

**NOTES REGARDING
HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS SITES**

ISRAEL

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GENERAL

- Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho, Shechem, Nazareth, Galilee, and Capernaum are names of the past.
- These are places where the great Biblical leaders lived and worked.
- They are places of cobbled streets, narrow alleys, and of exciting, fascinating people.
- This is the Promised Land, the land of the Bible....Israel.
- Here is where the past is honoured with the present.
- Israel is the strategic centre of the earth geographically, racially, culturally and religiously.
- This is why God placed His people there.
- That is why Jesus was born there.
- It is small in size and covers only an area of just over 36,000 sq km (14,000 sq miles)
- Yet this land has played a tremendous role in human history.
- It is the crossroads of the world – where East meets West, and North meets South.
- Commerce and travel passed this strategic area and thereby the influence of Christianity spread.
- It is situated on the “blue waters of the Mediterranean” which simply means “the sea in the heart of the earth”.
- Here these progenital races of people blend.
- The Jews call it their homeland; the Mohammedans call it their Mecca; and the Christians call it their Holy Land.
- Within the borders of this small land lie some of the ruins of the world’s most ancient civilisations.

VISAS

- Australian and New Zealand passport holders currently receive an entry visa for Israel free of charge, on entry. (Always double-check with the Embassy to see that conditions have not changed).
- Unless specially requested to do so, Israeli authorities will not stamp your passport.
- They will stamp a separate sheet of paper.
- This is to avoid trouble when entering Arab Middle-East countries hostile to Israel’s presence in the Middle East.

- Your passport must be valid for at least six months after you plan to leave Israel.

CURRENCY

- Israeli currency is Shekels (sometimes called NIS – New Israeli Shekels) and Agorot
- 100 Agorot = 1 Shekel
- Banknotes are available in 200, 100, 50 and 20 Shekels.
- Coins are available as 10 shekels, 5 shekels, 1 shekel, 50 Agorot, 10 Agorot.

LANGUAGE

- The official languages in Israel are Hebrew (most widely spoken) and Arabic.
- However most Israelis can speak or understand English.

ARRIVING AND DEPARTING

- There are just four ways that most people will enter or leave Israel.
- 1) By air through Ben Gurion International Airport which is southeast of Tel Aviv
- 2) By bus through the southern route into Egypt
- 3) By bus through the eastern route into Jordan via the Allenby Bridge
- 4) By ferry from Haifa to or from Cyprus, Greece and Italy.

- Security is perhaps the tightest at Ben Gurion Airport than at any airport in the world.
- Be prepared to arrive over three hours before the flight.
- Every intending passenger is 'grilled' or questioned as to the reason for their visit etc
- Make sure that you have packed your own bag and it has been in your possession before checking in.

- Ben Gurion Airport is about one hour's drive from Jerusalem.
- There are buses and also service taxis or "sheroot" – shared taxis.
- Both buses and shared taxis operate continually between the airport and Jerusalem.
- Your hotel can arrange for these services – of you can phone.

ACCOMMODATION

- **Advent House.** There are guestrooms available at the Adventist Headquarters. No meals are provided and it is necessary to make reservations well in advance.
- **YMCA.** There are two YMCA places to stay. In the main part of Jerusalem near Advent House is the YMCA with its tall tower is convenient.
- **YMCA East.** Hotel Capitolina is in Derech Shechem not far from the Jerusalem Centre in Jerusalem East. It is not far from the Damascus Gate.
- **Astoria Hotel.** The Astoria Hotel is reasonably priced and very clean. Meals are provided. It is located in the Kidron Valley on the Mount of Olives Road and is within easy walking distance of the Old City. Address: Astoria Hotel Mount of Olives Road, P.O. Box 19348 Jerusalem Phone 28 4965.
- **Commodore Hotel.** Another reasonably priced hotel on the Mount of Olives Road, just 200 m from the Astoria. Commodore Hotel, Mount of Olives Road, Jerusalem.

CAR RENTAL

- Hertz Rent-a-Car and other car rental companies are situated near the YMCA and the Advent House in Melech David Road.
- You will need your current driver's licence and credit card with you.

JERUSALEM

- The walled city of Jerusalem lies between two main valleys. The Kidron is on its eastern side and the Hinnom on the western and southern sides. The Kidron Valley separates the city from the Mount of Olives.
- The origins of Jerusalem are unknown, but excavations have found evidence showing its existence during the twelfth Egyptian dynasty (19th and 18th centuries BC).
- During the Old Testament period, it is first mentioned as Salem (Genesis 14:18) with Melchisedec a priest of the most high God as the ruler.
- During the time of King Iknaton of Egypt, a king by the name of Abdu-Heba sat on the throne of Jerusalem, His name means, 'Servant of the Hittite Goddess, Heba'.
- It is evident that the early population of Jerusalem included Hittites and Amorites. This is reflected in the words of Ezekiel 16:3,45.

MUSEUMS

- The Rockefeller Museum opened in 1938. It has been the archaeology museum but after Israel became a divided city the Rockefeller Museum was located in East Jerusalem.
- Eventually Israel developed a museum in the western part of the city now called the Israel Museum. Both of these museums have important finds that shed light on the Bible.
- A third museum has been built to house the finds from Qumran. The Shrine of the Book museum is also a must-visit place.

The Rockefeller Museum

- Is situated in East Jerusalem on Sultan Suleyman Street to the east of Herod's Gate and near the corner of the wall called Stork's Tower.
- Today it is a branch of the Israeli Museum – but is still worth a good visit.
- Almost everything on display archaeologists have unearthed since 1948.
- From a temple in Arad in the southern desert west of the Dead Sea are two stone altars that were in use from the time of Solomon to Hezekiah, The worship area has been reconstructed with the original stone materials. It was excavated by Yohanan Aharoni.
- A decorated window balustrade is here from a royal palace on the road to Bethel. It was also excavated by Aharoni.
- Some contents of temples at Hazor are here. Yadin excavated there and a seated statue, several standing stones called masseboth, an altar and other cult paraphernalia shows what objects a pagan temple in Old Testament contained.
- There are several inscriptions including the Mesad Hashaviahu Letter (also called the Yabneh-Yam Letter) of the seventh century BC in which a worker complains to the governor that his foreman had taken his coat from him in punishment for having been lazy, when in fact, he had rested on the Sabbath after having completed his assigned task.
- Another inscription has been cut from a tomb wall in Lackish, where the mourner expressed faith in "Yahweh, the god of the whole earth, the god of Jerusalem", even though Yahweh had saved Jerusalem but allowed Lackish to be captured by the Assyrian king.
- The Uzziah Plaque is a marble plaque with an inscription that says that the bones of Uzziah, king of Judah, have been moved to a new place, and the reader is asked not

to disturb them. The inscription dates to the 1st century AD and shows that the tombs of the kings of Judah were evidently still known then. Peter's statement in Acts 2:29 attests to the same fact.

- A stone, called The Pilate Inscription was discovered in the theatre at Caesarea, and contains a dedicatory inscription of "Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judah". Apart from the Bible and the writings of Josephus, this stone is the only archaeological evidence from the first century AD that Pilate was indeed governor of Palestine.
- There are also three fragments of a stone inscription, found at Caesarea, which list the courses of priests serving in the Jerusalem temple, and describe Nazareth as the home town of one of the 24 priestly courses. This find is of utmost importance as the first extra-Biblical evidence for the existence of Christ's hometown.

The Israeli Museum

- Was built in 1965 overlooking West Jerusalem.
- The Israeli Museum has many pieces of art, mosaics, paintings, and other exhibits.
- A mosaic from Beth Shean dating from the 6th century BC synagogue floor, shows the Ark of the Covenant etc.
- Another mosaic from the synagogue at Gaza dates from the same age as that of Beth Shean and shows David playing the lyre.
- There is an extensive collection of Jewish worship and synagogues as well as Jewish art.
- An extensive archaeological section is arranged chronologically. A few of the important items are listed below.
- A most interesting item is the silver amulet which has the earliest known fragment of the Biblical text of the priestly benediction.
- Another item of interest is the ivory pomegranate with a Hebrew inscription – the only known item relating to worship in Solomon's temple

The Shrine of the Book

- This is part of the Israeli Museum and its shape is like a huge top of a jar in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. It has been described as an upside down saucer.
- The Qumran community hid their precious manuscripts in such jars in the caves near the Dead Sea in 69 AD as the Roman Army approached.
- The temperature and humidity are strictly controlled in the Shrine of the Book.
- Inside the building the interior is made to be like the caves in which the scrolls were found.
- There are display cases built into the side walls of the long hall leading from the entrance to the rotunda and has exhibits such as the letters of Bar Kokhba and other non-Biblical documents, which also came from the caves as well as from the Jewish mountain fortress of Masada.
- There are two floors of exhibits with the better-preserved Bible Scrolls etc.
- The Commentary on Habakkuk from Cave One is on display.
- However the 7.5 m (24 ft) scroll of Isaiah is stored in a dark, airtight container because of deterioration and a photographically produced copy is on display.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

- The Mount of Olives - or Olivet – is the ridge east of Jerusalem, just across the Kidron Valley.

- The Mount of Olives belongs to one of the highest mountains in Palestine, though it is only 60 m (200 ft) higher than the Jerusalem temple area.
- There are three principal summits that form this mountainous ridge. In the north is Mount Scopus on which the Roman General Titus pitched his camp for his final assault on Jerusalem in 70 AD. In the centre of the ridge is the Mount of Olives. Then to the south is the Mount of Offense.
- During Jesus' visits to Jerusalem He frequently spent the night on the Mount of Olives, probably in Bethany. (Luke 21:37; 22:39). He began His celebrated entry into Jerusalem from it (Luke 19:37,38). While on this mountain He gave His great sermon on His Second Coming and the end of the world (Matthew 24:3).

The Chapel of Ascension

- The top of the Mount of Olives is considered to be the site of the Ascension of Jesus.
- It is said that Jesus with His disciples walked a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem and from there He ascended to heaven.
- The Jews taught that a Sabbath day's journey was about 1000 yards (920 m).
- They had measured one thousand yards from Jerusalem and marked that spot as the place of the Ascension.
- A Byzantine church was built on the site in the fourth century and was destroyed by the Persians in 614 AD.
- The Crusaders built another church on the site in the twelfth century.
- The present small chapel is an edifice built by the Crusaders in the court of their church to contain the rock with the legendary footprint of Christ which He made when He ascended to heaven.
- The Moslems, who still occupy this site, built a wall around and added the present dome.
- Scripture plainly says that Jesus led His followers out as far as Bethany and there He was parted from them. Bethany is over the Mount of Olives (Luke 24:50,51).

