



CHRISTIANS UNITED FOR ISRAEL

ISRAEL

A JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME





Dear Pilgrim,

When I first journeyed to Israel, my life was forever changed and I know that your time in this sacred land will be a life-transforming experience as well. You will see the Scriptures unfold before your very eyes as you walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer.

This is the land where King David established Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel. This is where Jeremiah and Isaiah penned the principles of righteousness that became the moral foundations of civilization. This land is where a rabbi named Jesus of Nazareth established the covenants of my faith that are chiseled in the depths of my soul.

The Bible is in itself a journal of accounts of those who, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, chronicled events that changed the world. The spiritual impact of these events is eternal yet walking in the land of the Bible cannot be described, only experienced. There is no place on earth more significant than Israel. No matter how often I return, the reality of God's unbreakable covenant with Abraham never fails to impress me when I see the miracle of the modern Jewish state with my own eyes.

The survival of the Jewish people as a culture still anchored to the same Holy Scriptures, the same language, the same traditions, and the same land for more than 3,000 years is the end result of God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—there is no other explanation. The rebirth of modern Israel is the greatest miracle of all time.

Despite all the tragedies and horrific abuses the Jewish people have suffered, the descendants of Abraham are living and prospering in the Land that God promised them in the book of Genesis. After nearly two thousand years of exile, Jewish men and women returned to the barren places once inhabited by their biblical ancestors. They rebuilt cities out of swamps, and transformed the desert into farmland. Israel lives—it is healthy, joyful, and prosperous—it is a "light unto the nations."

The Jewish State has become a hub of creativity and innovation that fuels life-giving global technologies. Israeli scientists are on the cutting edge of medical research, of creating agricultural programs that are helping the nations of the world overcome famine and drought. Israel is a global leader in disaster response training; its humanitarian aid teams bring healing and hope to international communities hit by natural disasters.

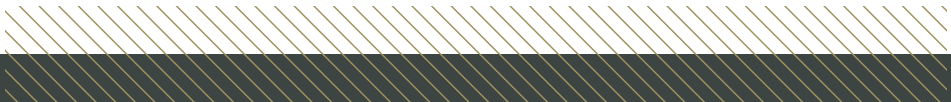
As the only truly free and democratic state in the Middle East, Israel is a beacon of hope and inspiration for all men and women who respect the value of all human life as image bearers of our Creator. While in Israel, I ask that you look at the people and notice firsthand the beautiful diversity of this nation. Among the backdrop of familiar Bible accounts and sites, as the Jewish people thrive in their ancient homeland, they protect the freedom and prosperity of all people and all faiths.

I encourage you to use this journal to chronicle your personal spiritual experiences and as you learn about Israel's amazing Biblical history and modern-day miracles, I ask that you take time to embrace the people of Israel—for they are the Apple of God's Eye.

May the blessings of the Lord surround you as a shield as you walk in this Holy Land.



Pastor John Hagee



ISRAELI HISTORY

- Land of Israel Timeline
- Timeline of Israel's Defensive Wars
- 1967 Maps

ISRAEL TODAY

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SCRIPTURE

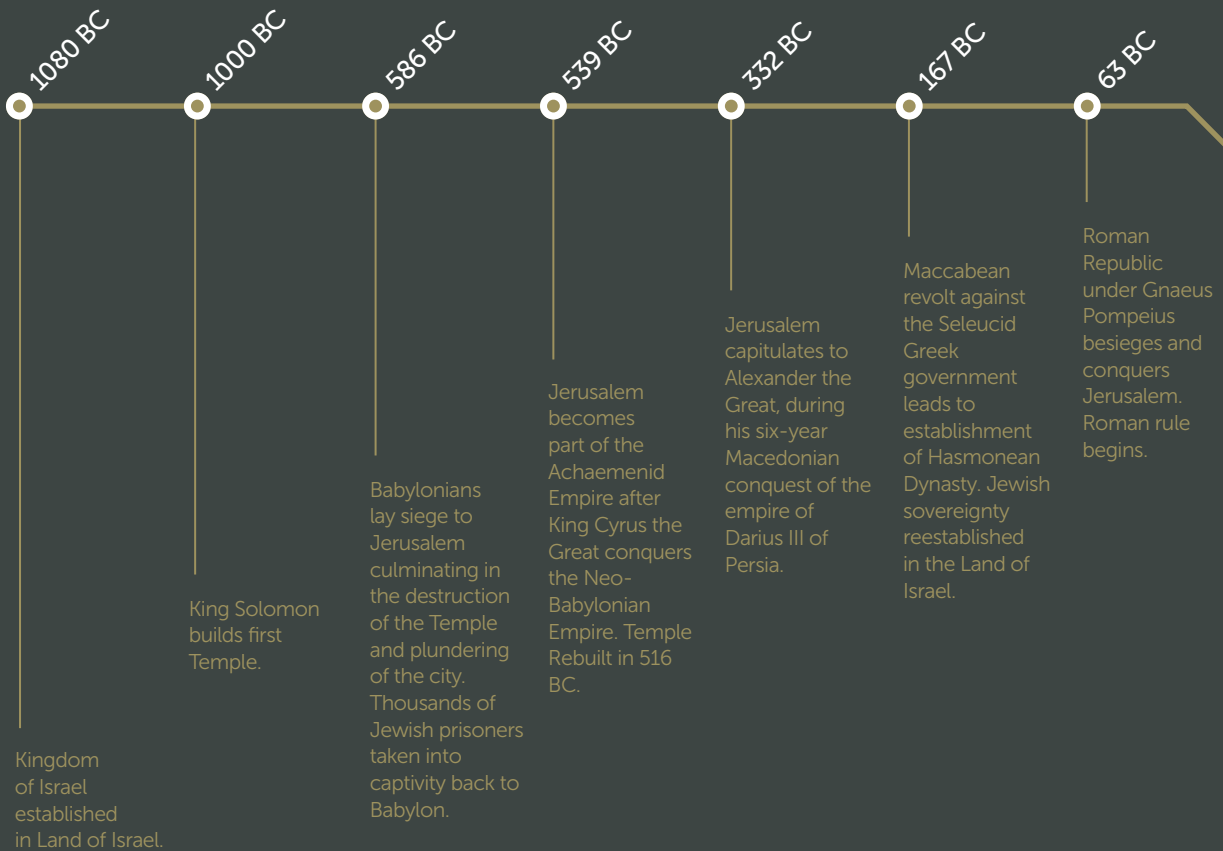
- Biblical Not Political
- Everlasting Covenant
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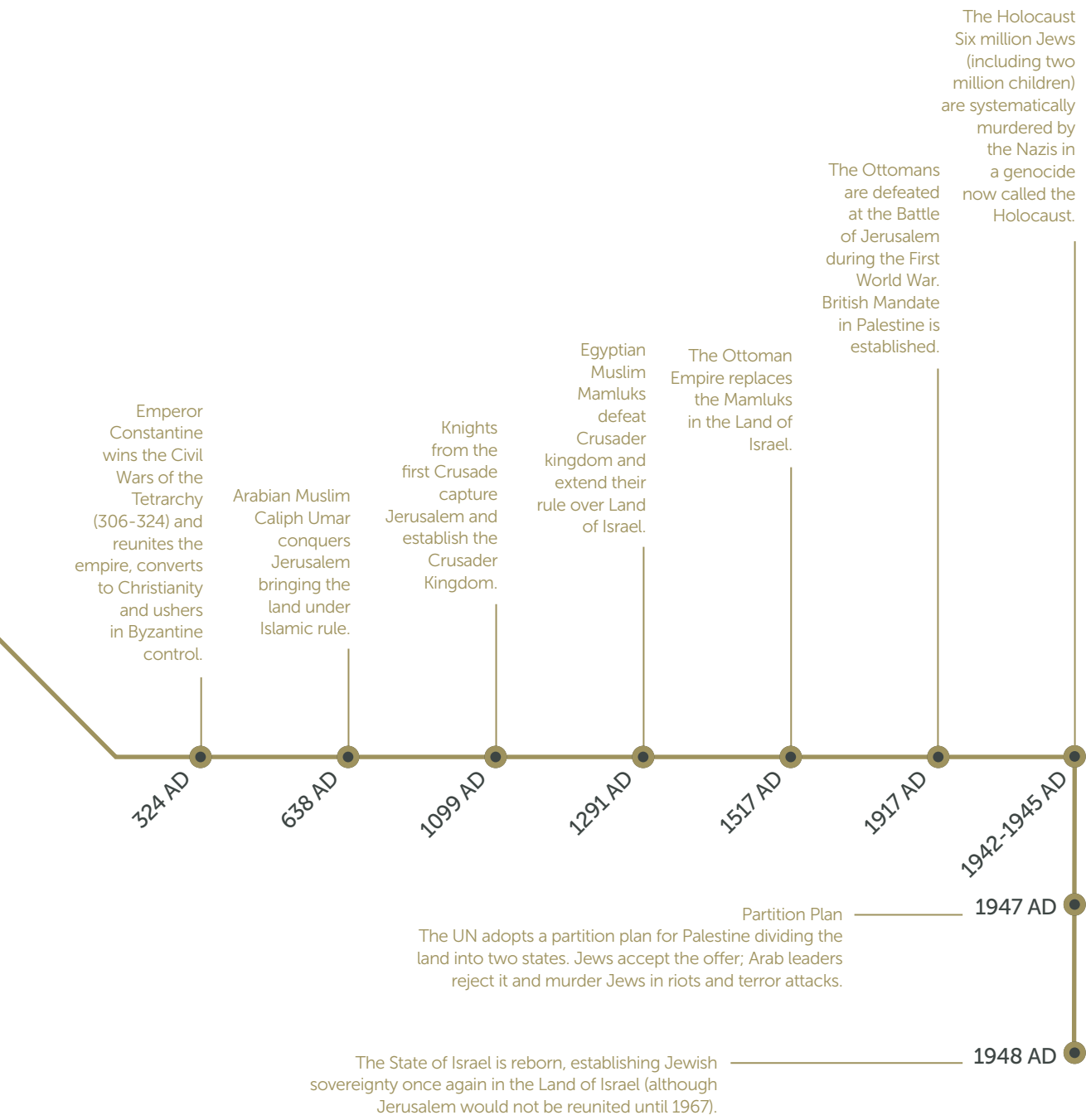
TRAVEL AND LIVE ISRAEL

