



School of International Studies
Department of Travel Study

September 2024 Intensive Explorations in the Holy Land 24-Days in the Holy Land September 7-30, 2024 Faculty: Dann Hone

Price \$TBA Based on 12 full paying participants (Land Price only)
Includes Negev & Red Sea



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This in-depth Intensive Explorations of the Holy Land is designed for travelers who have been to the Holy Land and desire a more intense experience than typical 10-12-day tours. The order of visiting sites is chosen mainly to progress through, first, the Old, and then the New Testament with emphasis on biblical lifestyles. A portion of the tour days will be devoted to lectures, discussions, and other study activities held mainly on the bus and at various sites, with the focus being on the scriptures but also on giving other historical, archaeological, and cultural insights to this land and its people. Added to this unique itinerary is a journey through the Negev and the Red Sea. Field study experiences include special activities that will help participants re-live the times of the Biblical world.

Days 1
Sunday-Monday
September 8-9

Depart USA—Arrival to Jerusalem

Arrival at the Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv. Drive to Jerusalem and pass some biblical sites on the way. Check-in to our hotel in East Jerusalem for three nights.

Day 2
Tuesday
September 10

Orientation to the Biblical World and Jerusalem Day: Jerusalem Orientation Walks and Rides • The Israel Museum • Knesset/National Menorah • Model City • Shrine of the Book • Begin Studies of Abraham and the Patriarchs

After breakfast and brief orientation meeting, we begin a brief orientation walk and ride thru Jerusalem, its money changers, markets, and transportation systems, to enable participants in their free time to get around the city with much more ease. Buying a *shawarma* or *falafel* sandwich for lunch in East Jerusalem, exchanging money at **Aladdin's**, walking through **the Old City**, and riding the new light rail to **Mahaneh Yehuda** (the West Jerusalem Jewish Market), and walking **King George/Ben Yehuda Streets** is part of our orientation to both ancient and modern cultures in the Holy Land. An early dinner will be provided at our hotel before we depart by bus to **West Jerusalem** and **the Israel National Museum**. On our way, we will pass the **Knesset Building**, where the Israeli parliament meets, walk to the **National Menorah** before our visit to **the Israel National Museum**, which includes the **Shrine of the Book** (the museum of the Dead Sea Scrolls) and the wonderfully re-created **Model City of Jerusalem**, which portrays the city as it looked near the time of Jesus. We return to our hotel for a welcome overnight. (B, D)

Day 3
Wednesday
September 11

Introduction to Biblical Lifestyles: Neot Kedumim • Preparations for Negev & Red Sea Trip

Arising early, our studies of Biblical lifestyles begin with a morning visit to the world's only Biblical Nature reserve, **Neot Kedumim**. Its entire purpose is to connect the words and the history of the Bible to the reality of the present. As we walk the nature reserve, expert guides will lead us through an exciting experimental experience introducing us to the day-to-day life in Biblical times. The afternoon will include orientation and preparation for our field trips to the Negev and Arava Rift Valley. Dinner at our hotel in East Jerusalem. (B, D)

Day 4
Thursday
September 12

Way of the Patriarchs • Hebron • Beersheba • Nitsanna & Be'erotayim (Kadesh Barnea)

Our focus for the Southern Judea and Negev journeys will be on the life of the prophet Abraham and his family, and the Exodus of the Children of Israel. We begin our study of Abraham by driving south along **the Way of the Patriarchs** and learn where Abraham lived and was buried as we first stop in **Hebron at the cave of Machpelah**. If possible, **visit pottery shops**. Head further south to **Lahav and the Bedouin Museum of the Negev to learn of Bedouin lifestyles**. We then drive to **Beersheba** to see the Old Testament tel and discuss more of the events in the life of Abraham and his family, including the instructions to take Isaac to Moriah to offer him as a sacrifice. Continuing further south to **Nitsanna** and the **Khan at Be'erotayim** near the site of ancient **Kadesh Barnea** where the children of Israel spent most of their years during the Exodus. We will **spend the night at the Khan** in the **Bedouin style guesthouses using sleeping bags**. Our dinner will include a **Bedouin style meal** followed by a discussion on the life of Moses and the Exodus. (B, D)