The Church of Pater Noster

- This church is built on the traditional site where Jesus taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer.
- It is also said to be the site where Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and revealed His Second Coming.
- Constantine was the first to build a church on this site.
- This church was destroyed by the Persians in 614 AD and rebuilt in the twelfth century by the Crusaders.
- With the defeat of the Crusaders it was destroyed and the site occupied by the Moslems.
- In the year 1868 Princess Aurelia de Bossi de la Tour D'Auvergne bought the site and donated it to France. In 1875 she built a convent for the order of the Carmelite nuns.
- Inside the church and on the walls of the cloister, the Lord's Prayer is written in 62 languages. The princess is buried in the cloister.

Gethsemane

- Gethsemane in Aramaic means 'oil press'.

- It is found on the lower western slope of the Mount of Olives where Jesus prayed in agony just before He was arrested there.
- You approach this garden by leaving Jerusalem through Saint Stephen's Gate and crossing the Kidron Valley.
- The olive trees found there are very old, but they do not go back to the time of Jesus' ministry, for Titus had all the trees around Jerusalem cut down during the siege of 70 AD. However as Pliny says, "The olive tree does not die." Therefore the present trees could be the shoots of those under which Jesus prayed the night of His agony.
- Opposite the walk into the Church of All Nations and over the narrow road that winds up to the Mount of Olives is another garden behind the fence. Sometimes the security at the entrance to the Church of All Nations will unlock the gate and allow visitors into this more secluded garden. In there is a bronze statue of Jesus lying on the ground and looking up to heaven pleading with His Father.

The Tomb of the Virgin

- Is situated opposite and across the road from the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Tradition says that the disciples placed the Virgin Mary here in this tomb.
- The crypt dates to the twelfth century although there was a tomb here from the first century.
- Mary's parent's traditional tombs are also in the crypt – those of St. Joachim and St. Anne.
- While the chapel has been built and destroyed several times, the 47 stairs and crypt built by the Crusaders are largely intact.
- After Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem the Moslems placed a mihrab in the southwestern wall beside the Tomb of Mary.
- Outside to the right of the façade is the Cave of Gethsemane or the Cave of the Betrayal.

The Church of All Nations

- In the year 379 AD, the Byzantines built the first basilica over the place they thought was made holy by the prayer and agony of Christ.
- This basilica was one of the first to be destroyed by the Persians in 614 AD.
- In the twelfth century the Crusaders rebuilt the church.
- The present church – one of the most beautiful in Palestine – was built in 1919 – 1924. Sixteen nations contributed funds for its construction and therefore it was called the "Church of All Nations".

The Russian Church

- It is sometimes referred to as the 'Russian Onion' because it has seven onion-shaped spires.
- It is called the Church of St. Mary Magdalene and is situated just above the Church of All Nations.
- It was built in 1888 by Czar Alexander III in memory of his mother.
- It is maintained by the Russian nuns.
- In the crypt lies the body of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodronova, sister of the Empress Alexandra. She was killed in 1918 by the Bolsheviks in Siberia, and according to her wish, her body was brought to rest here.

The Dominus Flevit Chapel

- This is situated just above the Russian Church of St. Mary Magdalene.
- The name of the chapel means “The Lord Wept”.
- It was built on the rock that tradition says Jesus sat as He wept over Jerusalem.
- Designed in the shape of a teardrop, it was built in 1955.
- The motif of a hen gathering her chickens is here.
- The view from the altar window with the cross of the altar looking down at the Dome of the Rock is worth the visit.

THE KIDRON VALLEY

- This valley separates the Old City of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.
- Jesus had crossed this valley many times using the Golden Gate to go to the Mount of Olives.
- It is also known from Old Testament times as the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
- The meaning of this name means “Yahweh judges”. With this is the belief that the dead would be raised on Resurrection Day on the Day of Judgment.
- Hence it is covered with cemeteries – both Jewish, Christian and also Muslim.

Tombs of the Kidron Valley

- The Tomb of Absalom or Pillar of Absalom is to the right of the Church of All Nations. Experts suggest these are from the Hellenistic age. (See 2 Samuel 18:18).
- The Tomb of Jehoshaphat is behind that of the Tomb of Absalom.
- The Tomb of St. James is a little to the south from the Tomb of Absalom. From this tomb a passage leads to the
- Tomb of Zechariah with its solid cubic monument with a pyramid on top – almost 10 m high.
- The Tomb of Pharaoh’s Daughter is a little further along the valley and is from the pre-Exilic period.
- Just beyond this on the slope of the Hill of Offence (where Solomon built temples to heathen gods) is the village of Siloan (In Arabic it is Silvan).

THE CITY OF DAVID

- The City of David was the area from the Temple Mount site south along the ridge beside the Kidron Valley.
- Originally it was held by the Jebusites from 2000 BC.
- David took the city for his capital around 1000 BC (2 Samuel 5:6 –17)

Hezekiah’s Tunnel

- In the Kidron Valley you can find the Gihon Spring and Hezekiah’s Tunnel.
- Leave the Old City through the Dung Gate, and proceed into the Kidron Valley over what is known as Southeastern Hill.
- The Spring of Gihon (the Virgin’s Fountain) is in a cave some 320 m south of the southeastern angle of the Temple area.
- A number of interesting ducts and channels are connected with this spring, including the Dragon Shaft.
- Here is the entrance to Hezekiah’s tunnel – a great technical accomplishment to bring water inside Jerusalem.

- In the year 700 BC to protect the water supply of the city from the invading Assyrians, Hezekiah cut in the solid rock a tunnel to channel the water of the Gihon Spring, which was located outside the walled city, so that it ran into the Pool of Siloam which was inside the walls of the city.
- The outlet of the spring was then closed and hidden from the eyes of the invaders.
- Jerusalem was saved since the Assyrian army, brought down by thirst and pestilence, failed to conquer the city and withdrew.
- The Tunnel in roughly an “S” shape measures 523 m (1749 ft) in length.
- The workmen began at each end and accomplished the remarkable engineering feat to meet in the middle of the mountain shaft within four feet of each other.
- It was through the old Gihon shaft that David’s commandos broke through into the city and took it from the Jebusites.
- It was also at the Gihon spring that Solomon was crowned King (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:4,30; 1 Kings 1:33-38).
- The water is usually a little over knee deep. Bring a torch with you for the experience.

Warren’s Shaft

- Is located some 100 m from the ruins and excavations of the Jebusite Acropolis is Warren’s shaft.
- Nearby are the large stones of the 18th century BC Jebusite wall guarding Jerusalem.
- Warren’s shaft is a sloping tunnel with stairs accessing it leading to the pool used by the Jebusites

The Pool of Siloam

- This pool was called “Siloah” in Nehemiah 3:15 and Siloam in John 9:7.
- Josephus says that the pool was situated in the southern part of Jerusalem.
- It measures 17 m by 5.5 m and its modern name is Kirket Silwan.
- The exit from Hezekiah’s Tunnel is here.

The Siloam Inscription

- In 1880 a Hebrew inscription of six lines was discovered on the wall of the tunnel or aqueduct some 7 m from its exit to the Pool of Siloam.
- It describes the process of tunnel digging and gives some valuable information concerning its measurements.
- The inscription has been removed from the tunnel and is now in the Istanbul Museum. As you go through the aqueduct you can see where the inscription was originally on the north side, nor far from the Pool of Siloam.

Job’s Well

- Following the Kidron south, go past the path to the Pool of Siloam where it junctions with the Valley of Hinnom,
- Here is Job’s well. (called En Rogel of 2 Samuel 17:17; 1 Kings 1:9)

The Valley of Hinnom

- It is to the south and west of Jerusalem.
- Tophet is the high place here where an altar was built to Moloch and human sacrifices were offered.

- Josiah defiled this altar. (2 Kings 23:10).
- Here in tombs underneath the Scottish Presbyterian Church, was found the 7th century BC silver scroll with Aaron's benediction (Numbers 7) now in the Israeli Museum.

The Hill of Evil Counsel (in Arabic Ras Aba Tor)

- According to tradition, Caiaphas owned a country house here.
- A Greek convent is on the slope of the hill and near it several cemeteries.
- One is called Acedama (The Field of Blood – Matthew 27:3-10).

St. Peter in Gallicantu

- This is the traditional site where the cock crowed when Peter denied His Lord.
- As you leave the Pool of Siloam to visit this church you walk over the very steps that were in existence in the days of Jesus.
- The church overlooking the Kidron Valley was built in 1931 over the traditional site of the house of the High Priest Caiaphas.
- When Jesus was betrayed and arrested, He was led to the house of the High Priest, Caiaphas.
- Here Jesus spent the whole night, and here was the scene of His first trial. (Matthew 26:57-65; Mark 14:53-65).
- Here Peter wept at the crowing of the cock. (Matthew 26:34; Mark 14:66-72).
- Excavations were made at this place. It could be the remains of the home of Caiaphas.
- There was discovered an almost complete set of Hebrew measures, a stone mill, a dungeon, a courtyard, servant's quarters, and the remains of a Byzantine church.

MOUNT ZION

- The meaning and the origin of this name are uncertain. It possibly comes from "sign post".
- Originally it was the name of the southeastern hill of the Jebusite city that David conquered.
- This hill lay between the Kidron Valley and the Hinnom Valley and outside the walls of the Old City.
- When David transferred the ark to his capital, Zion became the name especially of the place where God dwelt.
- Consequently the name Zion was used to refer to the northeastern hill after Solomon had built his temple there and moved the ark into it.
- Unfortunately, the name Zion has been attributed erroneously to the southwestern hill of Jerusalem since the Middle Ages.
- Excavations of the last 100 years have proved that the City of David, of which Mount Zion was part, was confined to the southeastern hill.
- The southwestern hill apparently was not part of the city until Hellenistic times.
- You reach the present Mount Zion from today's Old Jerusalem City by going through Zion Gate, or continuing up the hill from the Pool of Siloam past St. Peter in Gallicantu.

The Coenaculum (Site of the Last Supper)

- Tradition has it that the Coenaculum, or dining hall, is the place where Jesus ate the Last Supper with His disciples, establishing the communion service. (Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13).
- The building was constructed by the Crusaders.
- It was on the original Mount Zion that the early Christians had their headquarters.
- In Isaiah 2:3, it was predicted that “from out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”.

