lord's instructions bound even the priests. Recent excavations at Beth Shemesh have revealed that it was a thriving city from the Middle Bronze through the Iron Age. Of note, Beth Shemesh boasts the largest Iron Age reservoir found in Israel, with a holding capacity of over 56,000 gallons, enough to sustain its inhabitants comfortably for three months in the event of a siege. This remains an ongoing archaeological site with discoveries as recent as 2019.

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45 Valley of Elah (“Valley of the Oak”)

Located approximately 16 miles northwest of Hebron, the Valley of Elah was where David fought the giant Goliath between Socoh and Azekah (1 Samuel 17). Elah derives its name from the terebinth tree prolific in this area from ancient times until today.

Socoh (“Branches”), **Azekah** (“Strength of Walls”)

Located on a hill on the western side of the Elah Valley, Socoh was garrisoned by King Rehoboam for the defense of Judah (2 Chronicles 11:7) but was later captured by the Philistines during Ahaz’s reign (2 Chronicles 28:18). It is the location where the Philistine army gathered to taunt Israel through the giant Goliath (1 Samuel 17). Azekah was a strategic city also fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chronicles 11:9) and was one of the last Israelite cities to fall and be captured by the Babylonians in 586 BC (Jeremiah 34:7). From Azekah, Saul and the Israelites positioned themselves to fight Goliath and the Philistines.

Khirbet Qeiyafa (“Fortress of Elah”)

Discovered in 2007, Khirbet Qeiyafa is said to be a Judean fortress identified with King David. This southern stronghold was likely erected to protect the kingdom against the advances of the Philistine city of Gath, located only 8 miles to the west. Boasting stones as large as 8 tons, this southern outpost was also home to two large buildings dating to the 10th century BC. Archaeologists believe these buildings to be a palatial structure and a storeroom containing stamped storage vessels dating to the time of King David. Further, its two gates (one on the west and one on the south), consisting of four chambers each, are the earliest example of a double-gated city from

the First Temple Period. It appears that the city came to sudden ruin as hundreds of pottery vessels, stone utensils, and metal objects were discovered, having been hastily left on the floors of its dwellings. In 2008, the oldest known Hebrew text was discovered here (1,000 years older than the Dead Sea Scrolls) on an *ostrakon* (a piece of pottery) on the floor of one of the rooms bearing the following inscription:

*“Do not oppress, and serve God... despoiled him/her
The judge and the widow wept; he had the power
Over the resident alien and the child, he eliminated them together
The men and chiefs/officers have established a king
He marked 60 [?] servants among the communities/habitations/generation.”*

Some believe this to be the description of the coronation of Saul as Israel transitioned from the Period of the Judges to a united monarchy. Additionally, two important discoveries were made in 2012. The first, a large clay vessel, was unearthed bearing the name *Ishba'al, son of Beda*. The name *Ishba'al* also appears in 2 Samuel 2 (alt. *Ishboshet*) and 1 Chronicles 8 as one of King Saul's sons who would rival David for the throne. Interestingly, this name was not used after the First Temple period. The second was an elaborate doorframe to an inner sanctum, shedding light on the meaning of the mysterious *mezuzot* of Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:31). Khirbet Qeiyafa has been identified with biblical *Shaaraim* (Joshua 15:36; 1 Samuel 17:52; 1 Chronicles 4:31), which in Hebrew means, “two gates.” In addition, 1 Samuel 17:52 notes that after David's defeat of Goliath, the slain Philistine bodies lay from Shaaraim to Gath and Ekron.

Hebron (“Alliance”)

Located 19 miles southwest of Jerusalem on the road to Beersheba, Hebron played a significant role in the history of God's people. Here Abraham

settled at the “*great trees of Mamre*” (Genesis 13:18) and purchased the cave of Machpelah (Genesis 23:1-20) where he and his wife Sarah (Genesis 25:7-10), his son Isaac and his wife Rebekah (Genesis 35:27-31), and his grandson Jacob and his wife Leah (Genesis 49:29-33; 50:12-14) were buried. It is here at Hebron that Abraham and Sarah were visited by the angels who promised the birth of a son (Genesis 18:1-15), and where Abraham viewed the destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19:27-29). During the Period of the Conquest, the fields surrounding Hebron were given to Caleb as a tribal inheritance (Joshua 14:6-15; 15:13-14), while Hebron proper was allotted to the Levites (Joshua 21:11-12). During the Period of the United Kingdom, David was anointed king over Judah at Hebron and ruled here for the first seven years of his reign (2 Samuel 2:1-4, 11). The current building which houses the memorial tombs, is said to have been built by Herod the Great and is venerated by both Jews and Muslims.

Bethany (“*House of the Poor/Humble/Afflicted*”)

A small village two miles east of Jerusalem and located on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, Bethany was the site of several important events in the life of Jesus. Here Jesus often spent the night at the home of His friends Martha, Mary, and Lazarus on His way to Jerusalem (Luke 10:38-42), and it is here that Jesus most famously raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44). Here also Jesus was anointed by Mary with expensive perfume at the home of Simon the Leper (John 12:1-9) and He later cursed a fruitless fig tree that withered (Matthew 21:18-22).

•**The Fig Tree**

First mentioned in the Garden of Eden account (Genesis 3:7) and cited over fifty times throughout Scripture, the fig tree has always been a valuable commodity in Israel (Deuteronomy 8:8). Prized for its shade,

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the fig tree grows to nearly 20 feet tall and produces leaves the size of a man's hand. Figs have historically been pressed into "cakes" and eaten (1 Samuel 30:12) and used as well for medicinal purposes (2 Kings 20:7). The ancients saw fig trees as a sign of peace and prosperity (1 Kings 4:25; Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10), and the spies sent out to view the Promised Land brought back figs along with clusters of grapes and pomegranates as examples of the agricultural richness of the area (Numbers 13:23). The fig tree of Israel produces up to three crops per year; the "early fig" of June (Isaiah 28:4; Nahum 3:12), the "summer fig" of August, and sometimes the "winter fig" which ripens in the spring (Revelation 6:13). Unique to the fig tree is the fact that its fruit appears before its leaves, possibly explaining the Lord's cursing of it in Mark 11:13. Jesus likens His Second Coming to the imminent arrival of summer when the twigs of the fig tree become tender, and its leaves appear (Matthew 24:32-33).

Kidron Valley (*"Valley of Gloom"*)

Forming the eastern border of Jerusalem, the Kidron Valley (or Jehoshaphat Valley) runs north-south and is home to a seasonal brook by the same name. Dry for most of the year, this wadi was crossed by Jesus and His disciples on their way from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, and most certainly on the night He was arrested and brought before Annas and Caiaphas (John 18:1-13). In Joel 3, the Kidron Valley is represented as the place where God will judge the nations.

Hinnom Valley (*"Valley of Freedom"*)

Located south of Jerusalem, the Hinnom Valley is a deep ravine that forms Jerusalem's southern border. Infamous in biblical history, it was the location where children were sacrificed to the god Molech (2 Kings 23:10), a sin

which kings Ahaz and Manasseh were also guilty (2 Chronicles 28:3; 33:6). After the reforms of Josiah, the Hinnom Valley became the garbage dump for the city of Jerusalem. Here, fires continually burned night and day, thus becoming a symbol of the place of judgment called Hell (Greek – *Gehenna*; cf. Matt. 5:22; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6). Near the Hinnom Valley is located the Potter’s Field (*Hakeldama*), the traditional site where Judas killed himself and was buried (Matthew 27:3-10; Acts 1:1-20).