Day 5
Friday
September 13

The Exodus • Camel Trek • Sde Boker • Avdat • Mizpah Ramon

After an early breakfast we will take a **short camel caravan tour** led by the staff of **Khan Be'erotayim**. During the camel-ride, we will learn about the ancient settlements and agriculture; the adaptation of flora and fauna to the desert climate; survival in the desert; the vital need for water; the spice-route caravans and other fascinating stories about the people of the desert. We then continue further south to **David Ben Gurion's Kibbutz, Sde Boker**, and his burial site. Our next visit takes us to **Avdat, an early Nabatean fortress**. Our final stop will be at **Mizpah Ramon** overlooking the largest crater of Israel. (B, L, D)

Day 6
Saturday
(Sabbath)
September 14

The Exodus (continued) • Timnah • Tabernacle of Moses Model • Eilat

After a very early breakfast, we will head south along through **the Ramon crater** and discuss suggested sites of the Exodus and Mount Sinai. We will head south to **the copper mines of Solomon at Timnah**. Also, here is the famous **reconstruction of the Tabernacle of Moses**. **The Tabernacle Project** is the only life size model of its kind in Israel. It has been researched extensively and built according to specifications given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Our evening dinner and overnight will be at **Eilat**, the most southern city and only Israeli port on **the Red Sea**. (B, D)

Day 7
Sunday
September 15

Eilat • Underwater Observatory Marine Park • Snorkeling

Our morning will be reserved for enjoying the **beautiful coral reefs** or just sleeping in and savoring a late breakfast. We will visit the **Underwater Observatory Marine Park in Eilat**. Even for those who like shallow waters and are novices at snorkeling, the abundance of multi-colored tropical fish and corals will be astounding. Across the Jordanian border is the port city of **Aqaba**, located near the ancient port of **Etzion-geber** which was used by the Queen of Sheba in the days of King Solomon and possibly part of the journey of Lehi and his family. From the beaches of Eilat, we will be able to see four national borders – Egypt and the Sinai, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel. (B, D)

Day 8
Monday
September 16

Eilat • Aravah • Dead Sea • Masada • Ein Gedi • Qumran • Jericho

We arise early before heading north along the great rift valley known as **the Aravah** until we reach **Zohar** and **the Dead Sea**, 1,330 feet below sea level. Our first stop will be in **the Dead Sea Wilderness** and discuss the stories of Sodom and Gomorrah. We then proceed further north along the Dead Sea to stop at the ancient mountaintop fortress built by King Herod, **Masada**. We will ride the tram to the top or some may choose to climb the hill. We will explore the ruins there. The tram will return us to the bottom (or others may hike down) where we will explore the museum and learn more of the history, especially the Jewish tragedy of their revolt against Rome. Time permitting, we will see **Ein Gedi**, where David hid from Saul. We will also visit **Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found**, and learn more of their history and content. We will stop at the Dead Sea and one of the most **unusual swimming experiences** of a lifetime. The **Jericho Resort Hotel** will be a welcome stay for us. (B, D)

Day 9
Tuesday
September 17

Conquest Routes: Jericho • Nablus • Shiloh • Way of the Patriarchs (north) • Jerusalem

Our focus today and tomorrow will be on the entry of Joshua and the Children of Israel into the Holy Land. We will also review the period of early Israelite history during the period of the judges and the early monarchy. Our visits will depend on current safety conditions. After an early breakfast, we will visit **Old Testament Jericho** at **Tel es-Sultan**. Leaving Jericho, we will drive up **the Jordan Valley** and then proceed north past where Abraham first entered the Promised Land and, later, his grandson Jacob. Our first stop will be **Nablus, or ancient Shechem (Tel Balata)**, where Abraham built his first altar to worship the Lord (Gen. 12:1–7). We will view **Mount Gerizim** and **Mount Ebal** from the tel and discuss how the Lord taught the children of Israel about the blessings or cursings they would receive depending on their obedience (Deut. 27, 28). We will next visit **Jacob's Well**, not only to discuss Jacob, but also to see where the Savior had His insightful discussion with the woman at the well (John 4:5–42). We will then visit **the Samaritan Museum**, followed by a visit with a Muslim woman to learn more about her religion. If time allows, we will drive to **Samaria** to discuss the later history of the Northern kingdom. As we return to Jerusalem, along what was called in biblical times **“the Way of the Patriarchs,”** we will stop at **Shiloh**, where the ark of the covenant was kept in the tabernacle for many years and discuss the Prophet Samuel. We return to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight at our hotel in East Jerusalem. An evening short class and discussion will be held. (B, D)