Get ready for the journey of a lifetime. Your tour of the Holy Land will recharge your faith, challenge your mind, and jump-start your advocacy for Israel. You will see the Scriptures unfold before your very eyes as you walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer.

LAND OF ISRAEL

1080 BC - 1948 AD





TIMELINE OF ISRAEL'S DEFENSIVE WARS

1948

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

The day after Israel declared independence, five Arab armies attacked Israel. Short on manpower and resources, and with almost no international assistance, Israel miraculously survived and even gained ground. But independence came at a great cost. Israel lost 6,373 people in the war, nearly one percent of its entire population. When the war ended in 1949, Israel's borders were redrawn along the armistice lines where Egypt, Jordan, and Syria ended their military campaign to wipe out the new Jewish state. These borders became known as the Green Line but were never formalized into permanent borders and were never recognized by the United Nations as binding international law. The Green Line simply represented the facts on the ground between 1949 and 1967.

1967

SIX DAY WAR

In the years preceding 1967, attacks against Israel by Palestinian terror groups based in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan had increased. In mid-May Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser mobilized his military in the Sinai on Israel's border in addition to closing the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping, essentially blockading the Israeli port city of Eilat. At the end of May, Jordan joined the Egypt-Syria mutual defense pact. With threats mounting on its borders, Israel was vastly outnumbered. Only 22 years had passed since the Holocaust, and Arab leaders were again promising to drive the Jews into the sea. The Israel Defense Force decided to launch a stunning pre-emptive strike, successfully destroying 90% of Egypt's

air force on the ground. The war lasted just six days - taking place between June 5th through the 10th, 1967. Israel won a miraculous victory over five Arab armies, while reuniting Jerusalem and taking possession of the Golan Heights, Gaza, the Sinai Peninsula and the West Bank. For the first time in 19 years, Jews were once again able to pray at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

1968 – 1970

THE WAR OF ATTRITION

An inconclusive conflict fought between Egypt and Israel. Egypt began the war as a means to wear down Israel by dragging them into a long-term engagement and to provide Egypt with the opportunity to dislodge Israeli forces from the Sinai Peninsula that came under Israel's control in the Six Day War. Ultimately the Egyptian campaign would prove unsuccessful. The Sinai was returned many years later in a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt that stands to this day.

1973

YOM KIPPUR WAR

On Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack against Israel. Much of the fighting took place in the Sinai and the Golan. After early successes of the Egyptian and Syrian forces over Israel which was caught completely unprepared, Israeli forces began to turn the tide of the war but at a heavy cost. The war was fought from October 6 to 25, 1973 at which time a UN brokered ceasefire came into effect.

1982

FIRST LEBANON WAR

Tension along Israel's northern border increased during the course of 1981 following the firing of Katyusha rockets at Israeli communities by terror organizations in southern Lebanon. A ceasefire declared in July 1981 was broken on June 3, 1982 when terrorists shot Shlomo Argov, Israel's Ambassador to Britain. Three days later, on June 6, 1982, the IDF launched Operation Peace for the Galilee.

The War in Lebanon can be divided into two phases. The first was a conventional war, which lasted from June 6 to August 23, 1982, when the terrorists were expelled from Beirut. The second phase, which lasted for the next three years, was directed against the terrorists. By 1985, Israel had routed the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from southern Lebanon. The Israelis left behind a small buffer force that ultimately left the area in 2000. However, beginning in the 80s, the PLO was replaced by Hezbollah which is today among the most strategically relevant terrorist organizations in the world.

1987-1993

FIRST PALESTINIAN INTIFADA

A four-year period of violence and terrorism ensued in December 1987 after rumors spread in Gaza that Israel had killed four Palestinians in retaliation for an Israeli who had been stabbed to death. Huge riots soon broke out among the Palestinians, and each additional death added fuel to the fire.

Rumors circulated that Israel was murdering Palestinians. The UN investigated and determined the stories

were false, but the damage had been done. The uprising continued to grow, and the IDF reported thousands of Molotov cocktail and grenade attacks along with shootings. The terrorism targeted both Israeli soldiers and civilians. Thousands of people were injured or killed during the intifada ("uprising"). What had started as spontaneous mob violence was soon orchestrated and encouraged by the PLO, led by Yasser Arafat.

Many of the Palestinian victims were targeted by their own people based on accusations of collaborating with Israel. The murder among the Palestinians grew so out of control that the PLO began to try to put out the fire it had helped spread.

2000-2005 SECOND PALESTINIAN INTIFADA

During the second intifada, bombings became a regular occurrence in Israel. Over 1,000 Israelis, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, were murdered in terrorist attacks during this period.

In response, Israel launched Operation Defensive Shield, a large-scale military operation in the West Bank, to begin rooting out terrorists hiding among the Palestinian civilian population and stop terror attacks, an effective operation which nonetheless claimed the lives of 30 Israeli soldiers and wounded 127 more.

To counter the rise in suicide bombings, Israel built a security barrier to protect its citizens from these attacks. Checkpoints were also established as an added security measure against the daily threat of terrorism. During the construction of the security barrier, a multi-fence system of which five percent is a concrete wall that protects civilian homes and roads, the bombings dropped dramatically.

In the future, when peace is achieved, the fence can be taken down. But the fence will be a necessary barrier to protect Israeli civilians as long as Palestinian terror continues.

2006 SECOND LEBANON WAR

A 34-day military conflict in Lebanon, northern Israel and the Golan Heights that primarily took place between the Israel Defense Forces and Lebanese terror group Hezbollah.

The conflict began after a cross border raid by Hezbollah terrorists who fired rockets at Israeli border towns as a diversion for an anti-tank missile attack on two IDF Humvees patrolling the Israeli side of the border fence. The ambush left three soldiers dead. Two Israeli soldiers were abducted and taken by Hezbollah to Lebanon. Five more were killed in Lebanon in a failed rescue attempt. Hezbollah demanded the release of Lebanese prisoners held by Israel in exchange for the release of the abducted soldiers. In response to the violation of its sovereignty and the killing and abduction of its soldiers, Israel responded with airstrikes and artillery strikes on Hezbollah targets in Lebanon. The IDF launched a ground invasion of Southern Lebanon while Hezbollah launched multiple rockets at Israeli civilian populations.

The conflict came to an end on August 14th, 2006 with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701.

2008 GAZA WAR - OPERATION CAST LEAD

On December 27, 2008, the seventh day of Hanukkah, the IDF launched Operation Cast Lead in Gaza. The aim of the operation was to strike the infrastructure used for terror activities and rocket fire from the Gaza Strip. Twenty-two days after beginning the operation, the Israeli security cabinet decided on a cessation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip.