Tyropoeon Valley (“Cheesemakers Valley”)

Forming the natural separation between Mt. Moriah and Mt. Zion, the Tyropoeon Valley was coined the *Cheese-makers Valley* by the historian Josephus in the first century, perhaps as a mistranslation of the Hebrew name for Outer Valley as described in the Copper Scroll. At its base, the Western Wall of the Temple rose to a height of over 130 feet and is said to be a display of unparalleled masonry in the ancient world. The Tyropoeon Valley intersects with the Kidron Valley and terminates in the Valley of Hinnom.

Hezekiah’s Tunnel

Built by King Hezekiah shortly before 700 BC, this 1,500-foot-long tunnel was cut 60’ from the surface through the bedrock to bring water from the Gihon Spring safely into the city of Jerusalem during the attack of King Sennacherib of Assyria (2 Kings 18:13-19:36; 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:2-4). In 1867, Charles Warren discovered an inscription (also known as the *Silwan* inscription) describing its construction, stating that workers began at opposite ends and channeled toward each other guided only by the sounds of their pickaxes, eventually meeting in the middle. The passage reads:

...the tunnel...and this is the story of the tunnel while...the axes were against each other and while three cubits were left to cut?...the voice of a man...called to his counterpart, (for) there was ZADA (weak spot/crack) in the rock, on the right...and

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on the day of the tunnel (being finished) the stone-cutters struck each man towards his counterpart, ax against ax and flowed water from the source to the pool for 1200 cubits. And 100? Cubits was the height over the head of the stonecutters...

Currently, this valuable inscription is housed in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, Turkey.

Pool of Siloam (“Sent”)

King Hezekiah created a reservoir inside the walls of Jerusalem, the Pool of Siloam, to protect the city’s water supply from the invading Assyrians in 700 BC. Isaiah referred to the Pool of Siloam as the *waters of Shiloah*, and the *Lower Pool* (Isaiah 8:1-6; 22:9), and the prophet Nehemiah referred to it as *Shelah* (Nehemiah 3:15). In the New Testament, the Pool of Siloam is mentioned by Luke as the site where 18 men died when a tower fell on them (Luke 13:4). It was also the location to which Jesus “sent” the blind man to be healed after He put mud on his eyes near the Temple (John 9).

Pilgrim’s Road

Discovered accidentally in 2004 due to a burst water pipe under the City of David, the Pilgrim’s Road is a twenty-six-foot-wide staircase that spanned some two-thousand feet from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple. Believed to have been constructed by Pontius Pilate (between AD 20-30), this passage-way was traveled by thousands of pilgrims who would purify themselves in the *waters of Shiloah* before entering the Temple Mount. Of interest, archaeologists found a tiny gold bell in a drainage channel under the road, which they believed came loose from the tunic of the High Priest on his way to the Temple, a raised podium built on the side of the road, a child’s carving depicting the menorah from the Temple, and thousands of coins dating from the time of the Jewish Revolt (AD 66-70). The road was officially

opened to tourists in 2019.

Western Wall & Tunnel

Built by King Herod in 19 BC, the Western Wall of the Temple complex extends some 1,800 feet along the Tyropoeon Valley. Sometimes referred to as the *Wailing Wall (Kotel)*, it is venerated as one of the holiest sites in Judaism. This open-air section is over 200 feet long and separates its worshippers by gender (men on the left, women on the right). Some say that many Orthodox Jews who worship here are modern examples of the Pharisees that Jesus rebuked in His day, proudly displaying their broad phylacteries and long tassels (Matthew 12:1-7). The Western Wall Tunnel reveals an additional 1,600 feet of the wall and contains a stone believed to be one of the largest objects ever lifted without powered machinery. Sometimes called the Western Stone, its dimensions are approximately 34' long X 10' high X 15' wide, and it is estimated to weigh a staggering 570 tons (more than two fully-loaded 747 airliners). It may have been this stone among others that a disciple marveled at as they were leaving the Temple with Jesus, "*Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!*" (Mark 13:1-2). A location within the Western Wall Tunnel is believed to be the closest spot to the Holy of Holies, and many female Jews go there to worship and pray.

St. Anne's Church

Built by the Crusaders sometime between AD 1131 and AD 1138, St. Anne's Church commemorates the birthplace of Mary and is named after her mother, Anna. Some believe a small crypt below the church to be the *grotto* (cave) where Anna birthed Mary. Currently maintained by the Roman Catholic order of the White Fathers (after the colors of their robes), it is

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owned by the French after it was given to Napoleon by the Ottomans for his support during the Crimean War of 1856.

Pool of Bethesda (“*House of Mercy*”)

Located near the Sheep Gate in northern Jerusalem, the Pool of Bethesda is referred to in the Old Testament as the *Upper Pool* in the book of 2 Kings (18:17) as well as by the prophet Isaiah (7:3; 36:2). The Pool of Bethesda is most famously the site where Jesus healed the man who had been lame for thirty-eight years (John 5:1-15). Archaeologists have discovered two pools in the vicinity, with one corresponding to the five porticos (porches) described in John 5:2. Some believe the miracle that Jesus performed here to be a polemic against the healing powers of the Greek god Asclepius and his worship as savior.

Mt. Zion (“*Mountain of Fortification*”)

Originally a Jebusite city captured by David (2 Samuel 5:6-7), Mount Zion’s boundaries grew by the first century to include the hill southwest of Jerusalem. Throughout the years, it was used to reference Jerusalem, the land of Judah, and the people of Israel as a whole (Isaiah 40:9; 60:14; Jeremiah 31:12; Zechariah 9:13). In the New Testament, Zion is used to represent God’s spiritual kingdom, His Church, and the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 14:1). Today, the tombs of Horatio Spafford (“It is Well with My Soul”) and Oskar Schindler (“Schindler’s List”) are located in a cemetery on Mt. Zion.

- **Upper Room** (Latin: *Cenacle*, meaning dinner)

Located on Mount Zion is the Upper Room, believed to be the traditional site of the Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-30; Luke 22:7-23), where Jesus washed the disciples’ feet (John 13:1-17), and where He gave

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the new command to love one another (John 13:34-35). It is the place where Jesus comforted (John 14:1-4; 16:33) and prayed for His disciples and all believers (John 17:6-26), and promised the Holy Spirit (John 16:5-16). Interestingly, it marks the only spot in Scripture where Jesus is said to have sung (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26) - quite possibly Psalm 116:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 16-17; and 118:6-7, 14, 17-29 of the Hallel (Praise) Psalms. In Acts, it is here that the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples in power, and where Peter preached the famous sermon at Pentecost wherein some 3,000 came to believe (Acts 2).

•**The Tomb of David**

Located beneath the Upper Room, the Tomb of David was venerated as the location of King David's resting place by the 12th century. Although wrongly associated with David's burial place "*in the city of David*" (1 Kings 2:10), it is the traditional location where Jews and pilgrims come to honor the life of Israel's great king.

•**St. Peter in Gallicantu** ("*The Rooster Crows*")

Located on the eastern slopes of Mount Zion, the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu commemorates the place where the rooster crowed at Peter's third denial of Jesus (Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62). Built over the remains of the house of the high priests Annas and Caiaphas, it is believed to contain the *Sacred Pit* in which Jesus spent His last night awaiting trial before Pilate (John 18:12-40). Additionally, archaeologists have uncovered ancient steps from the Mount of Olives – across the

Kidron Valley – to Mount Zion. There is little doubt that these were the steps that Jesus ascended the night He was arrested.

