

THE SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY, VERITAS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
AND
THE COLLEGE OF ARCHAEOLOGY & BIBLICAL HISTORY, TRINITY SOUTHWEST UNIVERSITY

Bible Land Expedition, Holy Land Tour 2020

“Good & Bad Girls of the Bible”

Israel & Jordan, 10 touring days (5–14 March + allow 3 travel days; see below)

Your Expert Teachers/Guides*: Dr Steven Collins, Larissa Lusko, Dr Gary Byers

OVERVIEW:

BLE, and countless other churches and organizations, offer Holy Land Tours. But the title “Holy Land Tour” is where the similarity ends. The fact is, there isn’t another tour available that does, or can do, what a BLE tour does. Our guides and lecturers are expert Bible scholars and archaeologists, not local guides trained to cater to religious pilgrims as opposed to people interested in *real* biblical history and the archaeology that reveals it so dramatically. Not only will you experience the Holy Land’s breathtaking panoramas and biblical sites, but also you’ll see minute details illuminating biblical stories, subtleties that only expert eyes can reveal. BLE tours also balance both Old and New Testament history as it happened in both the Transjordan (Jordan) and Cisjordan (Israel). We also limit group size to a single bus (unlike many of the large tours that have multiple buses and spend more time waiting at restroom stops than actually visiting sites!), which is a real plus. The 2020 theme, “Good and Bad Girls of the Bible,” focuses on the diverse lives and personalities of important women in Scripture, alongside great characters like Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Kings David and Solomon, Elijah, John the Baptist, and Jesus. Your Bible will never read the same again!

ITINERARY:

Travel Day 1 (Tue, Mar 3) Depart from your home location.

Travel Day 2 (Wed, Mar 4) Arrive Amman, Jordan. We’ll all meet at the Olive Tree Hotel in Amman. A welcome and orientation meeting is scheduled for 7:30pm after dinner.

Tour Day 1 (Thu, Mar 5) Character: Miriam. OT theme: Israel’s wilderness wanderings. Places: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Petra. We’ll visit the amazing rose-red city of Petra, carved out of surrounding sandstone cliffs. Aaron was buried on a mountaintop near Petra. This is a great day for some serious hiking, or just casually enjoying the wonders of Petra, recently voted one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World. Overnight Amman.

Tour Day 2 (Fri, Mar 6) Characters: Herodias & Salome. OT theme: Moses’ march through Transjordan. NT theme: the ministry of John the Baptist. Places: Transjordan Highlands, Mount Nebo; Machaerus. We’ll trace the steps of Moses to Mount Nebo where he viewed the Promised Land. We’ll visit the palace/fortress where Salome danced before Herod Antipas and John the Baptist was executed. Overnight Amman.

Tour Day 3 (Sat, Mar 7) Characters: Leah & Rachel. OT theme: Jacob in Gilead. NT theme: Jesus & the Decapolis cities. Places: Jerash, Umm Qais, Gilead, Jordan Valley, Beth Shan, Galilee. We’ll enter the “Ten Cities” (Decapolis) area visited by Jesus, and the hometown of the Gaderene demoniac, first missionary to the Roman world of the Transjordan. We’ll take in an incredible view of the Yarmuk River Gorge with views of the Sea of Galilee and the Golan to the north. Overnight Tiberias, U Boutique Kinneret Hotel on the lakeshore.

Tour Day 4 (Sun, Mar 8) Characters: Sarah & the wise woman of Abel Beth Macaah. OT theme: Abraham at Dan & Joshua's northern campaign. NT theme: Jesus' ministry in Upper Galilee. Places: Galilee, Hazor, Dan, Caesarea Philippi (Banyas), Jordan River. We'll pass through areas frequented by Jesus and his disciples. We'll visit Caesarea Philippi, Jesus' favorite northern city built by Herod Phillip. We'll glimpse Mount Hermon, probably the Mount of Transfiguration. We'll meander up to mammoth Hazor, "chief among all the Canaanite cities," conquered and burned by Joshua. We'll visit Middle Bronze Age Laish/Dan of Abram's time, and later Dan of the Israelites. We'll see the altar built at Dan by Jeroboam (site of the "sins of Jeroboam"), and stand against the huge walls of the Iron Age city. We'll finish the day with a view of the Sea of Galilee from the Golan in which you'll see its entire shoreline at one time. Overnight Tiberias.

Tour Day 5 (Mon, Mar 9) Character: Peter's mother-in-law. OT theme: David & Geshur. NT theme: Jesus & the evangelical triangle. Places: Zer/Zed/Bethsaida; Capernaum; Korazin; boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. We'll walk the streets, paths, and trails followed by Jesus and his disciples. We'll walk through the gates of Zer/Zed, capital of the Kingdom of Geshur overlooking Lake Kinneret, hometown of Absalom's grandparents, allies and in-laws of King David. We'll visit the three cities of the "Evangelical Triangle," cursed by Jesus and destroyed by the Romans a generation later, as predicted. We'll finish the with a boat ride from Ginnosar to Tiberias. We'll finish the day with a spectacular view of the Sea of Galilee from the Golan. Overnight Tiberias.

Tour Day 6 (Tue, Mar 10) Character: Jezebel. OT Theme: Judges & Kings. NT Theme: the ministry of Paul. Places: Jezreel Valley, Harod Valley, Jezreel (city), Megiddo; Caesarea Maritima. We'll head up the Jezreel Valley to Jezreel, the city of Ahab and Jezebel. We'll get views of Mount Gilboa (of Saul and Jonathan), En Harod (of Gideon), Mount Tabor, Endor (of witch fame), and Nazareth. Solomon's guardian city, Megiddo (also referred to as "Armageddon"), awaits us with many stories to tell, and amazing views. When we get to Caesarea on the Sea, we'll sense the remarkable abilities of King Herod as a builder extraordinaire. We'll drop by Paul's place of "imprisonment" for an unforgettable appointment with New Testament history. Overnight Jerusalem, David Citadel Hotel.