2012 GAZA WAR - OPERATION PILLAR OF DEFENSE

On November 14, 2012, the IDF launched Operation Pillar of Defense against terrorist organizations in

the Gaza Strip, with the objective of reducing the number of rocket attacks at Israeli civilians.

The operation began with the elimination of Ahmed Jabari, head of the Hamas military branch in the Gaza Strip. Jabari was directly responsible for a host of attacks on Israel. Over these eight days, life became unbearable for the 3.5 million Israelis within range of Hamas's missiles. Gazan terrorists bombed Israel with more than 1,500 rockets. More than 900 rockets hit Israel and the Iron Dome batteries, which saved the lives of a large number of Israeli civilians, intercepted over 400 others.

2014 GAZA WAR - OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE

In June 2014, Hamas and other terrorist organizations significantly increased rocket fire at civilian-populated areas in southern Israel. Within three weeks, nearly 250 rockets were fired, forcing the IDF to respond.

On July 7, the IDF carried out numerous air attacks aimed at Hamas terror infrastructure. Sirens were heard in most of the cities in Israel, including Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. On average, a rocket was fired every ten minutes from the Gaza Strip. On July 17, a dozen Hamas terrorists infiltrated Israel via underground tunnels to attack a kibbutz near the border, violating the humanitarian truce that began that afternoon.

That evening, the IDF launched the ground phase of the operation to destroy the tunnel network in Gaza. The IDF began destroying the terror tunnels within 24 hours. After dealing a significant blow to the Gaza terrorist infrastructure, and at a cost of 68 soldiers' lives, Israel concluded the operation after nearly 50 days of fighting, destroying the tunnel network in Gaza.



JUNE 5, 1967



JUNE 10, 1967



MEDITERRANEAN
SEA

LEBANON

SYRIA

GOLAN HEIGHTS

IRAQ

WEST
BANK

Jordan River

GAZA

ISRAEL

JORDAN

SINAI
(EGYPT)

SAUDI ARABIA

EGYPT

Land Captured by
Israel in 1967 War

DATE

CAESAREA

Caesarea on the Mediterranean Sea coast is located midway between Haifa and Tel Aviv. The city was built by Herod in dedication to the Roman Caesar and served as capital of the Roman province.

Included among many significant archaeological finds unearthed in Caesarea are the theater (which is still used today), the hippodrome, aqueduct, and Herod's palace.

Philip settled in Caesarea at the close of his ministry (Acts 8:40). Here also lived Cornelius the centurion, to whom Peter came and preached (Acts 10). Paul, to avoid Grecians who wished to kill him, was taken to this city to embark to Tarsus (Acts 9:30), and later visited here several times (Acts 16, 18:22, 21:8). He was also sent here by the Roman commander at Jerusalem to be heard by Felix (Acts 23:23, 33).



DATE

CAPERNAUM

When Jesus began His ministry he moved from Nazareth to Capernaum, a fishing and trading village located along the northern side of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum is mentioned in the New Testament, once as the home of Peter, Andrew, James and John, as well as the dwelling place of Matthew the tax collector.

The second time Capernaum is referred to is as one of the three cities damned by Jesus for its inhabitants' wrongdoings and lack of faith in God.

Capernaum is important for the study of the New Testament because of its central role in Jesus' ministry around Galilee. Many of Jesus' miracles, healings, and sermons are described by all four Gospel authors as taking place at Capernaum.

Matthew even goes so far as to call Capernaum Jesus' "own city." Jesus worshipped and taught in the synagogue of Capernaum and it is Capernaum where He declared the promise of the Holy Communion. Despite this, Jesus is described as cursing the town because of their rejection of Him.



DATE

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

Identified by Emperor Constantine's mother Helena as the site of Jesus' crucifixion and tomb in 326 AD, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre adjoins three separate constructs over these two holy sites: the basilica, an enclosed atrium (believed to be the site of Calvary), and a rotunda over the burial place of Jesus. Located within the northwest quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, this magnificent and ancient structure has been renovated several times since its original construction and remains a highlight of myriad Christian pilgrimages.

While some question the plausibility of third century Christians correctly locating the sites of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, others point to archaeological evidence indicating the sites' credibility: archaeological remains of the second north wall of Jerusalem, largely undisputed, point to the Church's location just outside the wall, in keeping with the Gospel accounts' description of Jesus being crucified and buried "near" the city (John 19:20).





DATE

CITY OF KING DAVID

The City of David is one of Jerusalem's most active archaeological sites. The oldest part of Jerusalem, it was a settlement during the Canaanite period. King David captured the city over 3,000 years ago and brought the Ark of the Covenant here as a declaration of a united Israel and Jerusalem as its capital.

It is within walking distance from the Old City of Jerusalem and the Western Wall, and is one of the most exciting sites in Israel. Visitors from all over the world come to see the strongest physical connection between the stories of the Bible and reality, the place where the Holy City started.

Today the City of David is an archeological park that tells the history of Jerusalem, its wars and hardships, its prophets and kings, and the history of the Jews during Biblical times. The remains of the city are present in the ancient stones and the thousands of shards that cover the pathways between the buildings. Among the archeological ruins are large elaborate houses that bear witness to the high social status of the city's residents. Warren's Shaft leads to the tunnel that was used to transport water from the Gihon Spring outside the city, next to the remains of one of several towers used to defend the well. It is thought that King Solomon was anointed and crowned king of Israel at this site. Among the ruins found in the city were personal seals for signing letters and documents bearing the names of their owners. These were the effects of people who are mentioned in the Bible.

DATE

DEAD SEA

In Hebrew "Sea of Salt," the Dead Sea is a hyper saline lake that is truly one of Earth's unique places. It is the lowest spot on earth (1,290 feet below sea level) and has the highest mineral content of any body of water in the world. Truly a priceless national treasure, the Dead Sea boasts mounds of crystallized salt formations that dot the shoreline creating breathtaking natural sites. Nothing grows in the immediate area. Animal life, as we know it, is impossible; hence its name, the Dead Sea.

The Dead Sea area has become a major center for health research and treatment for several reasons. The mineral content of the water, very low content of allergens, reduced ultraviolet component of solar radiation, and the higher atmospheric pressure each have specific health effects. The black mud found in vast quantities has scientifically-recognized curative qualities. Biblically, it was a place of refuge for King David. It was one of the world's first health resorts (for Herod the Great), and it has been the supplier of a wide variety of products, from balms for Egyptian mummification to potash for fertilizers. People also use the salt and the minerals from the Dead Sea to create cosmetics and skin care products.

The Dead Sea does not figure prominently in the biblical narratives. Its most important role was as a barrier, blocking traffic to Judah from the east. An advancing army of Ammonites and Moabites crossed a shallow part of the Dead Sea on their way to attack King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20). Ezekiel has prophesied that one day the Dead Sea will be fresh water and fishermen will spread their nets along the shore (Ezekiel 47:10).



DATE

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

The Garden of Gethsemane (at the foot of the Mount of Olives) is now a flowering garden where several ancient gnarled olive trees still bear fruit. The name is derived from the Hebrew words "Gat Sgemanim," meaning "olive press."

The olive trees here are the oldest in Israel. It was here that Jesus loved to come and pray. It was here that He endured the anguish and intense anxiety of foreseeing the cross and yet yielded to His Father's will in perfect submission (Luke 22:39).

Judas performed his act of betrayal in this garden and Peter cut off the ear of the Roman soldier to defend Jesus. Adjacent to the Garden is the Church of All Nations, housing the very rock by which Jesus prayed. The church was so named because 16 nations contributed to its construction.