Hezekiah's Broad Wall

Unearthed during the 1970s, Hezekiah's Broad Wall dates to the 8th century BC. This massive structure (some 21 feet thick and 200 feet long) effectively fortified the city of Jerusalem. King Hezekiah constructed this wall in anticipation of the invasion of Sennacherib, King of Assyria. Nehemiah later rebuilt the wall (Nehemiah 3:8; Isaiah 22:9-10).

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Selected Hebrew and Arabic Words

The following are some of the Hebrew words we'll be learning as we travel through the land together:

Pesel – “Idol”

Talmid – “Disciple”

Shofet – “Judge/Savior”

Besorah – “Good News”

Mayim Hayim – “Living Water”

Emunah – “Faith/Faithfulness”

Berakh – “Bless”

Ani – “Humble, Gentle, Poor, Afflicted”

Kavanah – “Direction, Attention, Focus”

Shalom – “Peace”

Ve' Ahavta – “You Shall Love”

Ben – “Son”

Avinu – “Our Father”

Go'el – “Our Redeemer”

Yir'ah – “Fear, Awe, Reverence”

Hametz – “Leaven”

Ben Adam – “Son of Man”

Eretz – “Land”

The following are some common phrases in either Hebrew or Arabic:

Peace – *Shalom* (Hebrew), *Salaam* (Arabic)

Sabbath – *Shabbat* (“*Shabbat Shalom*” is a common greeting on Saturday)

Peace be upon you – *Evenu shalom aleichem* (Hebrew)

Salaam alaikum (Arabic)

Good Morning – *Boker tov* (Hebrew)

Sabah el Kheir / Sabah el Noor (Arabic)

Good night – *Laila tov* (Hebrew)

Thanks – *Toda* (Hebrew); *Shukran* (Arabic)

Let's go – *Yalla* (Arabic)



Berkshire Institute
for Christian Studies

Song Lyrics

BIBLE LANDS

Travel Guide

"Ask for the ancient paths; ask where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16

Amazing Grace

John Newton | Traditional American Melody

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch; like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

The Lord hath promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

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O Come Let Us Adore Him

O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord

For He alone is worthy
For He alone is worthy
For He alone is worthy
Christ the Lord

O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord

Public Domain

Angels We Have Heard on High

Traditional French Carol

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Refrain

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Refrain

See Him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
While our hearts in love we raise.

Refrain

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As the Deer

Martin Nystrom

As the deer panteth for the water,
So my soul longeth after You.
You alone are my heart's desire,
And I long to worship You.

Refrain:

You alone are my strength, my shield;
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire,
And I long to worship You.

You're my friend and You are my brother,
Even though You are a King.
I love You more than any other,
So much more than anything.

Refrain

I want You more than gold or silver,
Only You can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy giver,
And the apple of my eye.

Refrain

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At the Cross

Words: Isaac Watts, Music: Ralph E. Hudson

Alas! and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Refrain:

At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away,
It was there by faith I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Refrain

Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker died,
For man the creature's sin.

Refrain

Thus might I hide my blushing face
While His dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt my eyes to tears.

Refrain

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do.

Refrain

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Because He Lives

William & Gloria Gaither

God sent His son, they called Him, Jesus;
He came to love, heal and forgive;
He lived and died to buy my pardon,
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives!

Chorus:

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives, all fear is gone;
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
Just because He lives!

How sweet to hold a newborn baby,
And feel the pride and joy he gives;
But greater still the calm assurance:
This child can face uncertain days because He Lives!

Chorus

And then one day, I'll cross the river,
I'll fight life's final war with pain;
And then, as death gives way to vict'ry,
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He lives!

Chorus

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Be It Unto Me

Claire Cloninger & Don Moen

Chorus:

Be it unto me - according to your Word
According to your promises, I can stand secure
Carve upon my heart the truth that sets me free
According to your Word O Lord
Be it unto me

You promised your blood will deliver
Lord, we believe it's true
You promised us joy like a river
Lord we receive it from you
These things you have spoken
And you're bringing to pass
This world's disappearing
But your word will last

Chorus

You promised to carry our sorrows
Lord, we believe it's true
You promised unending tomorrows
Lord we receive them from you
You be our provider
In your word it's revealed
And by the stripes that you bore
Lord we have been healed

Chorus

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Beloved, Let Us Love One Another

1 JOHN 4:7 & 8

Music by Dennis Ryder

Beloved, let us love one another
For love is of God and everyone that loveth
Is born of God and knoweth God
He that loveth not,
Knoweth not God, for God is love
Beloved, let us love one another
First John 4: 7 and 8

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Bless The Lord Oh My Soul

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul and all that is within me
Bless His Holy name
(repeat)

He has done great things, He has done great things
He has done great things, bless His Holy name
(repeat)

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul and all that is within me
Bless His Holy name
(repeat)

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CCLI # 11462133

Blessed Be Your Name

Matt & Beth Redman

Blessed be Your name in the land that is plentiful
Where Your streams of abundance flow; blessed be Your name.
And blessed be Your name When I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk through the wilderness; blessed be Your name.

Every blessing You pour out, I'll turn back to praise
And when the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say...

Chorus:

Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be Your name when the sun's shining down on me
When the world's "all as it should be"; blessed be Your name.
And blessed be Your name on the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering; blessed be Your name

Every blessing You pour out, I'll turn back to praise
And when the darkness closes in, Lord, still I will say...

Repeat Chorus Twice

Bridge:

You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say,
"Lord, blessed be Your name."

Repeat Chorus Twice

The Blood Will Never Lose It's Power

Andraé Crouch

The blood that Jesus shed for me
Way back on Calvary
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day
It will never lose its power
It reaches to the highest mountain
It flows to the lowest valley
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day
It will never lose its power

It soothes my doubts and calms my fears
And it dries all my tears
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day
It will never lose its power

It reaches to the highest mountain
It flows to the lowest valley
The blood that gives me strength
From day to day
It will never lose its power

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Christ Arose!

Robert Lowry

Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior,
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

Refrain:

Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes,
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.
He arose! He arose!
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Vainly they watch His bed, Jesus my Savior;
Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

Refrain

Death cannot keep its Prey, Jesus my Savior;
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!

Refrain

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Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye Heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Amen

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Fill My Cup, Lord

Richard Blanchard

Like the woman at the well, I was seeking
For things that could not satisfy.
And then I heard my Savior speaking—
“Draw from My well that never shall run dry.”

Chorus:

Fill my cup, Lord;
I lift it up Lord;
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.

There are millions in this world who are seeking
For pleasures earthly goods afford.
But none can match the wondrous treasure
That I find in Jesus Christ my Lord.

Chorus

So my brother if the things that this world gives you
Leave hungers that won't pass away,
My blessed Lord will come and save you
If you kneel to Him and humbly pray—
Chorus

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Fishers of Men

Harry D. Clarke

I will make you fishers of men,
Fishers of men, fishers of men.
I will make you fishers of men,
If you follow Me
If you follow Me if you follow Me.
I will make you fishers of men
If you follow Me

Hear Christ calling come unto Me,
Come unto Me, come unto Me.
Hear Christ calling come unto Me,
I will give you rest.
I will give you rest, I will give you rest.
Hear Christ calling, come unto Me
I will give you rest.