The Tomb of David

- In 1 Kings 2:10 we are told that King David was buried in the City of David.
- In Nehemiah 3:15,16 we are told that the Tomb of the Kings was near the Pool of Siloam.
- Even though the present tomb is only a traditional site, it is one of the most sacred sites in Israel, second only to the Western Wall.
- The present Tomb of David was described and located at its present site by Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela when he visited Jerusalem in 1173 AD.
- It is made of stone and covered with embroidered cloth and carries a silver crown of the Torah.

The Holocaust Museum

- Here on Mount Zion is a small museum where items from World War II are on display.
- Here you can see blue and white cakes of soap made from the fat of Jews who were slaughtered in the holocaust.
- Also to be seen at this place is the fountain of Rachel, “weeping for her children”.

The Via Dolorosa

- This is the traditional pathway Jesus followed carrying the cross.
- The events of this sorrowful way are commemorated by 14 stations. Nine of these stations are related to the Gospels, and five by tradition.
- The first two are located in the Antonia, seven are located in the streets, and the last five are located within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
- Each Friday at 3.00 pm, a procession is led by the Franciscan priests along the Via Dolorosa.
- The Via Dolorosa begins at the arch of the Ecce Homo which means, “Behold the Man”.
- Tradition says that the arch was built over the site where Pilate said, “Behold the Man”.
- A more likely route would commence from the Citadel which was the royal palace and down David Street to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

St. Stephen's Gate

- Today the road through St. Stephen's Gate is the most direct route from the Old City to the Mount of Olives.
- This gate stands probably on the site of the ancient Sheep Gate. The gate was named after Stephen the deacon of the early Christian Church who was martyred nearby.

- It is also called the Lion's Gate because there are two lions on either side.

Lithostrotos (The Pavement)

- This pavement called Lithostrotos in Greek, was the scene of the public trial of Jesus. (John 19:13).
- Here Pilate presented Jesus to the Jews, scourged him and said, "Behold the Man".
- Here Pilate finally washed his hands and condemned Jesus to death.
- This pavement which was discovered in 1931 is the actual courtyard of the Antonia, where Jesus was condemned to death, and from where he started on His way to the cross.
- The stones of this pavement are grooved or striated in order to prevent animals from slipping when pulling a load.
- Some stones were lifted and some 4th century AD coins were found indicating the stones could be before that.
- At intervals there are grooves or canals in the pavement to collect the rainwater and carry it into the large cistern below.
- The Lithostrotos is located on the same roadway that leads from St. Stephen's Gate into the city.
- You can also visit the prison cell which is part of this complex.
- Carved on the surface of some of the pavement stones you will see traces of the game played by Roman soldiers.

THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

The Cardo

- Cardo, from the Greek "cardia" or heart or city centre, has as its full name Cardo Maximus.
- It is a street from the Byzantine period reconstructed and is a must-see.
- About 180 m (600 ft) has been reconstructed.
- Near the entrance to David Street are the remains of a Hasmonean (Maccabean) well from the Second Temple period.

The Israelite Tower

- At a depth of about 9 m (30 ft) below the street, north of the "Wide Well", 55 steps lead down to where the remains of the Israelite Gate, tower of the 6th century BC were found.
- It dates from the end of the First Temple period – was destroyed 586 BC.

The Burnt House

- Some 6 m (20 ft) below the street leading east from the "Hurvah" Square to the Western Wall, are the remains of a luxurious house burnt in 70 AD.
- A stone weight inscribed "dBr Kathros" identifies it with the high priestly family of Kathros.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

- Tradition would have us believe that the Church of the Sepulchre stands over Golgotha, the place of the crucifixion, and the tomb where the body of Jesus was laid.

- There are some Adventist scholars who are convinced that this is the place of the crucifixion and burial.
- Scripture tells us that the crucifixion took place outside the city wall.
- Eleven years after the crucifixion, Golgotha was included within the perimeter of the city by a new wall built by Herod Agrippa in the year 44AD.
- Hadrian, wanting to root out every remembrance of Jewish and Christian religions, obliterated Calvary and the tomb by building a temple dedicated to Jupiter over the area.
- After Constantine had converted to Christianity, his mother Queen Helena came on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and searched out the area of the crucifixion.
- In her search she said she found part of the wood from the true cross.
- In 326 AD Constantine demolished Hadrian's temple and erected a magnificent basilica.
- The Constantine monument was destroyed in 614AD by the Persians.
- It was rebuilt again on a reduced scale by Abbot Modestos, but was destroyed by Khalif Haken in 1099 AD.
- The present church was built by the Crusaders.

If you are in Jerusalem during Easter week, you can attend many of the fascinating services based on the ancient Eastern Church traditions, that are held in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. There is the service of the Holy Fire and the dramatic pageant called the Washing of the Feet at the time of the Greek Easter.

Calvary at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

- Here there are two chapels built over Calvary.
- One is believed to be the site of the crucifixion and belongs to the Greek Orthodox Church.
- The second is believed to be the site where Jesus was stripped of His garments and nailed to the cross. This belongs to the Roman Catholic Church.
- It is difficult to see the rock for buildings; however, it can be seen under an altar dedicated to the Virgin Mary of Sorrows and below the inside of a chapel dedicated to Adam.

The Tomb of Christ

- When Queen Helena visited the Bible lands she isolated one tomb at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, from among others, and said it was the Tomb of Jesus.
- This tomb existed until 1009 AD when it was totally destroyed by Khalif Hakem.
- The present rock tomb with a Moscovite cupola was built over the site in 1810 by the Greek Orthodox Church and the Russians.
- It is of interest to know that the stone that forms the sepulchre is not of Palestinian origin but from Greece.

The Pool of Bethesda

- The best way to locate this pool is to enter St. Stephen's Gate as though walking into the city. On your right soon after leaving St. Stephen's Gate is an entrance to a church. Proceed through that until you come to a railing and steps that lead down to ruins.
- It is here that you find the Pool of Bethesda.

- It was here that Christ healed the man who had been crippled for 38 years (John 5:1-9)
- The pool was buried under debris for centuries – and was recently unearthed.
- It was found that the pool was rectangular in shape, about 105 m long (350 ft) and 60 m wide (200 ft).
- It was also found that the pool was surrounded by five porches which confirms the word of John in John 5:2.

The Damascus Gate

- This gate is the busiest and most ornate of all the gates of the Old City.
- It is called the Damascus Gate since it stands at the beginning of the ancient road leading from Jerusalem to Damascus.
- The Israelis call it Shaar Shkhem because it leads to Shechem (also called Nablus).
- Since the seventh century, the Arabs have called it Bab Al Amud (The Gate of the Column), because of a column raised there on an ancient Roman street, built by Hadrian in 135 AD.
- On the ramp just outside the gate you will notice where recent excavations have been made. This work has revealed the remains of two earlier gates, one with Herodian structure and the second dating from Hadrian times.
- Here from a plaza dating to Roman times, the entrance to the Roman Cardo is found.
- Also a gaming board is engraved in the paving stones.
- The present gate was built by the Turks in 1537 AD.
- It is near the Damascus Gate that a walk may be taken around the Old City Walls.

OUTSIDE THE OLD CITY

Solomon's Quarries

- A short distance from the Damascus Gate is the entrance to Solomon's Quarries.
- Here the milk white stones for the Temple were quarried.

The Garden Tomb

- From Damascus Gate take Nablus Road a short distance to "The Garden Tomb" – the entrance is from a lane on the right.
- Follow the sign about 150 m and you find the door on your right. It is only open during certain hours and is certainly an ideal site for meditation.
- Notice a groove in the front of the tomb where a huge stone the shape of a coin was rolled to seal the tomb. When you enter the tomb and walk into the burial chamber you will notice that stone had to be chiselled away in order to make room for a taller person to be buried.
- This tomb is now dated to the 7th century BC.
- While many Protestants would 'like' to think of this as the Tomb of Jesus, the best scholarship today favours strongly that of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Gordon's Calvary

- Gordon's Calvary is believed by many Protestants (but not archaeologists) to be the authentic site of the crucifixion.

- It was found by the British General Charles Gordon in 1883. He noted that the rocky hill which resembles a human skull, and suggested that this might be the true Calvary.
- To view Gordon's Calvary, it is best seen from the Bus Terminal back on Hatzanchanin Street. From the Garden Tomb, go back towards the Damascus Gate and then a short distance left is the Bus Terminal.
- Archaeologists point out that the 'face' on the rock – some cavities that somewhat resemble eye sockets and a nose have been formed by the area being quarried long since the time of Christ.

Me'ah She'arim

- The strict Orthodox Jewish area is worth a visit. Note the signs over the street or in shop windows regarding modest dress.
- Also note entry signs to the synagogue noting that men and women attend separately.

The Greek Monastery of the Cross

- It has a dome over the church, but looks like a fortress.
- The church is built over the traditional site where the tree grew from which the cross was made.

THE WALL OF THE CITY AND SOME OTHER GATES

The Citadel or the Tower of David

- It was built by Herod the Great as a royal palace and also as the western defence of Jerusalem.
- It was protected by walls and three huge towers.
- This fortress/palace was spared by Titus in 70 AD and used as the barracks for the Tenth Roman Legion.
- It was also spared as a witness to the bravery and might of the Roman army.
- It is believed to be the site of the trial of Jesus and His condemnation.
- Phasael's Tower was built by Herod the Great and named after his brother. Hadrian demolished it in 135 AD, but it has been partially rebuilt in the 14th century.
- You enter the Tower of David and the Citadel via the Jaffa Gate.
- The Tower of David was a Jordanian mortar position at the beginning of the Six-Day War.
- Jaffa Gate was once one of the smaller gates that led into Jerusalem, but it was widened to its present size for the visit of Kaiser Wilhelm and his entourage in 1898
- Allenby also entered Jerusalem through the Jaffa Gate in 1917.
- It is said that King David was the first to build a fortress on this site.
- It is worth noticing the massive Herodian blocks at the base of the construction.
- The Tower of David Museum had displays regarding the story of the history of Jerusalem.

The Golden Gate

- The Golden Gate stands over the site of the original Gate of Mercy of the Second Temple.
- As you study the stone work you will see that part of the stone wall belongs to the primitive structure.