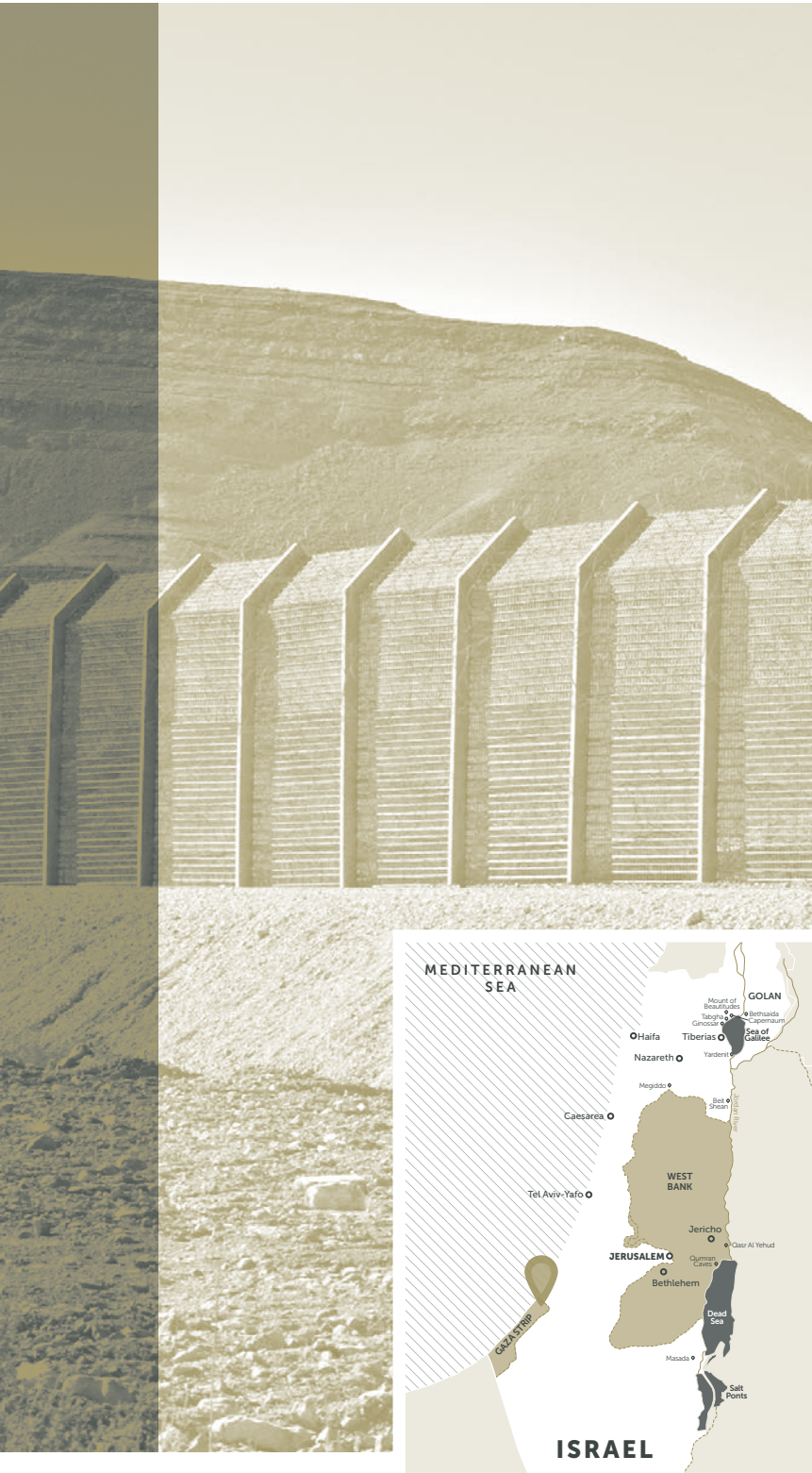
DATE

GARDEN TOMB

The Garden Tomb is just a short walk from "Gordon's Calvary." It is believed by many Christians to be the site of the borrowed tomb of Jesus because it closely fits the description of the tomb in the Gospel of John chapter 19:41-42. "At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid." Between Calvary and the tomb, one will find an ancient winepress and a very large water cistern, indicating this area was used as a garden. The tomb itself has two chambers cut from rock and dates back to the days of Christ. This was not a typical burial site. Joseph of Arimathea was believed to be a rich man and would have prepared an elaborate tomb for himself such as this one.

The Garden Tomb Association of London maintains the tomb and garden area. While you are here, take the time to think of what might have happened in this historic place - the resurrection of the Son of God. Jesus revealed himself to Mary. Peter and John raced to the tomb, only to find the burial clothes on the slab along with His talit folded neatly (John 20:1-18). This was visible proof of God's authority over death, hell and the grave, the verification that Jesus Christ was and is our Savior. As you leave this place, be assured as Mary was, that Jesus is alive!





DATE

GAZA BORDER

The Gaza-Israel border is one of the most volatile places in the Middle East. The terrorist organization Hamas controls Gaza and uses its location there to regularly launch rockets into Israel. Since 2018, the group has held riots alongside the border intermingling armed terrorists with civilians in the hopes of drawing public condemnation against Israel for those caught in the crossfire. Israel unilaterally disengaged from Gaza in 2005, in what some referred to as “a test case for peace.”

The hope and prayer were that by leaving the Palestinians to control the coastal enclave and leaving behind an economic infrastructure for the population to utilize, a new path forward could be forged. Unfortunately, Palestinians in Gaza destroyed the economic infrastructure – which would have provided for the welfare of 100,000 people – and turned the Gaza Strip into a base of operations from which to terrorize Israelis. A generation of Israelis has grown up under this constant threat, constantly being forced to take refuge in bomb shelters with only seconds to reach one. The situation is so grave that 63% of Israeli children living in communities near the Gaza border have been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

For years CUFI has sought to support Israel during this crisis. During one sustained conflict in 2014, CUFI brought one pastor from each state in the union on a solidarity mission to southern Israel. The people of Sderot were so grateful that many came into the streets and met our busses with smiles and tears. In addition, CUFI supports the southern Israeli economy by regularly selling products produced there to our membership.



DATE

GOLAN HEIGHTS

Geographically, the Heights are bordered on the west by a rock escarpment that drops 1,700 feet to the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River, on the south by the Yarmouk River, and on the north by Mount Hermon, and on the east by a largely flat plain, called the Hauran. The Golan is usually divided into three regions: northern (between the Sa'ar and Jilabun valleys), central (between the Jilabun and Daliyot valleys), and southern (between the Dlayot and Yarmouk valleys). The Golan Heights themselves are between 400 and 1,700 feet high, and are the source of about 15% of Israel's water supply.

In Biblical times, the Golan Heights was referred to as Bashan; the word "Golan" comes from the Biblical city of Golan in Bashan (Deuteronomy 4:43, Joshua 21:27). The area was assigned to the tribe of Manasseh (Joshua 13:29-31). In early First Temple times, (953-586 B.C.), the area was contested between the northern Jewish kingdom of Israel and the Aramean kingdom based in Damascus. King Ahab of Israel (who reigned 874-852 B.C.) defeated Ben-Hadad I of Damascus near the site of Kibbutz Afik in the southern Golan (I Kings 20:26-30), and the prophet Elisha prophesied that King Jehoash of Israel (who reigned 801-785 B.C.) would defeat Ben-Hadad III of Damascus, also near Kibbutz Afik (II Kings 13:17). In the late 6th and 5th centuries B.C., the region was settled by returning Jewish exiles from Babylonia (modern Iraq).

This site includes a military briefing on the ferocity and importance of recent wars here, and the realities of Israel's modern-day security challenges.

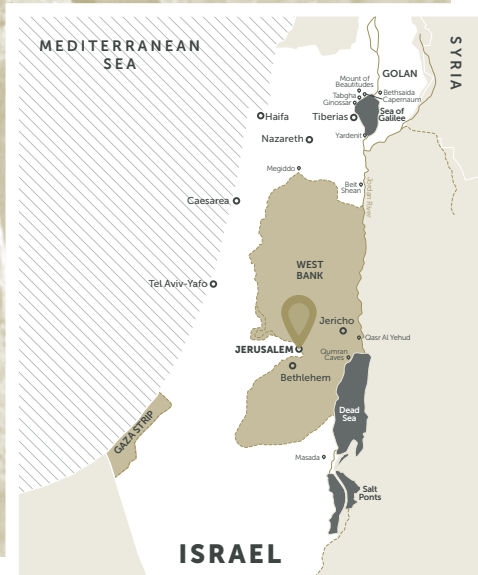
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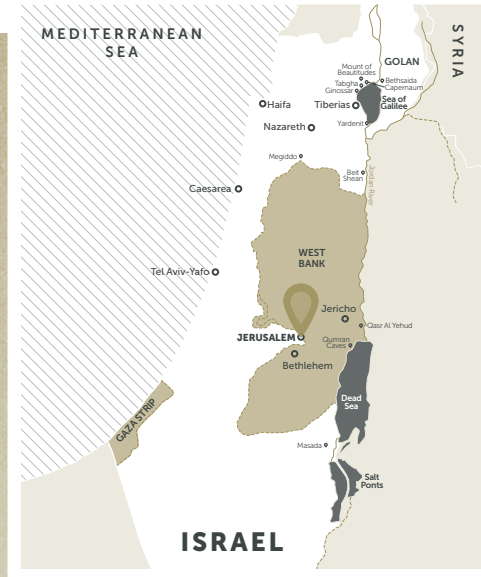
HERODIAN QUARTER

In the time of Herod, the area of the modern-day Jewish Quarter was part of a luxurious "Upper City," occupied primarily by the families of important Jewish Temple priests. Excavations after the War of 1967 exposed the remains of several mansions dating to this period. This rediscovered Herodian quarter now lies from three to seven meters below street level, preserved in the Wohl Archaeological Museum.