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Family of God

Bill & Gloria Gaither

I'm so glad I'm a part
Of the Family of God!
I've been washed in the fountain
Cleansed by His blood
Joint heirs with Jesus
As we travel this sod
For I'm a part of the Family
The Family of God

CCLI #11462133

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Words: Thomas O. Chisholm

Music: William M. Runyan

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Refrain

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Refrain

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Hallelujah! What A Savior!

Philip B. Bliss

“Man of Sorrows!” what a name
For the Son of God, who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Guilty, vile, and helpless we;
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
“Full atonement!” can it be?
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Lifted up was He to die;
“It is finished!” was His cry;
Now in Heav’n exalted high.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

When He comes, our glorious King,
All His ransomed home to bring,
Then anew His song we’ll sing:
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

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He Is Lord

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He is Lord, He is Lord!
He is risen from the dead and he is Lord!
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess
That Jesus Christ is Lord.

CCLI #11462133

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Words: Charles Wesley

Music: Felix Mendelssohn, arr. by William H. Cummings

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest Heav’n adored;
Christ the everlasting Lord;
Late in time, behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail th’incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heav’nly Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

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He Lives!

Words & music by A. H. Ackley

I serve a risen Saviour; He's in the world today.
I know that He is living, whatever men may say.
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him He's always near.

Chorus:

He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way.
He lives! He lives! Salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.

In all the world around me I see His loving care,
And though my heart grows weary I never will despair.
I know that He is leading, thro' all the stormy blast;
The day of His appearing will come at last.

Chorus

Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian! Lift up your voice and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ, the King!
The Hope of all who seek Him, the Help of all who find,
None other is so loving, so good and kind.

Chorus

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Holy, Holy, Holy

Reginald Heber

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns upon the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name,
In earth and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

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How Deep the Father's Love for Us

Stuart Townsend

How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure;
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss,
The Father turns His face away;
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the Man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders,
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there,
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life ~
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
No gifts, no pow'r, no wisdom;
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer.
But this I know with all my heart:
His wounds have paid my ransom.

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How Great Thou Art

Stuart K. Hine

O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Chorus:

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

Chorus

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!"

Chorus

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I Have Decided To Follow Jesus

I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
No turning back no turning back

The world behind me the cross before me
The world behind me the cross before me
The world behind me the cross before me
No turning back no turning back

Though none go with me I still will follow
Though none go with me I still will follow
Though none go with me I still will follow
No turning back no turning back

Will you decide now to follow Jesus
Will you decide now to follow Jesus
Will you decide now to follow Jesus
No turning back no turning back

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I Love You, Lord

Laurie Klein

I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice
To worship you, O my soul rejoice.
Take joy, my King, in what you hear,
May it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

(Repeat)

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In Christ Alone

Keith Getty & Stuart Townend

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'til on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

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It Is Well With My Soul

Words: Horatio G. Spafford, Music: Philip P. Bliss

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Refrain:

It is well, with my soul,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet,
Though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

Refrain

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

Refrain

But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,
The sky, not the grave, is our goal;
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord!
Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!

Refrain

And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.

Refrain

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Jesus Paid It All

Words: Elvina M. Hall

Music: John T. Grape

I hear the Savior say,
“Thy strength indeed is small;
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in Me thine all in all.”

Refrain:

Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

Lord, now indeed I find, Thy pow’r, and Thine alone,
Can change the leper’s spots and melt the heart of stone.

Refrain

For nothing good have I, whereby Thy grace to claim;
I’ll wash my garments white
In the blood of Calv’ry’s Lamb.

Refrain

And now complete in Him, my robe, His righteousness,
Close sheltered ’neath His side, I am divinely blest.

Refrain

And when before the throne I stand in Him complete,
I’ll lay my trophies down, all down at Jesus’ feet.

Refrain

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Lead Me to Calvary

Words: Jennie E. Hussey

Music: William J. Kirkpatrick

King of my life, I crown Thee now,
Thine shall the glory be;
Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.

Refrain:

Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thine agony;
Lest I forget Thy love for me,
Lead me to Calvary.

Show me the tomb where Thou wast laid,
Tenderly mourned and wept;
Angels in robes of light arrayed
Guarded Thee whilst Thou slept.

Refrain

Let me like Mary, through the gloom,
Come with a gift to Thee;
Show to me now the empty tomb,
Lead me to Calvary.

Refrain

May I be willing, Lord, to bear
Daily my cross for Thee;
Even Thy cup of grief to share,
Thou hast borne all for me.

Refrain

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Marching to Zion

Words: Isaac Watts

Music: Robert Lowry

Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne
And thus surround the throne

Refrain:

We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God

Let those refuse to sing, who never knew our God;
But children of the heav'nly King
But children of the heav'nly King
May speak their joys abroad
May speak their joys abroad

Refrain

The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heavenly fields
Before we reach the heavenly fields
Or walk the golden streets
Or walk the golden streets

Refrain

Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry
We're marching through Immanuel's ground
We're marching through Immanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high
To fairer worlds on high

Refrain

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The Holy City

Words: Frederick Edward Weatherly

Music: Stephen Adams

One night while I was sleeping I had a dream so fair
I stood in old Jerusalem Beside the temple there
I heard the children singing And ever as they sang
I thought the voice of Angels From Heaven in answer rang

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem!
Hark how the angels sing,
Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna to your King!”

And then I thought my dream was chang’d
The streets no longer rang
As with the glad Hosannas The little children sang
The sun grew dark with mystery
And the morn was cold and chilled
As the shadow of a cross arose Upon a lonely hill

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem!
Lift up your gates and sing,
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna to your King!”

And once again my dream was changed
New earth there seemed to be
I saw the Holy City Beside the crystal sea
The light of God was on its streets
And the gates were open wide
That all who would might enter
And no one was denied
No need of moon or the stars by night
Or the sun to shine by day
For it was the new Jerusalem
That would not pass away

“Jerusalem! Jerusalem
Sing for the night is o’er
Hosanna in the highest
Hosanna for evermore!”

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Near the Cross

Fanny J. Crosby

Jesus, keep me near the cross,
There a precious fountain
Free to all, a healing stream
Flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Refrain:

In the cross, in the cross
Be my glory ever;
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Near the cross, a trembling soul,
Love and mercy found me;
There the Bright and Morning Star
Sheds its beams around me.

Refrain

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day,
With its shadows o'er me.

Refrain

Near the cross I'll watch and wait;
Hoping, trusting ever,
Till I reach the golden strand,
Just beyond the river.

Refrain

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Nothing But the Blood

Robert Lowry

What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain:

Oh! precious is the flow that makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

For my pardon, this I see, nothing but the blood of Jesus;
For my cleansing this my plea,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

Nothing can for sin atone, nothing but the blood of Jesus;
Naught of good that I have done,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

This is all my hope and peace,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
This is all my righteousness,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

Glory! Glory! This I sing—
Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
All my praise for this I bring—
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain

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Of the Father's Love Begotten

Marcus Aureliou C. Prudentius, 4th century
tr. John M. Neale, 1854 & Henry W. Baker, 1859

Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heaven, adore Him;
Angel hosts, His praises sing;
Powers, dominions bow before Him,
And extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring,
Evermore and evermore.

Christ, to Thee with God the Father,
And O Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore.

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The Old Rugged Cross

George Bennard

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

Refrain:

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.

O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
To bear it to dark Calvary.

Refrain

In that old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see,
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.

Refrain

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true;
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He'll call me some day to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I'll share.

Refrain

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Silent Night, Holy Night

Words: Joseph Mohr

Music: Franz Gruber

Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

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Spirit of the Living God

Daniel Iverson

Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me.