- It was through this entrance that Jesus rode on the back of a borrowed donkey at the time of His triumphal entry into the city.
- Ezekiel refers to this gate in his prophecy found in Ezekiel 44:2.
- The gate was completely walled up in 1530 by the Turks, partly because the Jews believe that the Messiah will enter the city through this gate.
- They considered opening it again at one stage, but because the Moslems had built their tombs right against the gate on the outside, it was decided the gate should remain closed forever rather than desecrate the graves.
- It is also regarded as the gate where Peter healed the lame man as recorded in Acts chapter 3.

The Zion Gate

- It was built by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1540.
- Shell and bullet holes in the wall are from 1948 fighting.
- Outside the Zion Gate – just opposite – is the Armenian Monastery of Mt Zion, standing on the traditional site of the House of Caiaphas.
- In the altar of this small church is the “Angels Stone” claimed to be the one rolled against the door of Christ’s tomb.

THE CITY WALLS AND RAMPARTS

- Entry to the walk along the city walls is only possible at two points – the Damascus Gate and the Jaffa Gate.
- From the Jaffa Gate you can walk around the west and north of the city to St. Stephen’s Gate.
- Also from Jaffa Gate you can walk around the southern part of the wall to the Dung Gate.
- The walk does not include the area around the Temple Mount also known as the Dome of the Rock.

THE TEMPLE AREA

- The Temple area covers just over 14 hectares (35 acres), and is a sixth of the area of the Old City.
- It is considered that this is Mount Moriah where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice (the Moslems affirm Abraham offered Ishmael).
- Solomon built his temple here but it was burnt to the ground by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC.
- When the Jews returned from their captivity the temple was rebuilt by Zerrubabel but on a reduced scale.
- In the year 20 BC, Herod the Great rebuilt the temple again on a grand scale but it was completely destroyed by Titus in 70 AD.
- The Temple area remained a heap of rubbish until the Arabs conquered Jerusalem in the seventh century.
- At the end of the seventh century the Moslems built the Mosque of Omar also known as the Dome of the Rock.
- This Mosque is the third most sacred to the Moslem people after the Kaaba and the tomb of the prophet Mohammed in Medina.
- The Mosque of Omar is the most exquisite Moslem shrine in the world.

The Rock of Mount Moriah

- Under the dome of the Mosque of Omar lies the Rock of Mount Moriah.
- It is 13.5 m long, nearly 11 m wide and rises to a height of nearly 2 m.
- This is the traditional rock where Abraham offered his son Isaac.
- Moslems believe that Mohammed ascended from this rock to heaven.
- Next to the rock, a few strands of Mohamed's hair are kept in a small cabinet.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque

- At the southern part of the Temple area you will notice the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- It was built between 70-9 and 715 by the son of the man who built the Dome of the Rock.
- Al-Aqsa has been destroyed and renovated many times. The last time it was partly destroyed was in the 1960's by an Australian, who set fire to its curtains and rugs.
- The Al-Aqsa Mosque is used for group prayers and can hold 5000 worshippers.
- The Dome of the Rock is used for individual worship.
- You can enter either mosque as long as you remove your shoes. Just leave them at the entrance of the mosque and they will surely be there when you leave.

The Western Wall or the Wailing Wall

- This is the holiest shrine of the Jewish world. /
- It is considered sacred because it is the last relic of the last temple.
- The Western Wall is a portion of the wall that Herod built around the temple in 20 BC.
- Titus spared this part of the wall to show the future generations the greatness of the Roman army.
- During the Roman period the Jews were not permitted to come to Jerusalem.
- However during the Byzantine period they were allowed to come to the Temple once a year, on the anniversary of its destruction, to lament and weep over the ruins of their beloved Temple. This is why it is known as the Wailing Wall.
- From 1948 to 1967 Jews were not permitted to visit the wall since it was in the Jordanian section of the city.
- After the Six-Day War, the Wailing Wall became a place for national rejoicing as well as a place of worship.
- Here you will find black-robed Orthodox Jews standing at the wall, praying and chanting and swaying at all times of the day and night.
- They stuff the cracks of the wall with bits of paper containing their prayers for the restoration of their sacred temple.
- Visitors may join with the worshippers (males to the male area, and females to the female area).
- Hats are required – or may be obtained when entering the area.
- You may also see some ceremonial washing of the hands.
- It is well worth while making a visit here on Friday afternoon for the hour or two leading up to sunset and the welcoming of the Sabbath.

ELSEWHERE IN JERUSALEM

The Model of Herod's Jerusalem

- The model is located in the southwest corner of the City in the gardens of Holyland Hotel. Travel past the Israeli Museum and the Shrine of the Book and it is near the Hall of Holocaust.
- The address is Rabbi Uziel Street, Malkha.
- The construction of this model took seven years of study, research and careful building.
- The scale is 1:50 and it occupies one quarter of an acre.
- The topography is an exact copy of Jerusalem in the time of Christ.

The John F. Kennedy Memorial

- It is on the hill Kurwan as Giv'at Orah, west from the suburb of Bayit Vegon along Kiryat Hayovel.

The Hall of Holocaust (Yad Vashem)

- It is situated about 8 km from the heart of Jerusalem.
- It is located on Rehov Zikaron in the southwest part of the city.
- The Hall of the Holocaust is well worth a visit. It speaks for itself. The horrors that befell the Jewish people during World War II are displayed for all to see.
- The name Yad Vashem means "a name and a place" with reference to Isaiah 56:5.
- It commemorates the six million who died in the Nazi holocaust.
- One of the most moving places here is the Children's Memorial.
- It would be wise to plan a visit to the Shrine of the Book, the Model of Herod's Jerusalem, and the Hall of the Holocaust on the same day as they are all in the same area.

Herod's Family Tomb

- Follow Washington Street from the west end of King David Hotel towards Mount Zion.
- Here in an open field is where Herod's Tomb was found.
- See the stone that sealed the entrance to the tomb.
- This tomb was discovered late in the nineteenth century AD.
- It was used as an air-raid shelter during the 1948 wars.

The YMCA

- It is located by the King David Hotel at 24 King David Street.
- It is the most distinctive landmark in the city with its tall bell tower.
- As you move around the city keep your eyes on the YMCA tower and you will find you are never very far from it.
- It was built in 1928 with funds from a New Jersey millionaire.
- For a small fee you can go to the top of the tower between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm/
- A fantastic view of the city is seen from here.

Advent House

- The Adventist Church and Office is opposite the YMCA at 4 Rehov Abraham Lincoln.

OUTSIDE JERUSALEM

BETHLEHEM

- Situated some 9 km south of Jerusalem.
- Known in Scripture as Bethlehem Ephrata.
- Take a sherut – a shared taxi, van or minibus which will go as far as the Israeli/Palestinian checkpoint.
- It takes around two hours to walk.
- Leave Jerusalem past the Railway Station at Abu Tor and go straight on the main road through the Talpiot section past the Allenby Barracks on your left.
- Bethlehem has a population of around 30,000 inhabitants.
- As you descend the slopes into the town, note the caves on the hillsides around you.
- People have been living in those caves for centuries.
- Bethlehem is built on a stony ridge some 780 m above sea level (2600 ft).
- It reaches back in time to the remote time of the patriarchs.
- Rachel was buried at Bethlehem.
- Ruth met Boaz in this city and married him.
- Micah (5:2) foretold that Jesus would be born here.
- David was born in Bethlehem and cared for his sheep in the hills around the town.
- It was from here that David set out to fight Goliath, and later was summoned from here by Samuel to become King of Judah.

The Church of the Nativity

- This is the principal shrine of Bethlehem.
- It is a fortress-looking structure facing the dusty Manger Square.
- The entrance to the church is so low that you must bend in order to enter.
- The entrance has been lowered twice to prevent marauders from entering the church on horseback.
- The basilica of the church is divided into five naves by four rows of pinkish Corinthian pillars.
- Several dozen-lamp fixtures hang from the ceiling.
- The floor is of stone and wood, with occasional trap doors which display the original mosaic floor when opened.
- At the front is the altar of the Nativity.
- The Greek Orthodox occupies the area to the right of the altar while the Armenian Church occupies the left.
- Armenian, Greek and Franciscan priests are responsible for the care of the church.
- On either side of the altar, narrow stone stairs lead down to the manger, where it is said Christ was born.
- In the year 135 AD Hadrian desecrated this cave by surrounding it by a temple dedicated to Adonis.
- Constantine removed the Hadrian temple in the 4th century and built a magnificent basilica following his mother Helena's visit.
- In 529 AD the church was badly damaged by the Samaritans who revolted against the Byzantine Empire.
- It was immediately rebuilt by Justinian and it stands to this day.
- In 614 AD when the Persians destroyed all the churches in the area, the Church of the Nativity was the only one left standing.

- It is said that the mosaic of the Wise Men in ancient Persian costume deterred them from their vandalism.
- The Church of Nativity is the oldest church in the Holy Land.
- On Christmas Eve entry is limited to those with tickets – collect them at the Franciscan Pilgrim's Office at the Jaffa Gate.

Manger Square

- It is bounded by bazaars, a police station and a church.
- As you walk toward the Church of the Nativity, the bazaar on the left (King David Bazaar was owned by an Adventist). Like all bazaars they will help you purchase your souvenirs.

The Milk Grotto

- Is located just around the corner from the Church of the Nativity.
- Tradition says that Mary fed baby Jesus here and when some drops of milk splashed in the rocky cave, the stone turned chalky white.
- Nursing mothers are reportedly helped and powdered stone is sold in packets as a souvenir.

The Shepherd's Field

- Luke 2 speaks of the shepherds watching their flocks by night.
- There are fields all around Bethlehem but tradition has it that the fields are about 5 km east of the town.
- The best place to get a photograph of the fields is from the bell tower beside the Church of Nativity.

Bethlehem Streets

- If you have the time, a walk through the streets of Old Bethlehem is well worth the effort.
- You will see the type of home that must have been in existence in the days of Jesus.
- The dwelling place is above and the manger below.
- Also notice the dress of the Bethlehem women.
- They still wear the old traditional costume, a long black robe, a belt around the waist, and a white veil flowing down to the shoulders. On a red cone is attached a string of coins set firmly on the head.