Day 10
Wednesday
September 18
(continue)

Jerusalem • Old City • Holy Mount • City of David • Hezekiah's Tunnel

Our day begins with an early morning **walk through the Old City** to visit the **Temple Mount**, which is located atop Mount Moriah—the place where Abraham took Isaac to offer him as a sacrifice. It was also the site of the temples of Solomon and later Herod; today it is occupied by the magnificent **Dome of the Rock** and the **El Aksa Mosque**, making this city the third most sacred site in all the world of Islam. We'll

Day 10
Wednesday
September 18

visit the **Western Wall** to observe Jewish worship and **Bar Mitzvahs** and the **Ha Kotel Excavations**. We then climb the stairs to the Jewish Quarter to visit the **Temple Institute and the Wohl Archaeological Museum** before having some free time to shop and enjoy lunch. Departing through Dung Gate we go to the excavated **City of David**. Here we will watch a movie of the history of this important Old Testament site. We then walk down to see more ruins and then down to **Warren's Shaft and into Hezekiah's Tunnel** — the ancient water system carved through the hill at the time of Isaiah. We'll continue to the **Pool of Siloam**, site of one of Jesus' miracles (John 9). If the **Cardo Parva** is newly open, we will ascend the very street that existed in Christ's Day that leads back to the southern wall of the Temple Mount and visit the **Davidson Center** to learn more about the Holy Mount at the time of Jesus. After we return to the hotel, we may have some free time before we eat dinner. We will have a class this evening about "The Ministry of Christ and the Days of Herod the Great". (B, D)

Day 11
Thursday
September 19

Shephelah • Valley of Elah • Beit Guvrin • Lachish

Our day will begin with a 6:00 a.m. breakfast in order that we may leave early to some of the heavy traffic. After breakfast we will board our motor coach and travel southwest from the hill country of Judah to the valleys of the **Shephelah**, where many of the Old and New Testament events occurred. Our first stop will be the **Soreq**, where Samson (from **Zora**) and Delilah (from **Timnah**) were born. We will stop for a recounting of these and other stories from the book of Judges at the ancient Tel of **Beth Shemesh**, where the Ark of the Covenant was delivered from the Philistines. Traversing the low hills (Shephelah) our next stopping point is in the **Valley of Elah**, where David met the mighty Philistine, Goliath. We, too, will use a sling to try our luck at hitting a target. The high ruins of **Azekah** loom over us as we recount these significant events. Continuing across the Shephelah we pass below the hometown of Micah (**Maresha Gat**) in route to visit the Bell Caves and the Sidonian-Idumean city of **Maresha**. (The Herodian family came from here.) The ancient fortress of **Lachish** is our final stop in the Shephelah. We will travel back towards the edge of the Shephelah and pass by the ruins of **Gath** and **Ekron**. These sites have been excavated with the help of BYU faculty and students. The final valley of the Shephelah in our travels will be the **Aijalon**, where Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still for the children of Israel. Passing **Beth Horon**, we mount the Benjamin Plateau and pass the ancient site of **Gibeon** for our final stop at **Nebi Samwil** (traditional burial site of the Prophet Samuel and place where Solomon prayed for wisdom) on the northern outskirts of Jerusalem. From here we can see nearly all the **Benjamin Plateau**, where geographically 67% of Old Testament recorded events occurred. Next we return to our Jerusalem Hotel. (B, D)