Soul of heaven, heart of God, wash over me.
Soul of heaven, heart of God, wash over me.
Cleanse me, teach me, hold me, reach me.
Soul of heaven, heart of God, wash over me.

Holy presence, love divine, cast out my fear.
Holy presence, love divine, cast out my fear.
Shield me, free me, call me, lead me.
Holy presence, love divine, cast out my fear.

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There's Something About That Name

words by Gloria Gaither & William J. Gaither
music by William J. Gaither

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus;
There's just something about that name.
Master, Savior, Jesus, like the fragrance after the rain;
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, let all Heaven and earth proclaim;
Kings and kingdoms will all pass away,
But there's something about that name.
Kings and kingdoms will all pass away,
But there's something about that name.

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Springs Of Living Water

John W. Peterson

I thirsted in the barren land
Of sin and shame
And nothing satisfying there I found
But to the blessed cross of Christ
One day I came
Where springs of living water did abound

Chorus:

Drinking at the springs of living water
Happy now am I my soul they satisfy
Drinking at the springs of living water
O wonderful and bountiful supply

How sweet the living water
From the hills of God
It makes me glad and happy all the way
Now glory grace and blessing
Mark the path I've trod
I'm shouting hallelujah every day

Repeat Chorus

O sinner won't you come today to Calvary
A fountain there is flowing deep and wide
The Savior now invites you to the water free
Where thirsting spirits can be satisfied

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Standing on the Promises

Russell K. Carter

Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
Through eternal ages let His praises ring,
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,
Standing on the promises of God.

Refrain:

Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises that cannot fail,
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
By the living Word of God I shall prevail,
Standing on the promises of God.

Refrain

Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,
Bound to Him eternally by love's strong cord,
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
Standing on the promises of God.

Refrain

Standing on the promises I cannot fall,
List'ning every moment to the Spirit's call,
Resting in my Savior as my all in all,
Standing on the promises of God.

Refrain

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Just A Closer Walk With Thee

Patsy Cline, 1965

I am weak but thou art strong
Jesus keep me from all wrong
I'll be satisfied as long
As I walk, let me walk close to thee

Just a closer walk with thee
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
Daily walking close to thee
Let it be, dear lord, let it be

When my feeble life is o'er
Time for me shall be no more
Guide me gently, safely o'er
To thy kingdom's shore, to thy shore

Just a closer walk with thee
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
Daily walking close to thee
Let it be, dear lord, let it be
When life's sun sinks in the west
Lord, may I have done my best
May I find sweet peace and rest
In that happy home of the blessed

Just a closer walk with thee
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
Daily walking close to thee
Let it be, dear lord, let it be

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Sweet Sweet Spirit

Doris Akers

There's a sweet sweet Spirit in this place
And I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord
There are sweet expressions on each face
And I know they feel the presence of the Lord

Chorus:

Sweet Holy Spirit Sweet heavenly Dove
Stay right here with us filling us with Your love
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived
When we shall leave this place

Repeat Chorus

There are blessings you cannot receive
Till you know Him in His fullness and believe
You're the one to profit when you say
I am going to walk with Jesus all the way

Repeat Chorus

If you say He saved you from your sin
Now You're weak you're bound and cannot enter in
You can make it right if you will yield
You'll enjoy the Holy Spirit that we feel

Repeat Chorus

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Wonderful Peace

Words: W.E. Cornell

Music: W.G. Cooper

Far away in the depths of my spirit tonight
Rolls a melody sweeter than psalm;
In celestial-like strains it unceasingly falls
O'er my soul like an infinite calm.

Refrain:

Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Coming down from the Father above!
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray
In fathomless billows of love!

I am resting tonight in this wonderful peace,
Resting sweetly in Jesus' control;
For I'm kept from all danger by night and by day,
And His glory is flooding my soul!

Refrain

And I think when I rise to that city of peace,
Where the Author of peace I shall see,
That one strain of the song which the ransomed will sing
In that heavenly kingdom will be.

Refrain

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There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains: Lose all their guilty stains,
Lose all their guilty stains;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its pow'r,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are safe, to sin no more: Are safe, to sin no more,
Are safe, to sin no more;
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are safe, to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die: And shall be till I die,
And shall be till I die;
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

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Thank You Lord

Bessie Sykes | Seth Sykes

Thank You Lord for saving my soul
Thank You Lord for making me whole
Thank You Lord for giving to me
Thy great salvation so rich and free
Thank You Lord for saving my soul
Thank You Lord for making me whole
Thank You Lord for giving to me
Thy great salvation so rich and free

'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

Words: Louisa MR Stead

Music: William J. Kirkpatrick

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His Word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
And to know, "Thus saith the Lord!"

Refrain:

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er;
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
Oh, for grace to trust Him more!

Oh, how sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to trust His cleansing blood;
And in simple faith to plunge me'
Neath the healing, cleansing flood!

Refrain

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just from sin and self to cease;
Just from Jesus simply taking
Life and rest, and joy and peace.

Refrain

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.

Refrain

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What A Gathering

John H. Kurzenknabe

At the sounding of the trumpet,
When the saints are gathered home,
We will greet each other by the crystal sea,
With the friends and all the loved ones
There awaiting us to come,

Refrain:

What a gath'ring of the faithful that will be!
What a gath'ring, gath'ring,
At the sounding of the glorious jubilee!
What a gath'ring, gath'ring,
What a gath'ring of the faithful that will be!

When the angel of the Lord proclaims
That time shall be no more,
We shall gather, and the saved and ransomed see;
Then to meet again together,
On the bright celestial shore,

Refrain

At the great and final judgment,
When the hidden comes to light,
When the Lord in all His glory we shall see;
At the bidding of our Savior,
Come, ye blessed, to My right,

Refrain

When the golden harps are sounding
And the angel bands proclaim
In triumphant strains the glorious jubilee,
Then to meet and join to sing the song
Of Moses and the Lamb

Refrain

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Were You There?

African American Spiritual

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
Tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
Tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
Tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
Tremble, tremble.

Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

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For The Joy

For the joy set before Him
For the joy He endured the pain
For the joy He suffered the shame
And He would do it all again
He'd do it all again
He'd do it all again
For the joy

Blessed Assurance

Fanny J. Crosby

Blessed Assurance
Jesus is mine
O what a foretaste of glory divine
Heir of salvation, purchased of God
Born of His Spirit, washed in His Blood

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long
This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long

Refrain

Perfect submission, perfect delight
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love

Refrain

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Praise the Name of Jesus

Praise the name of Jesus,
Praise the name of Jesus.
He's my Rock, He's my Fortress,
He's my Deliverer.
In Him shall I trust.
Praise the name of Jesus.

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Hosanna!

Wesley A. Ross

Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

The people spread out their coats on the way,
They cut down the branches from the trees nearby,
They shouted for joy to their God,
“The Son of David is coming today!”

(repeat)

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Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Thank you Jesus, Thank you Jesus,
Thank you Jesus, Thank you Jesus
Thank you Jesus, Thank you Jesus,
Thank you Jesus, Thank you Jesus

Lord we love You, Lord we love You,
Lord we love You, Lord we love You
Lord we love You, Lord we love You,
Lord we love You, Lord we love You

Lord we praise You, Lord we praise You,
Lord we praise You, Lord we praise You
Lord we praise You, Lord we praise You,
Lord we praise You, Lord we praise You

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Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho

Colin Buchanan

Refrain:

Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
Jericho Jericho
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
And the walls came a-tumbling down
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
Jericho Jericho
Joshua fought the battle of Jericho
And the walls came a-tumbling down
And the walls came a-tumbling down

You may talk about your men of Gideon
You may talk about your men of Saul
But there's none like good old Joshua
At the battle of Jericho

Refrain

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It Took A Miracle

John W. Peterson

It took a miracle to put the stars in place;
It took a miracle to hang the world in space.
But when he saved my soul,
Cleansed and made me whole,
It took a miracle of love and grace.

