



GCTS Archeological Study Tour

15 Days tour of Israel & Jordan

1 night on the coast, 3 nights in Galilee, 3 nights in Jordan, 1 night in Eilat, 5 nights in Jerusalem

DAY 1 (Thur. Jan 5): We leave the States for a journey to the land where the Bible will unfold before our eyes. We will walk, see, feel and touch the roots of our faith, encounter the divine and sense His presence.

DAY 2 (Fri. Jan. 6): Flying over the Atlantic Ocean and over Europe, we reach the shores of Israel. Upon our arrival to the Ben Gurion airport we will be met by our guide and transferred to our hotel on the **coast of the Mediterranean**, for a wonderful buffet dinner and a good night's rest.

DAY 3 (Sat. Jan 7): COASTAL PLAIN

After a rich Israeli breakfast, we will begin our tour of Israel at **Caesarea**, city of Cornelius the Centurion, the first Gentile to convert (Acts 10). We will visit the Roman theatre, walk on the pier used by the apostle Paul on his way to Rome and see the impressive water aqueduct built by Herod the Great. Leaving the Mediterranean, we will travel north to **Mt. Carmel**, where Elijah held the contest with 450 prophets of Baal (I Kings 18). At noon, a memorable experience is awaiting for us, as we stop for a typical **Falafel Meal** at the Druze village of **Daliat El-Carmel**. The afternoon will be dedicated to a trip through the **Valley of Jezreel**. At **Megiddo**, we will view the excavations of 21 superimposed cities, the remains from Solomon's days (I Kings 9). At the end of the day, we will drive through **Nazareth**, where Jesus spent most of His life. We will make a stop at **Mt. of Precipice** (Luke 4) for a wondrous view of Nazareth. We will drive by **Cana of Galilee** where Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding feast (John 2) and continue to our hotel in the beautiful region of Galilee.

DAY 4 (Sun. Jan. 8): AREA OF THE TRIBE OF DAN

Today is dedicated to the spectacular northern part of Israel. Following the accounts described in the Gospel of Luke chapter 9, we will drive through the **Hula Valley** to reach the slopes of **Mt. Hermon**, where the miracle of Transfiguration occurred. We will begin the day visiting **Hazor**, a city conquered by Joshua (Joshua 11) and reconstructed by Solomon (I Kings 9). We will continue to the **Dan Nature Reserve**. After a refreshing walk through the beautiful reserve and a taste from the cool water, we will discover Jeroboam's Altar (I Kings 12). We will also see a city gate from the Canaanite Middle Bronze Age and learn about the importance of the gate in the social life of the city in the Old Testament times. We will continue to the **Banias**, one of the headwaters of the **Jordan River** and site of **Caesarea Philippi**, where Peter confessed Christ's divinity.

DAY 5 (Mon. Jan. 9): AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE

Today we will be visiting the places where Jesus spent most of his public life and the sites you have read about all of your life. Our first stop will be at **Capernaum**, where Jesus taught in the synagogue and spent much of His ministry (Matthew 4). Then we will continue to the **Mount of Beatitudes**, where Christ preached the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). From there, we will head down south to **Beth Shean** (I Sam. 31), a Decapolis Capital mentioned in the Gospels. Here, we will walk on the ancient streets, view the Roman steam baths, the theatre, coliseum, market and temples and go up the tell.

DAY 6 (Tue. Jan. 10): THE JORDAN VALLEY

Today we will leave the beautiful Galilee area and drive down the **Jordan Valley**. After the formalities at the border, we will cross the Jordan River into Jordan, and drive through the land of **Perea**, where Jesus traveled coming to Jerusalem. Our first stop will be at **Mt. Nebo**. It was from here that Moses looked on to the Promised Land before dying (Deuteronomy 34). After seeing this beautiful view ourselves, we will continue to the city of **Madaba**, with its mosaic floor depicting the Holy Land in the 6th century and the ongoing excavations (Iron Age). We will also walk by the excavations below St. John's Church. On our way to Jordan's capital, **Amman**, we will visit **Tell el Umayri**. Our day will end with a visit to the citadel of **Amman** and a view of the ancient **Philadelphia** (Luke 7).

DAY 7 (Wed. Jan. 11): THE LAND OF MOAB

We will leave Amman behind us and start driving down south towards Petra. We will make a stop at the **Machaerus Fortress**, built by Herod, and the site where John the Baptist was beheaded (Mathew 14). We will then continue driving through the breathtaking **Wadi Mujib**, indicating the border between the lands of Moab and Amon.