Day 12
Friday
September 20

The day is for resting, visiting sites in East and West Jerusalem, shopping, etc. A list of optional sites will be recommended for those who want more adventure. In the early evening (5:30 pm) for those who desire, we will walk to the **Western Wall (Ha Kotel)** to witness the Jews **celebrate the opening of the Sabbath**. Overnight is at our hotel in East Jerusalem. (B, D)

Day 13
Saturday
(Sabbath)
September 21

Jerusalem • BYU Jerusalem Center • Bethlehem • Shepherd's Field

After breakfast, we transfer to the **Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies (BYU)** on the Mount of Olives for a tour of the gardens and facilities before attending Sabbath Services with the Jerusalem Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After services, we head to **Bethlehem** for a lunch meal before visiting the **Church of Nativity on Manger Square**. Then we travel to the **Catholic Shepherd's Fields** for our own testimony meeting. We return to the hotel for dinner and overnight. (B, D)

Day 14
Sunday
September 22

Judean Wilderness • Jericho • Qasr el Yahud • Jordan River Valley • Beit Shean • Nazareth • Church of the Annunciation

Leaving Jerusalem, we will follow the Old Roman Way through the **Judean Wilderness** that Christ walked with his disciples. Overlooking the **Wadi Qelt**, we will read more of the Psalms and parables of the scriptures and discuss monastic life as well. Returning to **Jericho**, we will view, the **Mount of Temptation** and talk of the Savior's temptations in the wilderness. We will then drive out to **Qasr el Yahud** to not only discuss the children of Israel's miraculous crossing the Jordan River (as did the later prophets, Elijah and Elisha), but also the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. We'll have an hour on the bus up the valley to discuss other biblical events as we drive to **Beit Shean** for lunch and a view of the Old Testament Tel and the post-New Testament city. Passing below both **Mount Gilboa** and the **ancient site of Jezreel**, we will then cross the central-eastern portion of the **Esdraelon Valley** (also known as **Armageddon**) to ascend the **Nazareth Hills of Lower Galilee**. We will arrive at our accommodations in the boyhood town of Jesus, **Nazareth**, next to the **Church of the Annunciation** at the **Convent of the Sisters of Nazareth** for dinner and a two-night stay. (B, D)

Day 15
Monday
September 23

Nazareth • Mount Tabor • Nazareth Village • Mount Arbel Overlook

After an early breakfast, we will depart Nazareth for the village of Deburiyya, where we will take **taxis to the top of Mount Tabor**, the traditional site of Christ's transfiguration. We will spend time discussing the many events that may have happened here. Returning to Nazareth and proceed to the **Nazareth Village** to step back in time in a wonderful re-creation of first-century life in a small Galilean village. **Lunch will be a First Century style served at Nazareth Village.** After Lunch our journeys take us to **Sephoris**, capital of the Galilee region in Roman times and probable site of work for the carpenter Joseph and his young son Jesus. Returning to Nazareth we will walk to the **Church of the Annunciation** and the **Church of Saint Joseph** which is situated a few yards from the entry to our accommodations at the Sisters of Nazareth Convent and Hospice. (B, L, D)

Day 16
Tuesday
September 24

Mount Arbel • Magdala • Nof Ginnosar • Sail on the Sea of Galilee to Tiberias • Capernaum • Mount of Beatitudes • St. Peter's Primacy