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Blest Be the Tie That Binds

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Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above

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God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again

Jeremiah E. Rankin

God be with you 'til we meet again
By His counsel guide, uphold you
With His sheep securely fold you
God be with you 'til we meet again

God be with you 'til we meet again
'Neath His wings protecting, hide you
Daily manna still provide you
God be with you 'til we meet again

God be with you 'til we meet again
If life's perils should confound you
God will put His arms around you
God be with you 'til we meet again

Refrain:

'Til we meet, 'til we meet
'Til we meet at Jesus' feet
'Til we meet, 'til we meet
God be with us
'Til we meet again

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Berkshire Institute
for Christian Studies

Daily Devotionals

BIBLE LANDS *Travel Guide*

"Ask for the ancient paths; ask where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16

Note: Daily Devotionals are labeled to correspond to the days as numbered on the itinerary (see "2023 Itinerary" on page 124).

Day 3

In The Spotlight: *Mt. Carmel ("Vineyard of God")*

Note: In the Ugaritic Baal Myth the deities 'Ilu and 'Anatu mourn the death of the divine Baal by scraping their skin with sharp stones and cutting their faces with razors. In the myth, Baal comes back to life. In this story, the Canaanites were reenacting the mourning that had preceded Baal's resurrection.

Scripture: *1 Kings 18:16-46*

Reflection Questions:

1. What was the occasion for the gathering on Mt. Carmel?
2. What were the odds (Prophets of Baal/Asherah vs. Prophets of Yahweh)?
3. What was Elijah's challenge to the people in vs. 21?
4. Note Elijah's prayer in vs. 37. What did he pray that the people would understand?
5. Reflect on times that you have strayed from God. Thank Him that He has drawn you back. Spend some time in worship of the True God.

THOUGHTS:

Day 4

In The Spotlight: *Capernaum (“Village of Nahum”)*

Note: After being rejected in His home town of Nazareth, Jesus made Capernaum His center of ministry. It was here that Jesus performed many miracles, including the healing of the Centurion’s servant (Matt. 8), a paralytic man (Mark 2), Peter’s mother-in-law (Matt. 8), and the nobleman’s son (John 4).

Scripture: *John 6:25-69*

Reflection Questions:

1. Why did the crowds follow Jesus to Capernaum?
2. What does Jesus declare about Himself in the synagogue?
3. Read vs. 66. Why did many of Jesus’ disciples leave? Read Peter’s response in vs. 68 to Jesus’ question. Why did Peter say this?
4. Reflect on times in your own life when God did not meet your personal expectations. Because Peter had spent so much time with Jesus, he knew that He was the real deal. Peter’s response indicated that he knew too much; he was in too deep. There was no other option for him except Jesus. Is that true for you?

THOUGHTS:

Day 5

In The Spotlight: *Caesarea Philippi* (“Caesar’s City of Philippi”)

Note: In NT times the city was known as Paneas (Banias), although Philip the tetrarch renamed the city Caesarea Philippi in honor of Emperor Augustus Caesar. As a pagan center of worship, the nature-god Pan was venerated here. At the Grotto of Pan, also known as the “Gates of Hades,” human sacrifices were thrown into the mouth of the cave as an offering to Pan.

Scripture: *Matthew 16:13-20*

Reflection Questions:

1. What was the question posed by Jesus? What was the reply?
2. What was Peter’s reply to the second question? Why was this significant? Who does Jesus say revealed this truth to Peter?
3. What does it mean that the gates of Hades will not overcome the Church?
4. How would you have answered Jesus’ question? Who is Jesus to you?

THOUGHTS:

Day 6

In The Spotlight: Nazareth (“Watchtower”)

Note: While Nazareth means “watchtower,” there are some who believe that the name also carries a double meaning (*netzer* = shoot, branch). Isaiah 11:1 predicts that the Messiah would be a shoot (*netzer*) from the stump of Jesse. Jesus, then, is both a Nazarene (from Nazareth) and a *netzer* from the lineage of David.

Scripture: *Luke 1:26-38*

Reflection Questions:

1. Why was Mary “greatly troubled” at the angel’s words?
2. Why do you suppose Mary found favor with God?
3. What were the implications of Mary becoming pregnant? In her own life? With Joseph? With her family? With her neighbors?
4. Verse 37 says, “*For nothing is impossible with God.*” What are problems/obstacles in your life that seem impossible?
5. Note Mary’s response of faith in vs. 38. What is it that you need to respond to God by saying, “*May it be to me as you have said*”?

THOUGHTS:

Day 7

In The Spotlight: *Ein Harod* (“Spring of Terror”) also known as *Gideon’s Fountain*

Note: *Ein Harod*, located at the base of Mt. Gilboa, was the place where Gideon chose his 300 men to fight the Midianites from an initial force of 32,000.

Scripture: *Judges 7:1-8*

Reflection Questions:

1. God instructs Gideon to let anyone go home who is afraid (v. 3). What would you have done? Would you have been among the 22,000 who left? What excuses would you have used?
2. Why do you suppose God chose those who drank the water in a certain way?
3. Why did God want to reduce the fighting force from 32,000 to 300?
4. Have you ever doubted that God’s ways were best? Think about a situation you are currently facing and commit to trusting the outcome to the Lord.

THOUGHTS:

Day 8

In The Spotlight: *Shechem (“Shoulder”)*

Note: In the OT, Shechem was the place where God revealed to Abraham that He would give him the land of Canaan as an inheritance. Because of this promise, Abraham built the first altar to the Lord here (Gen. 12). Shechem is also the site of the famous “Curses and Blessings Covenant” recited at Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim (Joshua 8). In the NT, Jesus encounters the woman at Jacob’s well here.

Scripture: *John 4:1-42*

Reflection Questions:

1. Who are the Samaritans? Why did the Jews avoid them?
2. Why did Jesus ask the woman to call her husband? What did it reveal about Jesus and about the woman?
3. What is the “living water” that Jesus refers to? How is it acquired?
4. Verse 24 says, *“God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth?”* What does this mean? What does this mean for the church? For you?

THOUGHTS:

Day 9

In The Spotlight: Negev (“Dry, Parched”)

Note: Abraham is an example of the Bedouin lifestyle. In Arabic, the name Bedouin means, “*desert dweller.*” As such, Abraham shared much of the same lifestyle with his modern day counterparts. Abraham would have traveled nomadically with his family, living in tents and tending his livestock.

Scripture: *Genesis 20*

Reflection Questions:

1. Why did Abraham say Sarah was his sister?
2. What did God prevent King Abimelech from doing?
3. What was Abraham’s prayer on behalf of Abimelech?
4. Abraham said of the area that he was living, “*There is no fear of God in this place.*” In what ways is this true of our own country today?
5. Try to imagine what life must have been like for Abraham and his family living as Bedouins. What was it like to live in a tent? To tend livestock? To search for water? To live off the land?

THOUGHTS:

Day 10

In The Spotlight: *Wadi Qelt (Parable of the Good Samaritan)*

Note: When pilgrims came to Jerusalem, a common route from Jericho to the Holy City was via the Wadi Qelt. Because of the many places to hide along the road, it was notorious for bandits who would rob unsuspecting travelers on their 17 mile journey to Jerusalem.