On display are geometrically patterned mosaic floors, colorful frescoes, and costly glassware, stone objects, and ceramics that provide a peek into domestic life at the top in the days of Herod and Jesus. In the first part of the museum (called the Western House) several small stone cisterns have been identified as private mikveh, Jewish ritual baths; holograms depict their use. A small ascending staircase ends abruptly, a reminder that nothing above ground level survived the Roman devastation of 70 A.D.

In the Middle Complex is where archaeologists discovered the remains of two separate houses with a maze-pattern mosaic floor covered in burnt wood. This is believed to be fire damage from the Roman attack on Jerusalem. The largest and most complete of the Herodian houses is the Palatial Mansion, which also has signs of fire damage as well as beautiful mosaic floors and ritual baths.





DATE

JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is the jewel of the ages and the city of David! The Bible records in I Chronicles 11:4-9 that the Lord gave Jerusalem into the hands of King David in 1004 B.C. David and his army took the city from the Jebusites and chose to make it his city. In Jerusalem, Solomon built the glorious First Temple; Nehemiah would later rebuild the Second Temple at the same site. Once David conquered the city (with God's blessing) the die was cast for Jerusalem to be central in world events. God chose this city as His own and decided that it would be the capital of Israel, the religious focal point of the Jewish people. Because of this, nations have both revered and reviled this most unique city.

Jerusalem, in the history of God's revelation and in His redemptive plan for man, is by far the most important site on this earth. This royal city is the capital of the only kingdom God has established among men. Here, the temple was erected, and sacrifices legitimately offered to the Lord. This is the place where Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended into heaven. To Jerusalem, the Messiah will return. No site noted in all the Scripture receives such constant and exalted praise. No other place in the world has the promise of ultimate glory and permanent peace.





DATE

JEWISH QUARTER – CARDO

The Jewish Quarter is one of the four traditional quarters of the Old City of Jerusalem. The current Jewish Quarter, which today looks almost brand new and usually sparkling clean, dates to roughly 1400. The quarter is inhabited by around 2,000 residents and is home to numerous synagogues and yeshivas (educational institutions that focus on the study of traditional religious texts, primarily the Talmud and Torah study).

The oldest synagogues — the Elijah the Prophet and Yohanan Ben Zakkai — are roughly 400 years old. In the main plaza an arch stretches skyward where one of the walls of the notable Hurva Synagogue once stood. Originally the Great Synagogue, the Hurva was built in the 16th century, but was destroyed by the Ottomans. The synagogue was rebuilt in the 1850s, but was damaged in the War of 1948 and then destroyed after the Jordanians took control of the Old City. Some consideration has been given to rebuilding the synagogue; but, for now, the arch remains as a memorial.

Just off the plaza is the Cardo, which was a Byzantine road; roughly the equivalent of an eight-lane highway running through the heart of the city.



DATE

JORDAN RIVER

To the West, we find the Jordan River, whose source comes from several springs on the side and base of Mt. Hermon in the North. Beginning at an elevation of some 1,700 feet above sea level, the river flows to about 700 feet below sea level at the Sea of Galilee and then to the Dead Sea at 1,300 feet below sea level. It is the only river in the world which flows for most of its course below sea level. The river meanders through the Jordan valley some 200 nautical miles though only 65 miles as the crow flies.

The Jordan River is noted in the Bible as a place of cleansing and entrance into the Promised Land; it is symbolic of a place of crossing over into newness of life. The waters were held back so that Joshua and the Israelites could enter the land foretold to Moses and given to Abraham (Joshua 3). John the Baptist proclaimed the message of repentance and used the river to symbolize the washing away of sins (Matthew 3:11). Jesus was baptized in the Jordan as He began His ministry of grace and truth. At that divine moment we note the presence of the Trinity of God, the Father proclaiming the affirmation of the Son in the presence of the Holy Spirit seen as the descending Dove (Matthew 3:13-17).

In the days of the Prophet Elijah's disciple Elisha, the special benefits of immersing in the Jordan River first became known (2 Kings 5:10). Since John baptized Jesus in the Jordan, immersion in these waters has been a highlight of Holy Land pilgrimage. It has become a tradition to be baptized at Yardenit. Here, the water flows into the Jordan River, eventually flowing into the Dead Sea located more than 100KM to the south.



DATE

LEBANON BORDER

Israel's border with Lebanon has long been an area of conflict. The Palestine Liberation Organization used territory in southern Lebanon as its base of operations in the 1970s until Israel expelled them from that land in 1982. By 1985, Israel had withdrawn the bulk of its forces from the area and subsequently withdrew its small buffer force from southern Lebanon in 2000.

During the early 1980s the world saw the rise of one of the most powerful terrorist armies in the world: Hezbollah. In 1983, Hezbollah bombed barracks housing American and French military personnel, killing 241 American and 58 French service members. With Iranian support, Hezbollah presently controls southern Lebanon and is the dominant military force in the country. Recently, Hezbollah and its allies gained control of the Government in Beirut.

Today, Hezbollah has well over 100,000 rockets aimed at Israel. Hezbollah's terrorist attacks and Iran's efforts to strengthen the terrorist organization have resulted in skirmishes along Israel's northern border - most notably the 2006 Lebanon War. Though Hezbollah knows it cannot defeat Israel militarily, its primary goal in a future conflict with Israel will be to see as many civilians as possible killed. While Israel discovered Hezbollah's terror tunnel network, Hezbollah's rockets still pose a significant threat to Israel. In a future conflict, the terrorist organization will use their large rocket arsenal to target Israeli civilians. Moreover, they have hidden those rockets amongst Lebanese civilian population centers, thus compelling a counterattack that will cost Lebanese non-combatants their lives.

Photo Credit: trabantos / Shutterstock.com

DATE

MAGDALA

Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene, was a prosperous fishing village at the time when Jesus was ministering in this region. It was fortified and severely damaged during the great revolt against the Romans. Archaeologists uncovered the remains of the village dating from the time of Jesus and a large Byzantine monastery. The synagogue in Magdala is currently the oldest excavated in the Galilee. A coin minted in Tiberias (29 AD) was found inside the synagogue, indicating the synagogue was from the time of Christ. It is highly likely that Jesus taught in this synagogue as the Bible tells us that Jesus taught throughout Galilee.



DATE

MASADA

Isolated on a crag rock at the southwestern tip of the Dead Sea looms the ruins of King Herod's fortress called Masada. It was here that nearly a 1,000 besieged Jews voluntarily killed themselves when faced with defeat at the hands of the Roman Army in 73 A.D.

Excavations have revealed the story told by historian Josephus Flavius, who described how 960 people drew lots to establish who should die and who should put them to death. This fortress was built by King Herod as a place of retreat and refuge in the event of a rebellion by the people. It proved to be the last stronghold for the Jewish people as the Roman armies under Titus swept through Israel. The Jewish patriots were able to withstand the Romans for three years, yet Titus was determined to eradicate this rebellion and leave no remnant of hostility. The armies built encampments around the fortress and then constructed a ramp on the western side of the plateau, which literally took years. When the ramp was complete and the fortress doors burned and battered down, the invading armies only found two women alive. The rest had taken their lives rather than live in slavery and bondage.

Masada has become a shrine and a symbol to the new nation of Israel. "Masada shall not fall again!" is the proud oath which cadets swear during the impressive graduation ceremony of Israel's military academy.





DATE _____

THE MOUNT OF BEATITUDES

The Mount of the Beatitudes, which overlooks the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, is believed to be the site where Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, a lengthy discourse containing the passage known as the Beatitudes (Matthew 5-7). This sermon has nine verses, each starting with "Blessed are the..." or in Latin "Beati..." The Latin word gave this hill its name, *Beati-tudes*.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:3-12)

DATE

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

The Mount of Olives holds an important place in Christianity. It is the place of some of the most important events in the life of Christ, both past and future. It was here that Jesus taught His disciples during His mission in Jerusalem. Here He was made a prisoner, He wept for Jerusalem, and ascended to heaven. The Church of All Nations has an ornately decorated facade. The Garden of Gethsemane, with its grove of ancient olive trees, dates back to Byzantine times and is cared for today by the Franciscan Brotherhood. Both are important holy sites for visitors.