Passing through **the Galilean Hills** we will pass through **Kfar Khanna** (Cana), traditional site of Jesus' first recorded miracle, pass by the **Horns of Hittin**, and travel to **Mount Arbel** for a panoramic view of **the Sea of Galilee**. Passing down through the high Galilean hills we come to **Magdala**, and stand in an actual synagogue where the Savior and His apostles taught in. After our tour of the ruins and church of Magdala we take a short ride to **Nof Ginnosar** to see their small museum and a **First Century fishing boat** like the ones Jesus and His apostles used. From here we will board **a boat to sail the Sea of Galilee** to **Tiberias**, one of the four sacred cities of Judaism and, in modern times, the only city on the Sea of Galilee. We will take a stop at the **Tiberias markets** for picnic lunch foods, before going north along the western shores to stop at We will then head to the northern shores to visit the site of ancient **Capernaum**, Peter's home which served as the headquarters for Jesus' Galilean ministry. Here there are more events mentioned in the gospels than any other location. We will drive to the probable location of **Bethsaida**, the birthplace of Peter, Andrew and Philip. Near here is where the feeding of the 5,000 took place. We continue to **Chorazin** to visit the ruins of the third and last city that Matthew (11:21-24) lists for which Jesus upbraided and cursed where "because they repented not". Our final stop in the afternoon is the **Mount of Beatitudes** to study the Sermon on the Mount. The late afternoon and evening will be spent swimming, relaxing before and after dinner. (B, D)

Day 17
Wednesday
September 25

Kursi • Bethsaida • Tel Katzrin & Golan Museum • Hula Valley • Hazor • Banias • Bental • Golan Heights

After breakfast, we will drive north into **Upper Galilee** past the site of the casting of devils into swine, **Kursi** where the 4000 were fed with the multiplication of loaves and fishes by Christ, where our first stop will be at the ruins of the **Talmudic village of Tel Katzrin** and the **Golan Museum**. In the Hula Valley we will pass the Old Testament ruins of **Hazor**, an ancient Canaanite citadel conquered by Joshua. We will continue to **Tel Dan**, the ancient northern limits of Israel ("from Dan to Beersheba") to see some Old Testament ruins, including a gateway that dates to the time of Abraham, and one of the headwaters of the Jordan River. Here we will follow the paths of the rainforest-like park. Our next visit is the ruins of **Banias**, **ancient Caesarea Philippi**, at the foot of **Mount Hermon** to discuss the sacred events of Matthew 16 and see another source of the Jordan River. We drive up to **the Golan Heights**, home of most of the **Druze** population of Israel as well as the scene of fierce fighting between Israel and Syria in 1967 and again in 1973. Our view from **Mount Bental**, a former IDF fortification, will be impressive. We will return to the guesthouse, where we will enjoy an evening including a short class and swimming and prepare for departure from the Galilee region the next morning. (B, D)

Day 18
Thursday
September 26

This is a day to do special things, enjoy the Sea and discuss the scriptures and ministry of Christ – possibly **optional travel** to the northern **limits of the west coast of Israel, from Akko to Rosh Hanikrah**. Have a relaxing evening. (B, D)

Day 19
Friday
September 27

Megiddo • Mount Carmel • Muhkraqa • Haifa • Dor (Nahsholim)

After breakfast, we will travel south around the Sea of Galilee and past **Hamat Tiberias** and the modern city of **Tiberias**. Passing through Tiberias, we climb the Galilean hills to **Mount Arbel** for our last view of the Sea of Galilee and the Golan Heights before crossing the Nazareth Hills. We will pass **the Horns of Hittin** and have a view across the **Beit Netofa Valley** to the site of **Cana**, where Jesus turned the water to wine. We next visit some important Old Testament sites starting with **Megiddo**, the fortress overlooking the historic **Jezreel Valley**. This site also gives us pause to discuss some future events and then travel to **Mukhraka** where Elijah had his confrontation with the priests of Baal (1 Kings 18). We then drive up on **Mount Carmel** for a breathtaking view of the city from **Kaiser's Watch** and recount the important LDS Church historical events which took place in this area. We will view some of the beautiful **Baha'i gardens**

(continued)

Day 19
Friday
September 27

and their temple. The day will end with a visit to the **Old German Templar Cemetery**, where two LDS missionaries and some Church members are buried. We leave the city and drive south along the Mediterranean Coast to the ancient port of **Dor** at the **Guest House of Nahsholim** on the **Mediterranean Sea** coast for dinner and overnight. Some who are energetic and not tired from the day's travels may choose to walk along the private **Mediterranean beach** or swim in its waters. (B, D)