Rachael's Tomb

- The tomb is just outside the town of Bethlehem on the Jerusalem Road – about a half-hour's walk from Manger Square.
- Jacob erected a memorial over her tomb and this memorial marks Rachel's grave to this day. (Genesis 35:16-20).
- The small domed covering is from the fifteenth century.
- This tomb is revered by Moslems and Jews.
- Men need a head covering to enter.
- Dozens of women gather here and are usually praying and weeping.

THE HERODION

- With its conical summit resembling a volcano, the Herodion stands in the wilderness of Judea about 12 km southeast of Bethlehem.
- It is named after King Herod the Great who built on its top a magnificent fortified palace between 24 and 15 BC.
- At its foot were palaces, terraced gardens and pools and two hundred steps of the purest white marble which led to the citadel on the top.
- After his death, Herod was buried here in a bier which was of solid gold studded with precious stones.
- The Jewish rebel Bar Kokhba made the Herodion his headquarters 132-135 AD.

THE POOLS OF SOLOMON

- They are situated about 3 km south of Bethlehem on the road to Hebron.
- These pools are mentioned in Ecclesiastes 2:6.
- However others claim that Herod brought the water here by aqueduct.

MAMRE

- A number of sites have been identified as Mamre.
- Josephus notes a terebinth tree some 1km from Hebron was Abraham's tree.
- Another tree was identified by the 4th century AD some 3 km north of Hebron, and Constantine built a basilica here.
- From the seventh century the site of Mamre was forgotten and many places claimed the honour of being the true Mamre.
- In 1926 a German society excavated Haram Râmat el Khalîl and found remains of the different buildings which successively had been built at Mamre including those of Constantine.
- While many feel that Haram Râmat el Khalîl is the correct Mamre, others feel that all of these sites are too far distant from Hebron
- Since the 16th century AD an oak tree some 2.5 km west-northwest of Hebron and guarded by Russian monks has been pointed out as the true Mamre.
- After his separation from Lot, Abraham came to Mamre and there built an altar to God. (Genesis 13:18).
- The Lord appeared to Abraham at this place (Genesis 18:1).
- It was here that Abraham pled for Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16-38).
- It was here that David was anointed king.

HEBRON

- Hebron is situated about 40 km south of Bethlehem.
- It is considered the oldest continuously occupied walled city in the world.
- Some of the early inhabitants were the Anakim (Numbers 13:22; Joshua 11:21).
- The Hittites are also mentioned as early dwellers here. (Genesis 23:3-16).
- Abraham came to this place and bought a burial plot for his family.
- Hebron was one of the Canaanite cities that terrified the Israelite spies in Moses' time. (Numbers 13:22,23).
- Its king Hoham, fought against Joshua but was defeated, killed and his city captured. (Joshua 10:1-27).
- Hebron is one of the sacred Moslem cities today because of the tomb of Abraham.
- It is also one of the four sacred cities of the Jews.

- David was elected king here and Hebron was his capital for the first seven years of his rule (2 Samuel 2:1-3, 11, 32).
- Be aware of the tensions between the Israelis and the Palestinians before visiting Hebron.

The Cave of Machpelah

- Near Mamre, this place consists of a field with trees on it, and a cave at one end.
- This property which belonged to Ephron the Hittite (Genesis 23:9,17,19) was purchased by Abraham as a family sepulchre.
- In this cave were buried Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob.
- The great mosque at Hebron stands over the cave.
- During the time of the Crusaders the building was a Christian Church, but since then it has been a Moslem mosque.
- For a long time this sacred place was out of bounds for non-Moslems.
- It is only in recent years that Christians have been permitted to visit the Mosque – but not the cave.
- Open times are 0730 – 1130 and 1330 – 16.00 hrs (sometimes to 1700 hrs). No non-Muslims permitted on Fridays or Moslem holidays.
- Inside are sarcophagus like cenotaphs, covered with richly embroidered silk tapestries.
- These mark the sites under which, in the cave, the coffins of the patriarchs are situated.
- The Moslems never descend into the cave – considered to be too sacred to walk in.
- It is said that when the Crusaders went down to the cave, they found bones which they bathed in wine, then replaced them and sealed up the tomb with heavy iron bars which are still in position.

The Pottery and Glass Works

- Hebron is quite famous for the industry of pottery and hand-blown glass known as Hebron glass.
- One family owns all of the pottery and glass works and continues to make pottery and glass as it was done in ancient times.
- Jeremiah 18:3 mentions that he saw the potter at work.
- You will find the glass and pottery works on the main road as you enter Hebron from the north. You are welcome to walk around and view their work – and of course purchase some.

BEERSHEBA

- Beersheba means “the well where an oath was made”.
- Travel south from Hebron some 45 km.
- It was a temporary residence for Abraham and Isaac.
- Abraham came to an agreement with Abimelech for water for his flocks.
- From here Jacob went to Haran, and here on his way to Egypt he stopped to offer sacrifices at the place where his father and grandfather had erected altars.
- The expression “from Dan to Beersheba” was used to designate the limits of Israel’s boundaries.
- Each Thursday morning there is a Bedouin market where animals and crafts are sold.

- About 5 km out as you come near the modern city of Beersheba, you will notice on your left a Tell. This is considered to be the site of the original city of the time of Abraham, dating to the time of Solomon.

ZOHAR & THE DEAD SEA WORKS

- Return on the highway towards Hebron. Turn right about 12 km from Beersheba. This road goes to the Arad and on to the Dead Sea. When you reach the Dead Sea take the road to the right and following the Dead Sea you come to the Dead Sea Mineral Works.
- On your return you pass through the tourist resort of Zohar.
- Drive down to the water's edge and see the minerals before they are pumped down to the works.

THE DEAD SEA

- The Dead Sea is about 70 km long and 15 km wide.
- It has a surface area of nearly 940 sq km and its water reaches a maximum depth of 380 m (1278 ft).
- Its level is 390 m (1290 feet) below sea level – the lowest spot on the earth's surface.
- It is called the Dead Sea because of the absence of any animal life in its water.
- Some joker has put up a sign at the springs just south of the Qumran Caves, "Fishing prohibited".
- This sea is the most salt-saturated water in the world containing about 27 percent solids. Ordinary water holds between 4 and 6 percent solids.
- The Jordan River and other streams pour into the Dead Sea some seven million tons of water and its chemicals. The water is unable to escape, and with the tremendous heat of the Jordan Valley, the water evaporates and leaves behind the large deposit of potash, bromine, gypsum and salt.
- The wealth of the Dead Sea is beyond estimation.

MASADA

- About 15 km north of Zohar as you follow the Dead Sea, you come to the sign pointing west to Masada.
- Masada is about 3 km from the shore of the Dead Sea in the Wilderness of Judea, but is some 440 m above on the mountain-top
- It is necessary to stop well away from the fortress in order to get a distant photo of the mountain.
- Masada has become a shrine for the Jews since it became the site of one of the most dramatic episodes in Jewish history.
- It is the symbol of courage and heroism, the symbol of the choice of death over slavery.
- After Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, a band of Jewish patriots led by Eleazar Ben Yair marched on Masada and captured it from a Roman Garrison.
- Joined later by a few surviving patriots who evaded capture in Jerusalem, they determined to continue the fight for freedom and made Masada a base for guerilla strikes against the Romans.
- In 72 AD, Silva, a general of Titus, marched on the great rock of Masada and after long hard fighting and a siege of many months, a break was made in the wall.
- The Romans made an earth ramp (that can be seen today) on the west side of the mountain.

- This was the only way the enemy could reach the wall.
- The leader of the Jews, Ben Yair, knowing that it was the beginning of the end, gathered his men and delivered one of the most dramatic speeches in history, urging them to die by their own hands rather than fall into the hands of the enemy.
- Then they chose ten men to slay the rest.
- The Romans entered the fortress, saw the bodies, and heard the story from two women who had hidden themselves from the disaster along with five small children.
- From the top of Masada you can see where the Romans made their camp.
- The diamond formation of stones marks the very spot to this day.
- The usual way to the top is by gondola or cable car. It is possible to walk down to the car park below.
- The top of Masada is about 800 m long and 200 m wide.
- It was excavated in 1963 – 65 by Professor Yigael Yadin. He had no difficulty getting helpers from all parts of the world.
- Josephus describes the store houses on top as “large enough to store corn, wine and oil in abundance, as well as pulses and dates, such as would enable men to subsist for a long time”.
- On Masada today, the Jewish soldiers make their vow of loyalty before their flag, to fight to the very end in defence of their Promised Land.

EIN GEDI

- Is situated about 15 km north of Masada, or some 56 km south of Jericho.
- This is a resort the Jewish people like to visit, and is a fertile settlement known as Kibbutz Ein Gedi in the midst of barrenness.
- Back behind the Kibbutz is Israel’s only waterfall. You wouldn’t expect to find a waterfall in the midst of a barren wilderness.
- Ein Gedi has been an oasis in the desert for thousands of years.
- Today the Ein Gedi National Park has walks to the Shulamit Falls etc. There are also the ruins of a synagogue dating back to the 5th century BC.
- Many tourists have been lost trying to find their way to the falls and the cave.
- It is a wise plan to take one of the locals as a guide and be sure you return safely.
- The water at the falls drops from a height of nearly 100 m (300 ft).
- There is a natural swimming pool at the bottom of the falls and in summer time the water is so refreshing you won’t want to leave.
- In one of the caves in this area King David hid from Saul and cut his robe during the night.
- It is mentioned as a beautiful place (Song Solomon 1:14)
- Ein Gedi is also a place to swim or float in the Dead Sea. The beach is about 1.5 km south of the National Park. It is not advisable to put your head under water. The water is so full of chemicals it feels slimy. Showers are available as you leave the Dead Sea and should be used.
- The Ein Gedi Health Spa is situated some 3 km south of the public beach. It has hot sulphurous baths – and also access to the Dead Sea.

QUMRAN

- Qumran is further north from Ein Gedi along the shores of the Dead Sea by some 28 km.
- This was the home of the Essenes, the writers of the famous Dead Sea Scrolls. They lived here from 150 BC to 68 AD.

- The site was completely excavated in 1951-56.
- The ruins comprise a main building some 35 m long and 27 m wide and was constructed using large stones.
- There was a dining room and kitchen where over 1,000 ceramic bowls were found.
- Around the main building was found a dryer's shop, a pottery shop, a mill and seven water cisterns.
- The most interesting find was the Scriptorium with the work benches, the writing tables and two ink stands with one containing dried ink.