Tour Day 7 (Wed, Mar 11) Characters: Naomi & Ruth. OT theme: wars and warriors. NT theme: Jesus and Herod the Great. Places: Judean Wilderness, Jordan Valley, Dead Sea, Masada, Ein Gedi, Qumran. We'll visit Qumran, the "home" of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and view the battleground where Kedorlaomer fought against the army of Sodom and Gomorrah over one and a half millennia earlier. We'll see Ein Gedi (Hazazon Tamar) where Kedorlaomer defeated the Amorites, and see why it was also one of King David's favorite haunts centuries later. Masada, the mountaintop fortress of Herod the Great, is spectacular from every angle. You'll marvel at the "last stand" of the First Jewish Revolt. Overnight Jerusalem.

Tour Day 8 (Thu, Mar 12) Character: Princess Michal. OT theme: the Jerusalem of old. Places: Central Highlands, Jerusalem of Melchizedek and the Jebusites, City of David; Broad Wall; Israel Museum. We can stand above the defensive walls of Melchizedek's city, walk through the tunnel dug by King Hezekiah, stand at the place where Abram met with King Melchizedek and see the very spot where Solomon was anointed king of Israel! Overnight Jerusalem.

Tour Day 9 (Fri, Mar 13) Character: Mary Magdalene. NT theme: the Jerusalem of Jesus' day. Places: Mount of Olives, Wohl Museum. Garden of Gethsemane, SW Temple Mount Excavations; Western Wall Tunnel; Pools of Bethesda; Via Dolorosa. On this day, we'll touch the Passion of the Christ. We'll walk down a Herodian street where giant architectural stones crashed down on the stone pavement as the Romans destroyed the Temple complex in AD 70. Overnight Jerusalem.

Tour Day 10 (Sat, Mar 14) Character: Lot's wife. OT theme: God's judgment. NT theme: the Messiah revealed. Places: Dead Sea, Kikkar of the Jordan River, Sodom (Tall el-Hammam) and Gomorrah (Tall Kufrayn), Beth Jeshimoth, Abel-Shittim (where the Ark of the Covenant rested before crossing the Jordan), Bethany beyond Jordan, Perea. We'll visit the location of the Israelite encampment on the Plains of Moab, and stand where the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant rested before being carried across the Jordan River. We'll walk over evil's "ground zero" at Sodom, and even touch the ashes of its destruction. We'll see the area where John baptized Jesus. You'll also have an opportunity to swim in the Dead Sea. Overnight Amman.

Travel Day 3 (Sun, Mar 15) Departure day.

PRICE AND REGISTRATION:

The cost of the trip (exclusive of airfare) is \$4,295. But there is a special **early-registration price of \$3,945 for those who sign up by 1 July 2019**. A single-room supplement is \$1,150. The registration down payment is \$750. Trip price is subject to change until the balance is paid in full. Balance must be paid no later than 1 December 2019 (review the refund policy at www.bletravel.com).

For details and answers to your questions, contact Dr Glenda Austin in our Albuquerque office by email (admin@tsu-edu.us) or phone (505-33-BIBLE; 505-332-4253).

***TEACHERS/GUIDES:**

Steven Collins, PhD, is among the world's foremost biblical archaeologists. He is Director of the School of Archaeology at Veritas International University, and serves as Consulting Research Professor in the College of Archaeology, Trinity Southwest University. Also a Bible scholar, Dr Collins teaches Old and New Testament history, biblical languages, biblical interpretation, and Christian apologetics. He is also Director and Chief Archaeologist of the Tall el-Hammam/Sodom excavations in Jordan, now heading into its 15th season. A prolific author, he has written numerous articles in professional journals and magazines (including *Biblical Archaeology Review*), and many books including *Discovering the City of Sodom* (Simon & Schuster 2013) and the *Harvest Handbook of Bible Lands* (Harvest House Publishers 2019) for which he is co-editor and a principal author. He's been excavating in and leading tours of Israel and Jordan for over 25 years. Dr Collins is a much-sought-after conference speaker/teacher, and is featured in documentary films airing on the National Geographic, Discovery, History, and Travel Channels.

Larissa Lusko is Dean of the College of Women's Studies and Christian Leadership at Trinity Southwest University, and an independent certified coach, trainer, speaker, and teacher with the John Maxwell Team. She is passionate about helping women discover their purpose, and equipping them with tools to develop their potential and calling. In addition to her ministry as a Bible teacher, Larissa frequently speaks at conferences and events. She is currently completing a master's degree in Archaeology & Biblical History at TSU, and is involved in the Tall el-Hammam Excavation Project in Jordan.

Gary Byers, PhD, is a leading biblical archaeologist, and Dean of the College of Archaeology & Biblical History at Trinity Southwest University. Also a Bible scholar and teacher, he is Assistant Director of the Tall el-Hammam/Sodom excavations in Jordan, and Senior Archaeologist at the Shiloh excavations in Israel/Palestine. Dr Byers has over 25 years of experience excavating in Israel and Jordan, as well as leading tours through the Holy Land. Dr Byers most recently contributed articles to the soon-to-be-released *Harvest Handbook of Bible Lands* (Harvest House Publishers 2019), and has written numerous articles for archaeological publications.