Day 20
Saturday
(Sabbath)
September 28

Tel Dor • Mediterranean Coast • Caesarea • Jaffa • Jerusalem

After an Israeli kosher breakfast, some may choose an **early morning swim** while others visit the ancient site of **Tel Dor**, where it is recorded that some of the cedars of Lebanon for Solomon's Temple were delivered by the Phoenician king Hiram of Tyre. Today **Kibbutz Nahsholim** is the headquarters of the **Underwater Archaeological Excavation Society of Israel** and houses **HaMizgaga - Museum of Archaeology and Glass**, a unique museum, which we will visit. Following our check-out from the guesthouse, we will travel south to **Caesarea Maritima**, the eastern Mediterranean capital of the Roman Empire for 600 years and a city where Peter and Paul were held in prison. The Roman theater, hippodrome, and aqueducts will spark our interest. We continue south to Tel Aviv, and if we have not done so earlier, visit Jaffa to recount the experiences of Jonah and Peter and see the **Old Jaffa Visitors Center**. Our dinner and overnight will be once again at our hotel in East Jerusalem where our first night began on our journeys. (B, D)

Day 21
Sunday
September 29

Jerusalem • Footsteps of Jesus (Day 1)

These next two days will prove to be an unforgettable experience as we begin to tread the footsteps of the Savior, reviewing the last events of His mortal ministry. We begin our day with a drive to the ancient village of **Bethany**, where we will visit the **Tomb of Lazarus** and the traditional site of the home where he lived with his sisters, Mary and Martha. We will stop at the **Mount of Olives** village of **Bethpage** where Jesus' disciples prepared a colt for His Triumphal ride into Jerusalem. Our next stop is a visit to **Mount Zion** and the **Upper Room**, where a Passover meeting was held with Jesus and the Twelve and the sacrament was introduced. We Return to the Mount of Olives and the **Garden of Gethsemane**. In the Garden of Gethsemane, centuries old olive trees will remind us of the sacred account of our Savior's suffering and arrest. We will walk up to the Orson Hyde Gardens for a special review of the Atonement. (B, D)

Day 22
Monday
September 23

Jerusalem • Footsteps of Jesus (Day 2) • Last Hours of the Savior's Life • His Resurrection

Our experiences of this day will begin with a drive to Mount Zion, the traditional site of the house of Caiaphas, the high priest, at **St. Peter's in Gallicantu**, where the Savior was illegally tried after His arrest in Gethsemane. We enter **Lion's Gate**, through which we walk to the **Pool of Bethesda** area to discuss the events in John 5, before going on to the general area of the **Antonia Fortress**, where Jesus was sentenced to be crucified. Following a portion of the Vis Doloroso (Way of Sorrow), we will then turn and pass through Damascus Gate. we will walk to **Gordon's Calvary or Golgotha**, the place of the Crucifixion—and conclude at the **Garden Tomb**, where many believe the body of Christ was interred and from which He rose on that Easter Sunday so long ago. The remainder of the day will be for packing and enjoying our stay in the Holy Land. (B, D)

Days 23-24
Tuesday-
Wednesday
October 1-2

Tel Aviv • Final Destination

Late evening departure from Ben Gurion Airport and arrival day at destinations. If time permits stop at Nicopolis (Emmaus for ½ hour meeting). (B)



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PHOTOGRAPHS FROM PAST PROGRAM LOCATIONS



(1) Jerusalem Panorama; (2) Southern end of the Sea of Galilee looking to East; (3) Bar Mitzva celebrated at Dung Gate, Jerusalem; (4) Shepherds' Field outside Bethlehem; (5) Hebron Potter's shop; (6) Intensive Explorations' Camel Trek Be'erotayim, Negev-Sinai border; (7) First Century Rolling Stone Tomb, Midras, Shephelah; (8) Red Sea Underwater Marine Observatory, Eilat; (9) Snorkeling the Red Sea Corals; (10) Samaritan Priests with Oldest Torah Scroll, Mt. Gerizim, Samaria, West Bank; (11) & (12) Nazareth Village, Nazareth; (13) Roman Theater, Caesarea Maritima.