The next elevation to the south is called "The Prophets" because of the presence of tombs, believed to be those of Absalom, James, and Zechariah, father of John the Baptist. The southernmost elevation is called the Mount of Offense, being associated with the places of idolatrous worship, which Solomon built through the influence of his heathen wives. The hill is covered with churches and shrines, most commemorating places where Jesus stopped during His last week before the crucifixion (Passion Week). The mountain has always been a burial ground and pious Jews still hope to be buried here, since Scripture promises the Messiah will return to Jerusalem from this vantage point (Zechariah 14:4).





DATE

MOUNT ZION

Mount Zion is the raised hill adjacent to the southwestern corner of the Old City. This is a sacred place to the Jews; it is believed that this location contains the Tomb of David, which is the place where the prayer requests that fall out of the Kotel (Western Wall) are brought.

This is also regarded as the site of the Last Supper and the Upper Room experience of the 12 disciples, who had gathered for prayer awaiting the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). In ancient times, a deep valley (The Tyropean Valley, or Valley of the Cheesemakers) separated Mt. Zion from Mt. Moriah.

Today, many layers of ruined city and rubble from Jerusalem's many destructions completely fill this valley. In fact, at the Western Wall, the Kotel, or Jewish prayer plaza, about half of the old wall of the Temple Mount lies below the present ground level (sometimes Scripture calls all of Jerusalem "Zion" or "Mt. Zion").





DATE

POOL OF BETHESDA

Bethesda, meaning "house of grace," is the location of the spring-fed pool where invalids would wait their turn to step into the mysteriously troubled waters. It was believed an angel stirred the waters, and at the time of the stirring, healing was released to those who could rush in the pool. John 5 tells of Jesus' miraculous healing of the man who had been an invalid for 38 years. The pool is located next to St. Anne's Church just inside St. Stephen's Gate.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.

John 5:1-9

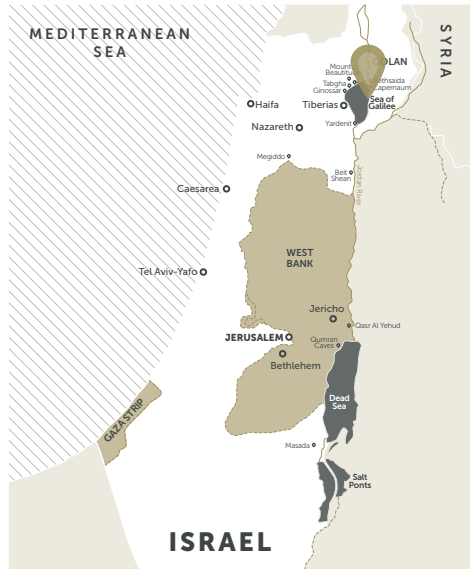
DATE

THE QUMRAN CAVES

Qumran is located on the northwest corner of the Dead Sea, some 28 miles southeast of Jerusalem. It is here that a second century Essene community lived. The Essenes, meaning "pious ones," lived here as a community, writing the Scriptures on scrolls and preserving them for future generations. It is believed that while under attack from the Roman armies, this community bound the scrolls in leather and hid them in the caves above the village. The Essene village was probably wiped out and the scrolls became an unfound treasure until 1947. It was then that two young Bedouin shepherds discovered an ancient scroll several yards long bearing the Book of Isaiah. Several other scrolls have been found in these caves, making this archaeological find one of the greatest of the 20th century.

There were 11 caves. The most famous of the Dead Sea Scroll caves, Cave #4, is also the most significant in terms of finds. More than 15,000 fragments from over 200 books were found in this cave, nearly all by Bedouin thieves. 122 Biblical scrolls (or fragments) were found in this cave. From all 11 Qumran caves, every Old Testament book is represented except Esther. No New Testament books or fragments have been found.





DATE _____

THE SEA OF GALILEE

The Sea of Galilee is most famously known in Scripture as the site where Jesus walked on the water and summoned Peter to walk on the water to him, as well as the site where Jesus calmed the storm that threatened to sink the boat He and his disciples were on. It is Israel's largest fresh water lake and is also called Lake Tiberias. It sits 680 feet below sea level and its depths range from 60-180 feet. Of the ten major cities (collectively called Decapolis) that surrounded the Sea of Galilee at the time of Jesus' ministry, only Tiberias remains. Much of Jesus' ministry occurred along the Sea of Galilee. Eighteen of the 33 recorded miracles of Jesus performed were in this area, ten of which were in the small fishing village of Capernaum.



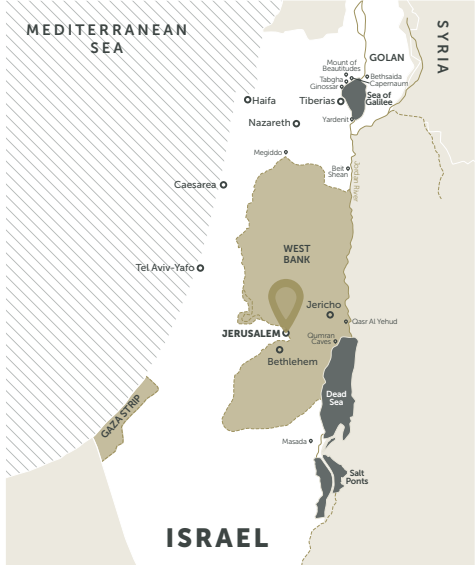
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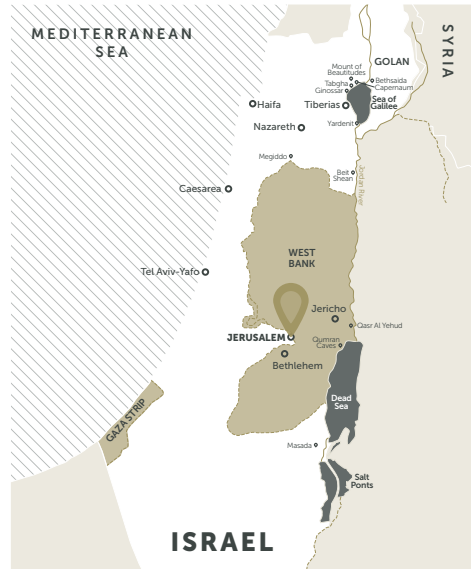
DATE

SEPTEMBER 11TH MEMORIAL

The US-Israel relationship is founded on shared values, such as a love of life and liberty. But the true depth of friendship is often realized on one's darkest day. On September 11, 2001, Palestinians danced in the streets, and Israelis wept for their American brothers and sisters. No people on earth understand the pain, anger, and loss we experienced on that horrific day as do the Israelis.

It is thus sadly fitting that on a hill in the Arazim Valley of Ramot, Jerusalem, in direct view of Jerusalem's main cemetery, there exists the only memorial to 9/11 victims outside the United States listing the names of all 3,000 victims of that attack. The base of the memorial (pictured to the right) is made of a piece of metal from the ruins of the Twin Towers. And people from all over the world come to this hallowed place in the world's holiest city to pay their respects to those lost on the morning of the second Tuesday of September, 2001.





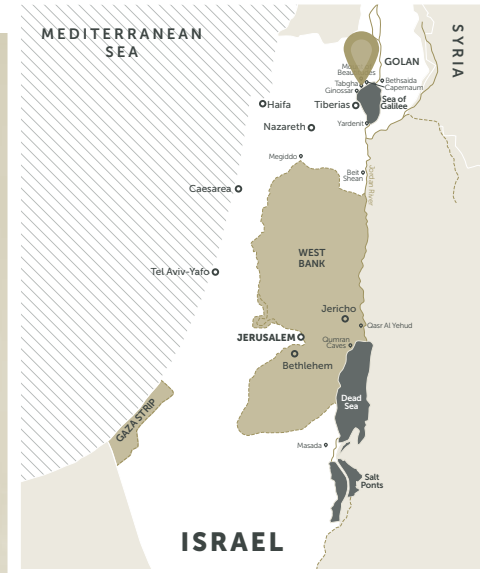
DATE

ST. PETER IN GALLICANTU

Few structures combine the ancient with the new as successfully as the dazzling Church of St. Peter on the eastern slopes of Mount Zion. The church takes its name from the Latin word "Galllicantu," meaning cock's crow and was erected in 1931 in commemoration of Peter's triple rejection of Jesus... "before the cock crows twice" (Mark 14:30). The church is an amazing blend of contemporary lines, primitive art, and antiquity. Brilliantly fused together to create a superbly-designed masterpiece, this is far more than an ordinary house of worship.