The Qumran Caves

- These caves were first discovered by a Bedouin boy in 1947, when searching for his lost goat.
- In the first cave, where he thought his goat might have fallen, were discovered seven leather scrolls, and some earthen jars.
- When the Bedouin boy realised the value of the scrolls they began a systematic search of all the caves in the area.
- Altogether eleven important caves were discovered.
- In Cave One, a complete scroll of Isaiah was found and a second copy preserving about one-third of the book.
- In Cave Eleven was found almost a complete scroll of Psalms and a comparatively well preserved scroll of Leviticus.
- In Cave Four, there was found about two-thirds of the book of Samuel.
- All told, in Cave Four there were found 35,000 manuscript fragments.
- This Cave is the best to photograph as it is found just opposite the ruins of Qumran.
- All the Books of the Old Testament are represented with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls with the exception of the Book of Esther.
- In all some 190 scrolls were found
- The discovery of these scrolls is the greatest Biblical manuscript find of all time and provides extensive samples of the Word of God as used by Christ and His apostles.
- You can walk to Cave Five without any difficulty by following the path, which runs west of the ruins of Qumran. It takes about 20 minutes to get to the cave and gives you an excellent view of the ruins and the Dead Sea.

EAST AND NORTH FROM JERUSALEM

BETHANY

- Bethany is 3 km east of Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.
- Since the fourth century it has carried the name of Lazarus "El Azariah" since it was the home of Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha, whom Jesus loved.
- Jesus often visited Bethany and stayed in the home of Lazarus.
- Here Jesus performed the great miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead.
- It was also in Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper where Mary anointed Jesus with the precious ointment. (Matthew 26:1-13).
- The remains of two churches built by the Byzantines and a third built by the Crusaders, were discovered in 1949.
- The present church was built in 1952 on the foundations of the old churches.
- The Ascension took place on the slopes of the Mount of Olives not far from Bethany (Luke 24:50,51).

- The best way to approach Bethany is from the Jericho road, as it runs right through the township.

Lazarus' Tomb

- A well-worn path leads in front of the church at Bethany up a gentle slope to the traditional tomb of Lazarus.
- John 11:38 says, "It was a cave and a stone lay upon it". It could very well be the tomb.
- There are 22 steps that lead down to a cark cave and this may be the reason Jesus "cried with a loud voice".
- This tomb is controlled by the Moslems.

THE INN OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

- Some short distance out of Bethany going to Jericho, on the right hand side of the road, is what is thought could have been the Inn of the Good Samaritan.
- It was once a police checkpoint, but now is photographed by tourists.
- The Inn must have been somewhere here between Bethany and Jericho.

JERICHO

- A car trip from Jerusalem to Jericho is one you must not miss.
- After travelling about 35 minutes you come to an intersection. The road to the right will take you down to the Dead Sea, while the left road takes you to the city of Jericho.
- Jericho lies about 250 m (820 ft) below sea level in the Jordan Valley. This is located in the Great Rift Valley in the earth's crust reaching from Mount Hermon in the north to the Gulf of Aqaba in the south – a distance of some 450 km.
- From remote times Jericho has been known for its well-watered and rich soil.
- It is claimed to be the oldest city in the world.
- Mark Antony gave the city as a gift to Cleopatra. She leased the city to Herod the Great.
- Growers claim to grow here the sweetest oranges and the finest dates in the world.
- It was here that Jesus called Zacchaeus from the sycamore tree as recorded in Luke 19.
- There is one sycamore tree found in the valley today and that is in the modern town of Jericho. It is on your right as you take the main road out to the ruins of Old Jericho.
- Near Jericho are the ruins of Hisham's Palace – built for the Omayyad caliph Hisham. It is noted for its floor mosaic of a lion hunting gazelles.

Excavations of Old Jericho

- Travelling northwest from modern Jericho, you come to the site of Old Jericho, only about 5 km out of town.
- Dr. Sellin, an Austrian, was the first to begin digging the site of Old Jericho in 1908.
- In 1926 – 1936, Garstang of the British School of Archaeology continued the work begun by Dr. Sellin. This was continued by Kathleen Kenyon in 1952.
- Recent articles in the Biblical Archaeology Review provides dates that fit Joshua's destruction of Jericho.
- Excavations show that Jericho is one of the oldest cities known to man.
- It is nowhere mentioned in records outside the Bible.

- Kathleen Kenyon's dig discovered a cemetery of Middle Bronze Age tombs, including funerary equipment such as wooden tables, stools and dishes, foodstuffs in vessels, cloth, and baskets – all amazingly preserved.
- It was discovered that the city had been destroyed several times, and the remains of at least seven successive walls of 3000 BC have been discovered. While the results of the excavations have been interesting for the archaeologist, they have unfortunately contributed little that is of direct interest to the Bible student. Nothing was found of the walls, which would be those destroyed in Joshua's time.

Elisha's Spring

- Looking down from the ruins of Old Jericho, toward the new city you see the Spring of Elisha. In fact it is just across the road from the Old City.
- It was here that Elisha miraculously sweetened the brackish water (2 Kings 2:19-22).
- The water still runs to this day and is still sweet.

THE MOUNT OF TEMPTATION

- Neither the Gospels nor any other source, enable us to determine exactly the spot where Jesus underwent his forty days of fasting.
- Tradition indicates that it was Mount Qarantal which rises behind the ruins of Old Jericho, as the site of the first and third temptations.
- A road to the west leads to the fortress-like monastery. You can't drive all the way to the monastery, but the climb, if you have the time, is well worth it because it gives a magnificent view of the Jordan Valley and the Land of Moab.
- The monastery was built in 1874 by the Greeks, over a cave thought to be the one occupied by Christ. This is the place (by tradition) where Satan came to tempt Jesus after His forty days of fasting.

THE JORDAN RIVER

- The River Jordan flows down from the snow-capped heights of Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea.
- It twists and turns over a distance of 260 km, while as the crow flies it is just 105 km.
- Its average width is just 30 m.
- Jesus came from Galilee and was baptised by John in the River Jordan.
- The traditional site of Jesus' baptism is located 8 km east of Jericho.
- You may have difficulty reaching this part of the river as it is now in an Israeli military zone.
- Somewhere near this same spot of the river, the Israelites led by Joshua, crossed and invaded the land of Palestine.

The Allenby Bridge

- The Allenby Bridge crosses the Jordan River directly east of Jericho.
- This is the crossing point between Jordan and Israel.
- Photography is NOT permitted in this area, as it is a military zone.
- Violation of this rule could be the means of you losing your camera if caught!

NORTH AND THEN WEST FROM JERUSALEM

EMMAUS

- On the outskirts of Jerusalem on the old road towards Ramallah, you will notice a concrete marker pointing west to Emmaus.
- According to the best textual evidence, Emmaus lay 60 stadia (about 11 km) from Jerusalem (Luke 24:13).
- The site has never, to the present time, been conclusively identified.
- The Emmaus referred to on the stone marker is 24 km from Jerusalem, which is thought to be too far for Luke 24:13.

EIN KEREM

- Is situated some 7 km west of Jerusalem.
- It is the traditional site for the home of John the Baptist.
- The Church of St. John the Baptist dates from the 17th century but has been built over earlier churches as far back as Crusader and Byzantine times.
- Another Church of the Visitation is worth a visit with the Magnificat on tiles in the courtyard.
- Nearby is the Hadassah Hospital. The Synagogue here is worth a visit with windows by Marc Chagall. There are 12 windows representing the twelve tribes of Israel.

BETHEL

- Travelling north from Jerusalem, you come to Ramallah which was the town where Jeremiah had his homebase.
- Continue on the road northwards and about 3 km from Ramallah, there is a sign on the right pointing to Bethel.
- Originally it was a Canaanite town called Luz.
- The name Bethel was given to it by Jacob, who there had the dream of the heavenly ladder.
- Abraham camped twice at Bethel and built an altar there.
- Bethel was also the place where Samuel judged Israel,
- It was also the place where Jereboam established one of the centres of calf worship.

SHILOH

- The modern name of Shiloh is Seilun and it is situated off the main north road from Jerusalem about 12 km north of Bethel.
- Excavations have shown that the city was in existence some time before the Hebrew conquest.
- At Shiloh the tabernacle was erected (Joshua 18:1) and the land was distributed.
- While the Israelites were encamped here Joshua died. (Joshua 24:1,29).
- A Danish expedition, under the direction of Khaer and Schmidt, excavated parts of the ancient city from 1926 to 1932.
- Recent Israelite excavations by I. Finkelstein have given clarifications.
- Here was a holy quarter for both Canaanites and Israelites.
- The site of the Sanctuary, cut out of the rock, is down the hill on the northeast side.

SHECHEM (NABLUS)

- This was a fortified Canaanite city and the ruins are found at the modern city of Nablus, about 20 km north of Shiloh.
- It was in this area that Abraham pitched his first camp and erected his first altar to God after arriving in Canaan. (Genesis 12:6,7).
- Jacob settled in this area after his return from Paddan-Aram, and bought a block of land there where Joseph was later buried.
- Old Testament Shechem lay at the eastern exit of the narrow valley between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim.
- In the early part of this century, a German team excavated Shechem but their work was unscientific and haphazard.
- In 1956, an American team began to work on the site and found tremendous walls that were used to fortify the city.
- They also found two well-preserved gates that led into the city.
- It was here that the American team found the oldest coin every found in Palestine, which dated back to 500 BC.
- Shechem is found on the outskirts of Nablus as you enter the town.
- Here is Jacob's well.
- Some 200 m beyond the sign to Jacob's well on the right is Old Shechem.
- It is completely fenced off and it is difficult to find those responsible for it to be permitted entry.
- In the markets in the Casbah, an interesting local craft is that of olive twig baskets.

Jacob's Well

- As you enter Nablus from the south, you will see the sign on your right pointing to the well, which is just 200 m from the sign.
- The well is inside the Convent of Jacob's Well.
- Inside is a small place for prayer that has a picture of Jesus and the Woman at the Well.
- There is a chapel with a number of paintings like that above and the well is in the centre.
- There is no doubt that this well is authentic.
- The well is 24 m (80 ft) deep and 2 m (7 ft) in diameter.
- The well is cut through limestone rock and the water is much better here than that of other springs in the valley.
- An ancient Greek Church (originally a Russian Orthodox Church) has been built over the well which now lies in a crypt. The church has been in the process of construction for many years.