Scripture: *Luke 10:25-37*

Reflection Questions:

1. What is a parable?
2. Why does Jesus tell this story? What question does He answer by it?
3. Why were Priests and Levites likely walking this road? Why didn't they attend to the injured man?
5. Jews viewed Samaritans as "half-breeds," both physically and spiritually. Are there people who you feel do not deserve the Gospel? Who is your neighbor?
6. How does Jesus define love for God?

THOUGHTS:

Day 11

In The Spotlight: *Bethlehem ("House of Bread")*

Note: *Migdal Edar* is mentioned in Micah 4:8 as the place where the Messiah would be born. It means, "tower of the flock." Migdal Edar was located in the Shepherd's Fields of Bethlehem. The sheep raised here were destined for sacrifice in the Temple of Jerusalem, some six miles away. When a lamb was birthed, the shepherd would take and wrap it in swaddling cloths to keep it from harming its limbs. After wrapping the baby lamb, the shepherd would lay it in a manger until the newborn calmed down.

Scripture: *Luke 2:1-7*

Reflection Questions:

1. Bethlehem means, "*House of Bread.*" In what sense was Jesus the Bread of Life?
2. Read Luke 2:12. Why do you think that it would be a sign to the shepherds to find Jesus wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger?
3. In what ways was Jesus the perfect sacrificial lamb?
4. Take a moment and ponder the mystery of the Christ-child lying in the manger.

THOUGHTS:

Day 12

In The Spotlight: *Pool of Siloam ("Sent")*

Note: Siloam was a storage pool and water tunnel that provided water for the residents of Jerusalem. Under the reign of King Hezekiah, the tunnel was dug so that water could be brought into the city from the Gihon Spring to evade the impending siege by the Assyrians (2 Kings 20:20).

Scripture: *John 9*

Reflection Questions:

1. What was the question the disciples asked Jesus concerning the blind man? What was His answer?
2. Why do you think Jesus spit on the ground and put mud on the man's eyes rather than just saying the word?
3. Jesus and His disciples encountered the blind man on the temple mount but instructed him to walk all the way to the Pool of Siloam to be healed. Why?
4. When questioned about Jesus, the healed man said, "*...one thing I know, I once was blind but now I see.*" Take a minute and reflect on your own testimony of God touching your life.

THOUGHTS:

Day 13

In The Spotlight: *St. Peter in Gallicantu (“Peter and the Rooster’s Song”)*

Note: The arrest of Jesus is recorded in all four of the Gospels. Believed to be the house of the High Priest Caiaphas, Jesus was detained here overnight after Peter denied he knew his Lord three times. At the final denial, the rooster crowed, and Peter wept bitterly.

Scripture: *Luke 22:54-62*

Reflection Questions:

1. Verse 54 records that *“Peter followed at a distance.”* Are there times when you follow Christ at a distance?
2. Peter’s first denial came at the accusation of a servant girl. Read Luke 22:33-34. What did Peter declare earlier?
3. How do you think Peter felt having made such a bold declaration? Can you relate to letting Jesus down after you have made promises to Him?
4. Re-read verse 61. After the rooster crowed, Jesus looked straight at Peter. What kind of look do you suppose it was?

THOUGHTS:

Day 14

In The Spotlight: *Hebron ("Alliance")*

Note: Hebron is significant throughout biblical history. It was the location of the Cave of Machpelah where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah are buried (Gen. 23:9). During the Period of the Conquest, the 12 spies viewed Hebron on their mission to explore the Promised Land (Num. 13:22). Later it is the location of the first seven years of King David's reign (2 Sam. 2:11) before his capital was moved to Jerusalem.

Scripture: *Genesis 18:1-15*

Reflection Questions:

1. Verse 1 says that God appeared to Abraham. Verse 2 says that three men were standing nearby? How do you explain this?
2. Verses 3-8 demonstrate Near Eastern hospitality. Do you think Abraham knew this was God visiting him or just ordinary strangers?
3. This passage does not tell us how Abraham responded to the news. What do you suppose was going through his mind?
4. Note Sarah's response to the news that she will give birth in her old age. How would you have reacted?

THOUGHTS:

MY NOTES



Berkshire Institute
for Christian Studies

2023
Itinerary
and
Travelers

BIBLE LANDS
Travel Guide

"Ask for the ancient paths; ask where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 6:16

2023 Itinerary

DAY 01 (March 15): BEGINNING OF OUR TOUR. Depart Boston for Tel Aviv, Israel.

DAY 02 (March 16): INTO THE LAND OF THE BIBLE – Arrive in Tel Aviv where you will be met at the airport for transfer to your hotel. Dinner and overnight in Netanya.

DAY 03 (March 17): TO SEA OF GALILEE - Regions: Coast of Sharon. Jezreel Valley, Sea of Galilee. Depart for nearby Caesarea Maritima. In Acts 10 read about Peter's encounter with the god-fearer Cornelius. Paul also stood here before Festus and Felix. View the Pontius Pilate Stone. Continue to Herod's summer home, the stadium, the harbor, and the Roman aqueduct. Depart for Muhraqa (Mt. Carmel) to consider Elijah's encounter with the prophets of Baal. Lunch is included at a nearby Druze village. Descend Mt. Carmel for the Jezreel Valley and the sites of Megiddo. This is the site of the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:16). Walk to the overview of the Canaanite circular bama (altar). Explore the ruins and descend into the water tunnel. Cross the Jezreel Valley and proceed to your lodging for the next five nights at Tiberias. TIBERIAS: Leonardo Club Hotel

DAY 04 (March 18): SEA CIRCLE TRIP - Region: Sea of Galilee. Circle the sea visiting sites of Jesus' ministry. Depart Kursi ("demons into the swine") and Bethsaida (home of Peter, Philip, Andrew). Visit the Mt. of Beatitudes, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7). Optional is a foot-descent to the seaside of Tabgha. Visit Capernaum, the center for Jesus' Galilean ministry. Board the Jesus Boat, a double-scale replica of a Roman fishing boat, to sail the sea and enjoy some of the inspirational Bible geography references. Lunch included at local restaurant.

DAY 05 (March 19): UPPER JORDAN - Regions: Upper Jordan, Sea of Galilee. Depart on the ancient Via Maris road to Chorazin (one of 3 cities cursed by Jesus), dwellings carved by volcanic basalt. Continue to Hazor (ancient crossroads, largest Canaanite city) for a brief stop. Proceed to Tell Dan. Walk into the Nature Preserve beside the roaring Dan River (Ps. 42) to Tell Dan (biblical Laish). View the High Place of Jeroboam. After a self-host lunch, proceed to Banias (Caesarea Philippi) to consider Peter's confession of Jesus as Christ. Lunch is provided. Time permitting, visit the

palace of Agrippa II. Return via Quneitra to view the Syrian border and continue to Tiberias. On the return trip to Tiberias, travel the Aphek Plateau for an unobstructed view of the Sea of Galilee from Kfar Haruv.

DAY 06 (March 20): NAZARETH, MT. PRECIPICE - Region: Sea of Galilee.