Beneath the church are a series of carved-out chambers from the Second Temple period. Since Catholic tradition positions the palace of Caiaphas on this very site, it logically follows that Jesus may have been imprisoned in one of these very same underground crypts.

A Byzantine shrine dedicated to Peter's repentance was erected on this spot in the middle of the fifth century, but later destroyed by Muslim invaders. The chapel was rebuilt by the Crusaders and given a new name, St. Peter's in Galllicantu. Today a golden rooster protrudes prominently from the sanctuary roof.



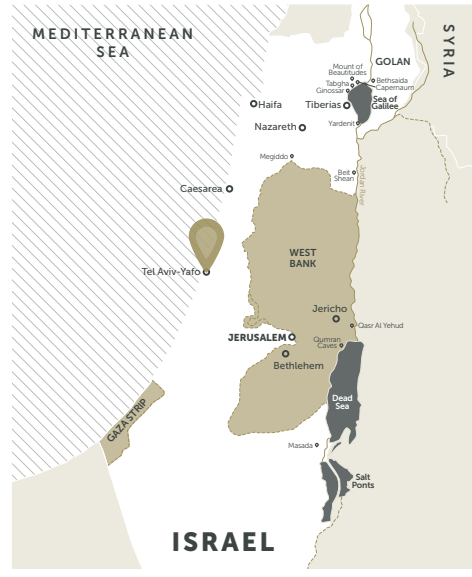
DATE

TABGHA

Tabgha is situated on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Some Christian historians have surmised that Jesus may have come here when looking for solitude to meditate, especially since it was close to the Galilee city of Kfar Nahum (Capernaum). Tabgha is considered the site of two of Jesus' miracles: the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, and the place Jesus appeared the fourth time after His resurrection (John 21:1-24).

The Gospels read that when Jesus was told the fate of His cousin, John the Baptist, "He withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place." But the populace followed Jesus on foot from nearby towns and Jesus, who saw the crowd that had gathered, preached all day and healed their sick. "As evening approached, the disciples came to Him and said, 'This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.'" Jesus then performed a miracle, feeding five thousand men "besides women and children" with only five loaves of bread and two fish (Matthew 14:13-21). The serene "Church of the Multiplication" was reconstructed over the Byzantine sanctuary on the site, with part of the ancient mosaic floor on display.





DATE

TEL AVIV

Tel Aviv feels like New York and acts like Silicon Valley, all while sitting alongside the pristine waters of the Mediterranean. It has often been said that Israel is a beautiful amalgamation of the ancient and modern, and Tel Aviv is Israel's hi-tech gem. Just over 100 years ago, Tel Aviv was a desert. Today it is a 21st century city with an entrepreneurial spirit that is second-to-none.

Israel boasts more companies listed on the Nasdaq than any other country, save the US and China. It leads the world in venture capitalism as a percentage of GDP, produces more scientific papers than any nation on earth, and is the second most highly educated country in the world.

The epicenter of this modern miracle is Tel Aviv. And as a result of this ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit, Israel is fulfilling its God-given mandate as a light unto the nations. Israeli technological breakthroughs have changed the way we live our lives in this digital age, and Israeli medical breakthroughs affect everything from routine medical care to how one treats battlefield wounds. Additionally, Israel's scientific advancements have made deserts bloom, changed how we grow crops, and brought water to parts of the world where its scarcity costs lives.

Israel is often referred to as the start-up nation, but to the believer this should come as no surprise. Israel is commanded by God to be a light unto the nations, and in today's modern age that light shines brightly from the tops of the skyscrapers of Tel Aviv.



DATE

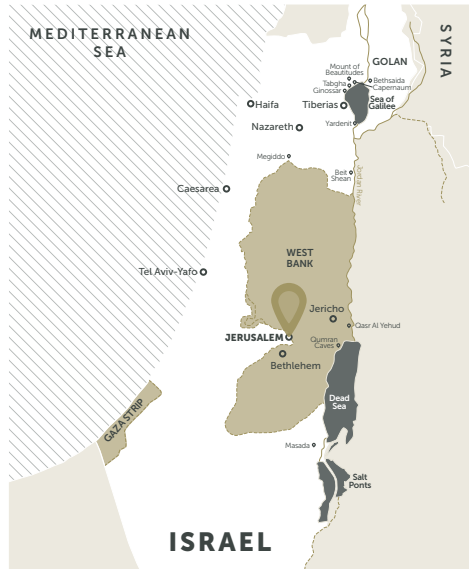
THE UPPER ROOM OF THE LAST SUPPER

The Upper Room of the Last Supper is a second-story room in Jerusalem that commemorates the "Upper Room" in which Jesus shared the Last Supper with the disciples. It is located directly above the Tomb of David and near the Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion.

The site of the Last Supper is not known and the Gospel accounts provide few clues. It cannot be the present room, which was built in the 12th century, but possibly near the original site of the Last Supper and/or Pentecost.

Beneath the floor of the building are Byzantine and Roman pavements and the foundations go back to at least the 2nd century A.D. It is possible that the "little church of God" that existed on Mount Zion in 130 A.D. (mentioned by Epiphanius of Salamis) was on this site.





DATE

U.S. EMBASSY - JERUSALEM

For 3,500 years, Jerusalem has been the epicenter of the Jewish people. Since Israel's modern independence in 1948, the holy city has served as the Jewish state's capital, but was divided until its liberation and reunification in 1967. For decades, the United States refused to recognize the fact that Jerusalem is Israel's eternal capital. In 1995, Congress passed and the President signed the Jerusalem Embassy Act which recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and called for the US Embassy in Israel to be moved there. But the law included a waiver, invoked by every president since the bill's passage, which enabled the application of the law to be delayed. For years, every president would sign that waiver every six months, delaying implementation of the law for more than two decades.

President Trump promised during his campaign to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and when the President took office, CUF1 made the realization of this promise a top priority. 135,000 CUF1 members emailed the White House asking the President to keep his pledge, and in the late summer of 2017, CUF1 founder and Chairman Pastor John Hagee privately met with the President. During the meeting, the President assured Pastor Hagee that his promise on Jerusalem would be kept despite the effort by foreign policy elites to convince President Trump not to recognize Jerusalem.

In December of 2017 President Donald Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Then in May of 2018, the US Embassy in Jerusalem was opened. In recognition of CUF1's integral role in the effort to advance this policy, Pastor Hagee was invited to give the benediction at Embassy's opening ceremony.

Photo Credit: meunier / Shutterstock.com



DATE

THE WESTERN WALL

The Western Wall was built by King Herod in 20 B.C. during his expansion of the Temple enclosure, and is part of a retaining wall that enclosed the western part of the Temple Mount. According to the Roman-Jewish historian Josephus, construction of the walls took 11 years. During this time it rained in Jerusalem only at night so as not to interfere with the workers' progress. In 70 A.D., the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and its Temple. During the Ottoman Period (beginning in the 16th century), the wall became the Jews' primary destination to lament the destruction of the Temple.

The Western Wall (Ha-Kotel Ha-Ma'aravi) in Jerusalem is the holiest of Jewish sites, sacred because it is a remnant of the Herodian retaining wall that once enclosed and supported the Second Temple. It has also been called the "Wailing Wall" by European observers because for centuries Jews have gathered here to lament the loss of their temple. The Western Wall Plaza (the large open area that faces the Western Wall) functions as an open-air synagogue that can accommodate tens of thousands of worshippers at one time. Prayers take place here day and night, and special services, celebrations, and memorials are held here as well.



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DATE

THE WESTERN WALL TUNNELS

The Western Wall of the Temple Mount is one of the most significant remnants in Jerusalem from the Second Temple. The Western Wall is nearly half a kilometer but the part visible at the Western Wall plaza known as The Wailing Wall, or Kotel is only 187 feet.