DAY 8 (Thur. Jan. 12): PETRA

Today will be dedicated to visiting the ancient city of **Petra**. Once the capital of the Nabatean people, this red city is considered one of the wonders of the ancient world. Walking or riding an Arabian horse, we will go through the "Siq", a magnificent canyon that will take us to the **Treasury Monument**, carved out of the red rock. Other impressive remains are the ancient tombs, the Cardo Street, the Triumphal Arch of Adrian and the Court building. Those who wish will be able to climb to the **High Place**, where the city's altar is found and an amazing overview of the entire area can be seen.

DAY 9 (Fri. Jan. 13): WADIRUM

We will spend the day at **Wadi Rum**, one of the most beautiful desert regions of the eastern Mediterranean, made famous by the exploits of Lawrence of Arabia. We will tour this magnificent region by jeep. In the afternoon we will cross the border back into Israel and arrive at the beautiful city of **Eilat**, located on the shores of the **Red Sea**, with a breathtaking view of the Red Mountains of *Edom* and the Gulf of Aqaba.

DAY 10 (Sat. Jan 14): LAND OF THE PATRIARCHS

We will leave sunny Eilat behind us and drive up north through the **Aravah Valley**. Our first stop will be at **Tel-Arad**. Here we will learn about the way one city was built on top of the other, starting at the Bronze Age, through the Israelite Period and up to the Persian Period. Further north we will reach **Lachish** and hike up to the Assyrian ramp. Driving through the **Elah Valley**, where David slew Goliath (I Samuel 17), we will start ascending to the Golden City of the Mighty King: **JERUSALEM**.

DAY 11 (Sun. Jan. 15): MT. OF OLIVES - CITY OF DAVID - ISRAEL MUSEUM

We begin the day at the **Mt. of Olives** with a magnificent overview of Jerusalem and an explanation of its history. Then, walk down the **Palm Sunday road** to the **Garden of Gethsemane**, site of Jesus' betrayal (Luke 22). We will continue to visit the **City of David**, **Hezekiah's Tunnel** and the **Pool of Siloam**, where Jesus healed the blind man, (John 9). We will spend the rest of the afternoon at the **Israel Museum**. Here we will have a chance to visit the **Model of Jerusalem** during Jesus' time to obtain an excellent perspective of the city at His time. We will visit the **Shrine of the Book**, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are housed, and view the ossuary of Caiphas and Pontius Pilatus stone. If time permits, we will also visit the **Bible Lands Museum**.

DAY 12 (Mon. Jan. 16): THE TEMPLE MOUNT

Early in the morning will visit the **Temple Mount** and the impressive **Dome of the Rock**. After a quiet moment of prayer at the **Wailing Wall**, we will visit the **Ophel** digs. We will walk on the First century Street, used by pilgrims for centuries, while viewing the remains of the Temple and the steps used by Jesus when entering it (Luke 19, Matthew 21). We will also visit the impressive **Western Wall Tunnel**, running along the continuation of the Western Wall, to get a better understanding of how the impressive complex of the Temple Mount was constructed. We will end the day at the **Rockefeller Museum**, one of the most important archeological museums in the land.

DAY 13 (Tue. Jan. 17): THE WILDERNESS

We will leave Jerusalem and descend towards the **Dead Sea**, located in the lowest place in the world, 1300 ft. below sea level! Our first stop will be at **Ein Gedi**, where David wrote some of his beautiful psalms. After a short hike we will reach the waterfall where David cut off Saul's skirt (I Samuel 24). We will continue to the astonishing ruins of **Massada**. Using a cable car we will reach Herod's magnificent fortress, site of the Zealots' stand against Rome. Well preserved storehouses, cisterns and palaces will be among the features to visit. At noon time we will stop at **Ein Bokek** for lunch and a float on the salty sea, before returning to Jerusalem.

DAY 14 (Wed. Jan. 18): JERUSALEM'S CHRISTIAN SITES

We will begin the day with a visit to **Herodion**, site of King Herod's palace and burial place. In the site are found remains of a magnificent palace, a luxurious swimming pool, a private theater and above all Herod's Mausoleum. Back in Jerusalem, We will retrace Jesus' last steps in Jerusalem. We will enter **St. Stephen's Gate** and come to the **Pool of Bethesda**, where Jesus healed the lame man (John 5). After a time of singing in **St. Anne's Church**, we will view the remains of the **Antonia Fortress**, site of Jesus' trial (Mathew 27). We then will follow the **Way of the Cross** out of the **Damascus Gate**. The rest of the day will be free. This will allow us to rest and absorb in much of the information we have come to obtain. You may want to use this day to re-visit a certain site, to stroll on your own or to do some shopping. Our tour bus will function as a shuttle bus and different activities will be suggested.

DAY 15 (Thur. Jan. 19): Early departure for home, after fulfilling a lifetime dream of seeing, touching and breathing the very places we have only read about until now. Arriving home our Bible will never be the same, for it will be alive in front of our eyes and in our hearts forever.