Joseph's Tomb

- You will find this tomb not far from Jacob's Well.
- As you leave Jacob's Well entrance you will notice a narrow laneway running toward the east, almost opposite the well sign.
- Follow the laneway and it will take you to Joseph's Tomb.
- The Tomb is well guarded by Israeli soldiers but they will welcome you.
- You are permitted to take photographs inside the tomb.

MOUNT EBAL AND MOUNT GEREZIM

Mount Ebal

- It is situated on your right as you face north and are about to proceed through Nablus.
- It is almost deprived of vegetation.
- It is said that it is bare because from this mountain were pronounced the curses that would overtake the transgressors of the law.
- Gerizim is the mountain on the south side.
- Moses directed that after the Israelites crossed the Jordan they go to these two mountains and on one pronounce the curse and on the other the blessings (Deuteronomy 27:12,13).

Mount Gerizim

- Is known as the Holy Mount of the Samaritans, who erected a temple there after the return of the Jews from exile.
- On the top of the mountain are several altars, and Samaritans will show you the altars built by Adam as well as that built by Noah.
- It is in this temple or synagogue that you see the Samaritan Pentateuch, one of the oldest scrolls known to man.
- If you are able to visit Mount Gerizim on the day of the Samaritan Passover you will observe a most interesting ceremony.

SAMARIA

- About 10 km northwest of Nablus you come to the sign directing you to Samaria.
- It will have the name Sebaste on the sign. This is the old capital of Israel.
- It was built by Omri about 850 BC.
- It was also the place where the kings of Israel were buried.
- In Ahab's day, this city was so well fortified that the Syrians could not overthrow it.
- The Assyrians finally conquered it only after a long siege of three years.
- When it fell, 30,000 citizens were carried away captive.
- From the beginning of its history, Samaria was the centre of pagan worship.
- Jezebel introduced Baal worship into the city and a temple to Baal was erected.
- As you look over the ruins of Samaria you will find remains of a wall of King Omri's time and also ruins dating back to Ahab's reign.
- A team from Harvard University excavated this area between 1908 and 1910.
- Further excavations were made in the 1930's when a great number of ivory plaques were discovered, probably from Ahab's time. (1Kings 22:39).
- A mosque has been built in the midst of the ruins of the Crusader built church.

TELL DOTHAN

- Is situated about 15 km north of Samaria on your left.
- Today it is known as Tell Totha.
- It is not easy to find but right by the road you see a well that would be similar to the one Joseph was placed in by his brothers before being sold to go into Egypt.
- The best way to reach Dothan would be to go into Jenin and take a small road directly west for about 1.5 km and you will see the sign point to the right.

MOUNT TABOR

- Travel from Jenin directly north to Afula and from Afula take the direct route to the Sea of Galilee. It is just 10 km east of Nazareth.
- About 3 km along the road from Afula you will see the sign to Nein.
- After another short distance there is a sign pointing to the right to Ein Dor.
- Directly opposite the Ein Dor turnoff on the west side of the road you will notice Mount Tabor.
- Early Christian tradition made Mount Tabor the Mount of Transfiguration.
- However in Christ's time there was a fort on the summit. Therefore it is unlikely to be the place apart as described in Mark 9:2.
- Buses cannot reach the summit because of narrow switchbacks on the road. Local Arab taxis will take you to the top.

TIBERIUS

- Tiberius is situated on the western side of the Sea of Galilee some 205 m (680 ft) below sea level – the largest city on Lake Galilee with about 30,000 population.
- In 62 AD Herod Antipas – a son of Herod the Great - built this city with beautiful palaces and temples.
- He named it in honour of the Roman Emperor Tiberius.
- All the inhabitants of Tiberius are Jewish, and it is the most popular resort in Israel.
- The city is noted for its hot springs and there are several here with supposed curative powers.
- On Ben Zakki Street there is the tomb of the great Jewish philosopher Maimonides.
- Not far from the lake is St. Peter's church with a boat shaped nave.

THE SEA OF GALILEE

- The Sea of Galilee is 21 km long and over 11 km wide.
- It is between 39 and 45 m deep, and is 205 m below sea level.
- This sea is known for the sudden and dangerous storms that spring up within a few minutes.
- In this regard it is interesting to study the row of trees on the mountain beside the road that overlooks Tiberius. You will find them all leaning toward the east, because of the strong winds.
- You can take a boat across to Genneseret, or you can drive around the southern part of the lake to the place where Jesus drove the demons out of the man.
- On the west shore there is a new museum with a recently discovered first century AD fishing boat on display.

The Baptism Site

- The Yardenet Baptism Site is at the southern end of the Sea of Galilee where the Jordan River flows out of the lake.
- Many Christians come to be baptised here.
- Some believe that Christ was baptised here.

MAGDALA (Miqdal)

- Just north of Tiberius by some 9 km as you follow the lake is the village of Magdala.
- There is a monument on the right side of the road and just beyond some ruins.

- It is considered that this marks the area where Mary Magdalene once lived, taking her name from the town.
- Citrus fruit grow well around here.

TABKHA

- It is situated about 10 km north of Tiberias – just a little southwest of Capernaum.
- Here Jesus is said to have fed the 5,000 with the five loaves and two fishes.
- **The Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes** was built in the 1980's.
- On the lakeside is the **Church of the Primacy of Peter** where Christ is said to have appeared to the disciples after the Resurrection.

Mount of Beatitudes

- Just above Tabkha you will pass by the eastern side of the Mount of Beatitudes.
- You will notice some grapes growing near the road.
- On the top of the Mount stands a Franciscan Church built in 1937 called the **Church of the Beatitudes**, for it is here that Jesus gave His great sermon the Beatitudes.
- Thistles grow all around, and no doubt Jesus drew His lessons when talking to the people from what He saw.
- This part of Galilee gives the feeling that here was the land of Jesus.

CAPERNAUM

- Is situated about 3 km further on from Magdala and some 12 km north of Tiberias. A sign points to Capernaum.
- These ruins are about 3 km from where the Jordan River enters Lake Galilee.
- This is where Peter lived and you will even see the remains of a home said to be Peter's.
- Excavations were made here in 1905 and the most important discovery was the remains of a synagogue.
- Professor Albright dates the Capernaum synagogue to about 244 AD, but behind the remains of this synagogue he says you can see the foundations of a much older synagogue – said to have been built on the site of St. Peter's House.
- Many of the stones from the older synagogue were used in the 244 AD building.
- In the grounds of the synagogue is a stone on which is an outline of the Star of David, the palm tree and the Ark of the Covenant. Notice the oil press in the same grounds beside the ruins.

The Golan Heights

- If you proceed north about 3 km you can take a road to the right that will take you over the Jordan River and onto the Golan Heights.
- This is where the Jews fought the Syrian army and drove them back many miles and claimed the territory.
- There are monuments here to commemorate the victory of the Israeli forces.
- This is the area for some of the sources of the Jordan River (near the border with Syria). The water is cold and at nearby Banias are the Banias Falls

HAZOR

- Only about 1.5 km past the turn-off to the Golan Heights you come to the ruins of ancient Hazor.
- This city was taken by Joshua and burned and later given to the tribe of Naphtali.
- It wasn't held by the Hebrews for long for it once again became a stronghold of the Canaanites.
- Garstang identified the Tell in 1928, but it was not excavated until 1955 by Yigael Yadin.
- The excavations yielded two Canaanite temples and many other objects of interest to the Bible student.

CANA

- There are three places in Israel with the name Cana, and **all** claim to be the site where Jesus turned water into wine.
- However, the Cana which lies about 8 km east of Nazareth is the most likely one of Bible times.
- This Cana is on the main route from Tiberius to Nazareth.
- There are two churches in the town each claiming to be the spot where the wedding feast was held.
- The best picture of the town is taken from the hill as you leave Cana and travel towards Nazareth.

NAZARETH

- Nazareth is situated about 30 km west of Tiberius and uphill all the way and 40 km southeast of Haifa.
- Nazareth where Jesus grew up is like the inside of a vast bowl with its mud and limestone houses tiered like the seats of an amphitheatre.
- Today it is a city where more than 30,000 Christian Arabs live.
- In the days of Jesus, Nazareth was only a very small village, scarcely recorded on the maps or mentioned in historical works.

The Church of the Annunciation

- The main landmark in the modern Nazareth is the Church of the Annunciation.
- The Greek Orthodox Church built this magnificent structure in 1960 – 1968.
- It was built over an earlier structure which dates from 1730 AD.
- Inside the church is the traditional Mary's Well, a spring which is the city's main water supply.
- It is also the site where the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary. See the great mural depicting this.
- The spring gushes out of the mountainside and runs through a conduit to a public fountain in the main square.
- The square is easily located. It is off the main road to Tiberius which runs through Nazareth.

The Church of St. Joseph

- Is located just 100 m from the Church of the Annunciation.
- It is believed to be the site of Joseph's carpentry shop.

- From the sanctuary you can walk down to the floor below and see its construction and a Byzantine mosaic floor.

An Old Nazareth Synagogue

- Over the road from the Church of the Annunciation and a little up the hill you will find a narrow street only large enough for a man and a donkey to walk along.
- This street, that looks more like a gutter, and is lined with small, open colourful shops, will lead to the Old Synagogue which Jesus frequented. (Luke 4:16).
- As you follow this street and bear to the left and then to the right, you come to the open courtyard where Jews will be sitting around. There will be a caretaker in charge of the building and he will gladly open the Synagogue and let you enter.
- Notice the name "Synagogue" over the doorway.

NAIN

- Is a very small village just south of Nazareth.
- Above the door inside the small church is a painted picture of Jesus raising the son of the widow from here.
- The artist has painted it in the style of Harry Anderson.

BEIT SHEARIM

- Some 18 km from Nazareth as you travel towards Haifa there are the Beit Shearim Burial Caves.
- In the second century, Beit Shearim was the home of Israel's Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin, as well as the headquarters of the famous Rabbi Yehudi Ha'nassi, the compiler of the Mishna.
- Many of the famous Jews of Israel were laid to rest in the cemetery of the town.
- Over the centuries these tombs and caves were looted and destroyed.
- However, they were unearthed and fully explored in 1936. If you have the time they are well worth a visit today.
- All the burial caves are much the same, entering through an opening in the rock or a stone door.
- An interesting stone coffin carved in Aramaic and Hebrew mentions the daughter of a rabbinical family. The inscription, as read by the guide, says "Here lies Atio, daughter of Rabbi Gamaliel, son of Nehemia, who died a virgin at 22 years of age".