Return to the Jezreel Valley to visit the hometown of Jesus, Nazareth. Visit the Nazareth Village to explore the lifestyles of Jesus' lifetime. Following orientation to the village, a complimentary lunch will be served. Ascend to Nazareth for a Mt. Precipice ridge view of Mt. Tabor and the Jezreel Valley. Visit Mary's Well and the Church of St. Gabriel, as well as the Nazareth Synagogue. Walk to the Basilica of the Annunciation to view an archeological museum and excavations. Depart Nazareth by way of Cana to consider the first recorded miracle of Jesus (John 2). Return to Tiberias.

DAY 07 (March 21): MT ARBEL, TEL BETH-SHEAN - Regions: Lower Galilee, Sea of Galilee.

Depart for Mt. Arbel for a dramatic overview of Jesus' public ministry on the north shores of the Sea of Galilee. Motor to the Valley of the Winds below the Arbel. Here one may see the untouched hills and valley as a reminder of what it was like in the days of Jesus. Continue to the seaside ruins of Magdala for the archaeology of a 1st century synagogue. After lunch visit Ma'ayun Harod (Gideon) and descend into the Jordan Valley to Tel Beth Shean. Approach a Roman bridge to ascend the Tel for the presentation of the death of Saul, Israel's first king. Descend to the reconstruction of Scythopolis, the leading city of the Greco-Roman Decapolis. Return to Tiberias. Lunch is included.

DAY 08 (March 22): SAMARIA, DEAD SEA - Regions: Samaria, Jordan Valley, Dead Sea.

Depart for Dothan and Samaria (royal city of the Northern Kingdom) and Sebaste (King Herod). Lunch is included. Continue to Nablus for Tel Balata and nearby Jacob's Well. Continue to the site of Shiloh to consider the tabernacle of Joshua 18:1. Continue to Bethabara (Bethany beyond Jordan) for the excellent Israeli site of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. Return to Jericho to consider the findings of Dr. Bryant Wood at Jericho's wall. Depart for an oasis-like hotel at the Dead Sea for lodging. DEAD SEA: David Dead Sea Resort

DAY 09 (March 23): BEDOUIN TENT & LUNCH - Region: Arabah. Visit Tel Arad and the ancient temple sites on the edge of the Syro-African rift. The north-south stretch of land from the tip of the Dead Sea to the Red Sea is

almost 100 miles. Although not a desirable route for ancient caravans, the nomadic Bedouins found subsistence. Ride camels into the Arabah sands. The journey into Makhtesh Ramon is a window of explanations about the Bedouin ways, desert, and the famous spice route. The complimentary lunch will be in a traditional Bedouin tent, and includes traditional Bedouin service and stories. Some Bible scholars note that until one visits the wilderness the land of the Bible has not been visited, since 70% of Bible narratives involve the wilderness. Return to the Dead Sea.

DAY 10: (March 24) MASADA, TO JERUSALEM - Regions: Dead Sea, Judean Wilderness. Depart for the Masada fortress and ascend via the tram. Explore the legendary last stand of the Jewish Zealots against the forces of Rome. Explore the dig which includes the Jewish synagogue and the Roman assault ramp. Descend to the Dead Sea and Ein Gedi (David and Saul) and walk the path to the waterfall. Visit Qumran to view the caves. En route to Jerusalem, detour on a Roman Road to the Wadi Qelt (reference to the Parable of the Good Samaritan). From the road, survey the cliffside St. George's Monastery. Return to the highway to visit Lazarus' Tomb in Bethany. Proceed to Jerusalem's Mt. Scopus for a first view of the Old City and an ancient Genesis welcome. Lodging is in Jerusalem. JERUSALEM: Ambassador Hotel

DAY 11 (March 25): JERUSALEM, BETHLEHEM - Regions: Jerusalem, Judean Hills. Visit the Mt. of Olives for orientation to Jerusalem's Old City (Ps. 122). Walk on the traditional Palm Sunday route past the Dominus Flevit Church and continue to the Garden of Gethsemane. Proceed to the Dung Gate and ascend the Temple Mount to walk past the Al-Aksa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Continue to the St. Stephen's Gate to visit St. Anne's Crusader Church and the Pool of Bethesda. Walk on the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Depart for the Judean wilderness, the Herodion (Herod's grave) and to view Shepherds' Fields. Continue to Bethlehem's Manger Square and the Church of the Nativity. Visit an olive wood shop before departure for Jerusalem.

DAY 12 (March 26): JUDAEAN SHEPHELAH, ARABAH - Region: Judean Shephelah, Arabah. Descend Jerusalem on the Beth-horon Road into the Aijalon Valley (the sun stood still). Pass Nahal Sorek (Delilah) and arrive Beth-shemesh (Samson, Ark of the Covenant). Continue to the Valley of Elah. Visit Khirbet Qeiyafa (time permitting) to consider an early planned

fortified city from the time of David. Ascend Azekah and reference the battle geography of David and Goliath. Depart for Hebron (conditions permitting) to view the extraordinary Herodian building, a classic structure illustrating the stone dressing of Herod the Great, the ancient master builder. Return to Jerusalem.

DAY 13 (March 27): JERUSALEM SIGHTSEEING - Proceed to the Dung Gate to see the joyful ancient tradition of Bar Mitzvahs this morning at the Western Wall. Proceed to the Ophel Ridge to walk on the Herodian pavement, view and touch the Temple foundation, and sit on the Temple steps from Jesus' time, the one place where we know Jesus walked and taught (Lk. 19-21). Proceed to the nearby Hezekiah's Tunnel, (bring old shoes for the knee-deep water) and walk to the Pool of Siloam (Jn. 9). Visit the lower Pool of Siloam. Explore the newly opened Pilgrim's Road. Walking through the Western Wall Tunnel is subject to time confirmation.

DAY 14 (March 28): JERUSALEM - Visit the Jerusalem Garden Tomb. There will be time for personal reflection. Proceed to the Damascus Gate and walk through the shuq (old city) to the Western Wall. Continue to the eastern slope of Mt. Zion for the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantua. Ascend the Mt. Zion entry into the Old City to visit the Upper Room. Walk to the Cardo and Hezekiah's Broad Wall. Enter the Wohl Museum to view the upper Jerusalem of Jesus' time. Motor to the Israel Museum to view the biblical archaeology and the 1/50 model of Jerusalem in the Herodian period. Nearby is the Shrine of the Book.

DAY 15 (March 29): TEL AVIV/USA – Transfer to Tel Aviv Airport for your return flight home with luggage packed with keepsakes and your heart full of memories!

2023 Travelers

Leaders

Mike Tuttle, MA
Steve Ross, NY
Andy Rice, MA

BICS Students

Class of 2023

Lilly Alves, MA
Slade Czaja, MD
Ethan D'Amato, TX
Emma Dargi, MA
Ciprian Droma, Romania
Joshua Hutchins, ME
Kiersten Marra, NY
Owen Rushing, NH
Amanda Swicker, MA

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Allison Johansen, NH
Abijah Levi, OK
Jaime Merrill, ME
Tristyn Thorpe, ME

Guests

Amy Alves, MA
Judy Andersen, MA
Roy Andersen, MA
Dave Aseltine, NH
Sally Aseltine, NH
Alice Bassen, MA
Jean Beal, MA
Merle Beal, MA
Bob Bockmann, MA
Robin Buchanan, NC
Wayne Casey, FL
Garry Finkell, NY
Doug Foss, MA
Russell Giasson, MA
Michele Giasson, MA
Hamilton Hadden, ME
Hilary Hadden, ME
Kristin MacKay, MA
Ann Martin, MA
Dave Pelletier, ME
Jackie Pelletier, ME
Bill Pigott, MA
Lynn Thorpe, ME
Sandi Tuttle, MA