Following the Six-Day War and the reunification of Jerusalem, the Western Wall Tunnels Project commenced as an effort to expose the entire length of the Western Wall. This allowed us to learn more about the wall itself and the various structures in its vicinity. Near the Western Wall are tunnels created by numerous arches stacked side-by-side that support staircases going from the city to the Temple Mount. In ancient times, there was a shallow valley (called the Tyropaeon) running along the western side of the Temple Mount. This is now filled in due to constant demolition and rebuilding, but it once separated the rich Herodian quarter from the Temple. It was the need to bridge this gap that originally caused the arches to be built. These pathways still hold up the streets today, and the tunnel goes directly underneath the Muslim quarter. As you walk through the tunnel along the ancient wall, you can pause opposite the Holy of Holies and see pavement built by Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:21) and foundations from the Praetorium (Matthew 27:27).



Photo Credit: DzyiO / Shutterstock.com

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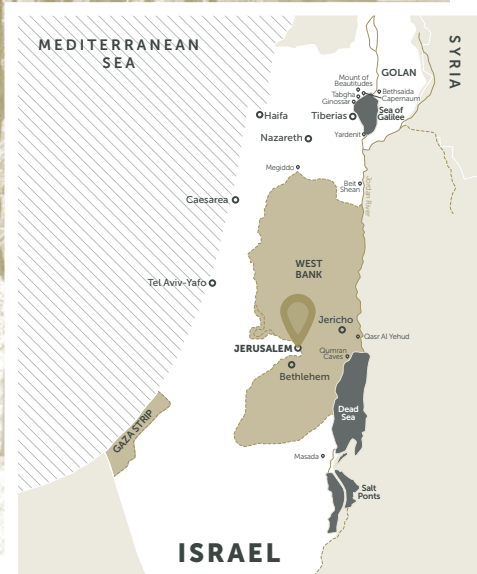
YAD VASHEM – HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

The Holocaust Memorial Center in West Jerusalem honors the 6 million Jews who perished under Hitler between 1933 and 1945. Its library of 50 million documents is the world's largest Holocaust archive and safeguards the memory of the victims and the events of the Holocaust by documenting accurately one of the darkest chapters in the history of humanity.

In 1961, Yad Vashem inaugurated the Hall of Remembrance (Ohel Jiskor), the first Holocaust commemoration. Engraved on the mosaic floor are the names of 22 of the most infamous Nazi extermination camps sites. The Eternal Flame, burning from a base fashioned like a broken bronze goblet, continuously illuminates the Hall, its smoke exiting the building through an opening at the highest point of the ceiling. Before it stands a stone crypt containing the ashes of Holocaust victims, brought to Israel from the extermination camps.

The story of the Holocaust is one of darkness and despair that palpably demonstrates the depths of depravity to which humans can sink. But Yad Vashem also beautifully commemorates the actions of non-Jews who took great risks to help Jews during the Holocaust at The Righteous Among the Nations memorial.

These Righteous protected their Jewish neighbors at a time when hostility and indifference prevailed. Their spirit is an inspirational reminder of the human capacity for love and hope even in the most brutal circumstances.



SCRIPTURE

BIBLICAL NOT POLITICAL

Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.

I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

GENESIS 13:14 – 15

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in[a] which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

GENESIS 17:7-8

EVERLASTING COVENANT

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their [a]hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The Lord of hosts is His name): "If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the Lord, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever."

JEREMIAH 31:33-36

TURES

GOD THE PROMISE KEEPER

But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and [a]bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better for you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My people Israel; they shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you bereave them of children."

EZEKIEL 36:8-12


When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself.

HEBREWS 6:13

PROMISES FULFILLED

and I will bring my people Israel back from exile. "They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them," says the LORD your God.

AMOS 9:14-15



Now the Lord said to Abram,
“Go forth from your country, And
from your relatives And from your
father’s house, To the land which I
will show you; And I will make you
a great nation, And I will bless you,
And make your name great; And so
you shall be a blessing; And I will
bless those who bless you, And the
one who curses you I will curse.
And in you all the families of the
earth will be blessed.”

– GENESIS 12:1-3





MEDITERRANEAN SEA

LEBANON

SYRIA

GOLAN

Mount of
Beautitudes
Tabgha
Ginosar

Bethsaida
Capernaum

Sea of Galilee

Haifa

Tiberias

Yardenit

Nazareth

Megiddo

Caesarea

Jordan River

Beit Shean

WEST BANK

Tel Aviv-Yafo

Jericho

Qasr Al Yehud

JERUSALEM

Qumran Caves

Bethlehem

Dead Sea

Masada

Salt Ponds

ISRAEL

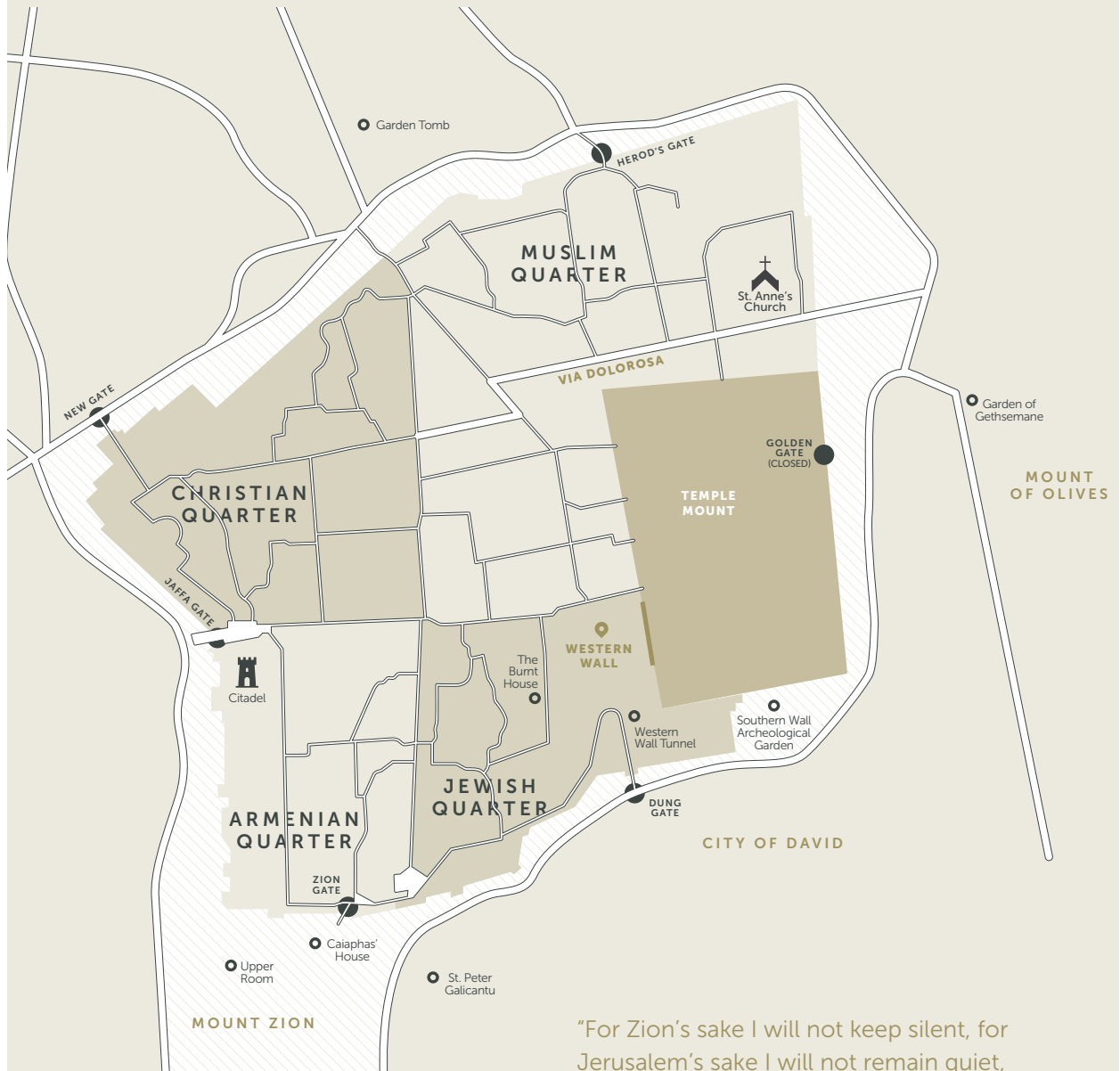
*There may be sites listed in the journal that are not on the itinerary, and there may be sites on the itinerary that are not in the journal.

EGYPT

JORDAN

Wadi al-Jaylo

JERUSALEM



"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch."

ISAIAH 62:1



CHRISTIANS UNITED FOR ISRAEL

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