HAIFA

- It is situated in northern Israel on the Mediterranean coast with Mt. Carmel behind it.
- Haifa could be considered one of the most beautifully situated cities in the world.
- It is built on the slopes of Mt. Carmel overlooking the Mediterranean Sea on one side and a bay on the other.
- It is Israel's third largest city with a population of over 250,000 and is the capital of the north.
- One of the most interesting sightseeing attractions in Haifa are the Persian Gardens and the Bahai Temple.
- Their sun-worshipping temple is almost a reminder of the Baal worship which Elijah had to meet in the same area nearly 3000 years ago.
- In the Persian Gardens the huge domed temple entombs the remains of El Bab, the Baha'Ullah's herald.

- You must remove your shoes before entering, and the tomb is a sight worth seeing with ornamental gold work and flowers in almost every nook. The Bab's remains, by the way, were hidden for years after he died a martyr's death before a firing squad. Eventually his followers secretly carried his remains to the present place of resting.

The Crusader Castle

- The ruins of the Castle are at Atlit – just a little north of Haifa.
- Here are the ruins of the largest Crusader Castle in Israel.
- It is on a headland jutting out into the sea.
- It was captured by the Moslems in 1291 AD.

MOUNT CARMEL

- Carmel means the “Vineyard of the Lord” and comes from the two Hebrew words, Kerem –El.
- It was on the range of mountains that the religious confrontation took place between the prophet of God Elijah, and the idol worshippers of Baal.
- The stream still flows below where the priests of Baal were slain. It is the brook Kishon (1 Kings 18:40).

Elijah's Cave

- It is a large smoke-blackened cave at the base of Mt Carmel near the Maritime Museum.

The Carmelite Monastery

- It is located on the northwest of Mt. Carmel and is sometimes called the “French Carmel”.
- The Monastery of Elijah, dates from 1212, and is the centre of the Carmelite Order.
- Under the High Altar is the cave where Elijah hid.
- Outside the monastery is a monument to Napoleon's soldiers, killed here in 1799.

ACRE (AKKO)

- Is situated about 25 km north of Haifa on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and about 55 km from Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee.
- Has a very delightful Old Town with a great atmosphere.
- Thutmose III mentions Acre around 1500 BC.
- Alexander the Great roamed through here in 332 BC.
- Paul passed through Acre on his missionary journeys – it was named Ptolemias as the Ptolemies had conquered it.
- Julius Caesar also passed through around 48 BC.
- It was the main port for the Crusaders following the fall of Jerusalem to them in 1099 AD.
- Richard I (The Lionheart) retook this city for the Crusaders from Saladin.
- It was the last city held by the Crusaders before they left Palestine.
- In Napoleon's time, the Moslem Armed Pasha el-Jazzar made Napoleon leave without conquering the city.
- In 1947 some 251 prisoners escaped with help from Jewish underground fighters.
- The walls have been rebuilt where the original Crusader walls existed.
- The major landmark of the city is the El-Jazzar Mosque.

- The Citadel once a Crusader building, then the Turks built the current building. It was been a prison during British rule and some Jewish prisoners were executed here.
- There is also a Turkish Bathhouse now called the Municipal Museum – showing what a Turkish Bathhouse was like over two hundred years ago.

MEGIDDO

- Megiddo is about 45 km from Haifa travelling towards Jenin.
- In Hebrew it is “Har Megiddon” and in Revelation the name is used as symbol of war.
- Here Deborah and Barak were victorious (Judges 4)
- Solomon established an important city (1 Kings 9:10; 2 Chron 1,9)
- Shishak of Egypt visited here in 915 BC (1 Kings 14:25; 2 Chron 12:9)
- Ahaziah died here 842 BC (2 Kings 9:27).
- Josiah died here (2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron 35:22).
- It was excavated between 1926 and 1936 by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- Excavations covered an area of thirteen acres and revealed the remains of twenty super-imposed cities.
- Each city was represented by a distinct layer of ruins.
- Megiddo controlled the trunk roads from Egypt to Syria and to Babylonia.
- Thutmose III of Egypt captured Megiddo in 1482 BC and the story is found in a long inscription engraved on the walls of the temple at Karnak.
- This was the first detailed record of a battle in history.
- Since then the Assyrians, Canaanites, Israelites, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Crusaders and General Allenby in 1917 have all passed through and/or occupied Megiddo in force.
- Among the very important discoveries at Megiddo are Solomon’s stables which are capable of housing 500 horses and 150 chariots.
- These are now considered to be from the time of Ahab.
- Grain silos houses and the foundations of huge gates have also been discovered here.
- Many of the Megiddo discoveries have been removed to the museums in Jerusalem.
- It is considered by many that the most amazing and interesting find was the discovery of an ingenious water system that is a remarkable example of the skilled engineering of ancient times.
- A large shaft was sunk into the ground some 25 m (85 ft) and from the bottom of the shaft a tunnel was cut through the rock channelling the water into the city from the spring outside.
- The spring opening was cleverly covered with earth to hide it from the besieging forces. The tunnel is well preserved and well worth seeing after 3000 years.

CAESAREA

- Caesarea is southwest from Megiddo on the coast or south from Haifa 50 km.
- In recent decades much work of exploration and excavation has been done here.
- This was the spectacular city of Herod the Great built in 20 BC.
- Pontius Pilate was the Governor here (Acts 10).
- Peter preached here in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10).
- Paul embarked and disembarked here several times (acts 18:22).
- Paul was tried before Felix here (Acts 23:23-25).

- Paul was imprisoned here for two years (Acts 24:27).
- Paul also appeared here before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 25,26).
- Paul sailed for Rome from here. (Acts 27:1).
- It was the home of Eusebius, an early church father around 264 AD.
- Herod began to construct a port to equal Athens and he probably succeeded.
- This city was dedicated to Augustus Caesar, Emperor of Rome from 27 BC to 14 AD.
- It later became the largest city of Judea, the chief port, the governor's residence.
- There is also the old Crusader wall of the city.
- It was here where nearly 2000 Jews and Christians were massacred in the amphitheatre (some were thrown to the lions) following the revolt of 66 AD. This revolt by the Jews led to the overthrow of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD.
- Some of the Crusaders landed here in 1101 and slaughtered the whole Arab population.
- The Crusaders found a green crystal vessel which was thought to be the Holy Grail and taken back to Italy where today it is in the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Genoa (called the Sacro Catino).
- South of the harbour, on the hill facing the sea is a beautifully preserved Roman amphitheatre, where no doubt the Jews and Christians were killed. It was uncovered only recently by excavations. It actually looks like a miniature of the Colosseum in Rome.
- Returning from the amphitheatre to Caesarea take a left turn when coming to the gold links. On a nearby hill is a Byzantine mosaic floor. It is made of interlaced circles, each containing a different bird or animal from that area.
- A Roman aqueduct is further along on the same road to the north of the old town. It was built in the second century to carry water from the hills to the city.
- In 1956 archaeologists began excavating the old city and a most interesting historic discovery was made. A stone inscribed with the name of Pontius Pilate (the Procurator who condemned Jesus) was found. This is the first archaeological evidence that showed that Pilate lived in Caesarea.
- A replica of this stone is just inside the Gate to the theatre.

TEL-AVIV

- The name means, "hill of spring".
- It was founded in 1909 on desolate sand dunes and is now the largest city in Israel with a population of over 400,000.
- It is the first city in the world to be built and populated and administered by Israel.
- It is the commercial, industrial and cultural centre of Israel.

JAFFA

- Tel-Aviv adjoins and has expanded to include the old town of Jaffa on its southern side.
- In the old city of Jaffa (Joppa) with its history of 3600 years, the Franciscan Church of Saint Peter, built in 1654 on the foundation of the medieval citadel, is the suggested site of the house of Simon the Tanner (Acts 9:43). Here the vision of Acts 10 was given to Peter.
- An older tradition has the site in a ruined mosque near the old lighthouse. The address is:- 8 Shimon Ha-Burski St. It is near Kikar Kedumim - which is Old Jaffa's main square.
- Jaffa was also the seaport where Jonah embarked for Tarshish.

THE VALLEY OF ELAH

- This valley is midway between the towns of Azekah and Socoh.
- Here is the site of the battle between David and Goliath.
- The Israelites advanced from the north and the Philistines came from the south and the coast.

ASHKELON

- From Jerusalem turn west near Esthual on the highway to Tel-Aviv.
- Travel past Zorah (Samson's birthplace – Judges 13:2-25) and Beth Shemesh (the Ark rested here on its return from Ashdod – 1 Samuel 6).
- Near Azekah (Joshua 15:35) turn into the valley of Elah – the site of the historic fight between David and Goliath. The Philistines were between Socoh and Azekah.
- Ongoing excavations are uncovering more and more of Ashkelon.
- It was the chief city of the Philistines.
- It was also the birthplace of Herod the Great.
- Samson lost his strength here at the hands of Delilah (Judges 16).
- See the portions of Ashkelon that have been exposed to the sea.
- A silver craft was found by the Gate on the north wall.
- A dog cemetery was found in excavations south of the bathing shed.

ASHDOD

- It is north of Ashkelon on the road to Tel-Aviv.
- It was once a Philistine city.
- Today it is a port in fact more imports and exports pass through here than any other port.
- Here the ark was placed in the Temple of Dagon (1 Samuel 5).

LACHISH

- Lachish is in the southern part of Israel about halfway between Hebron and Ashkelon.
- I would suggest that you go from Hebron to Tell Lachish, through the towns of Tarkumiye and Bet Gubrim.
- It is well worth a visit for Lachish is rich in history.
- It was an old Canaanite fortress city in the Shephelah.
- It came under Egyptian control probably in the time of Thutmose III, but revolted in the Armarna period, as is revealed in the Armarna Letters.
- Lachish was besieged by Sennacherib of Assyria in Hezekiah's reign, and scenes of its siege, attack, and capture are realistically depicted on stone reliefs found in Sennacherib's Palace at Ninevah – which are today in the British Museum.
- During the final years of Judah's history, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Lachish, which held out after much of the country was devastated by the armies of the Chaldeans (Jeremiah 34:7).
- Excavations show that the city was overthrown twice by Nebuchadnezzar, first in 597 BC and again in 586 BC.
- Archaeologists are uncovering the Assyrian siege ramp and rebuilding the Gate.
- Further on is AMATZIA, an underground settlement of the 2nd century AD.

