

# THE HOLY LAND

March 04 – 18, 2008

*Hosted by*

**Pastor Barry Thiessen**

**FORT RICHMOND BAPTIST CHURCH**

## **Tue., Mar. 04: Canada to Athens.**

Today we depart from Toronto on our overnight flight to Athens. Group seating will be pre-assigned by the airline for our flight. Dinner and complimentary in-flight service will be provided this evening. **(D)**

## **Wed., Mar. 05: Athens.**

Upon arrival at Athens Airport we are met by our Tour Manager, who will assist us with immigration and luggage formalities. Boarding our luxury touring coach we relax and enjoy the short journey to Athens and our overnight hotel, **The President**. Before arriving at our hotel we shall take a panoramic tour of Athens, including the **Acropolis** and **Mars Hill**. Tonight we enjoy our 'Welcome to Greece' dinner. **(B,D)**

## **Thu., Mar. 06: Corinth.**

After breakfast we will embark on the short journey to ancient Corinth. Situated between Athens and Sparta the archeological ruins of this city offer a wonderful insight into life at the time of Paul's visit during his second and third journeys. Dinner will be at a local restaurant this evening before our flight to Israel, where complimentary refreshments and in-flight service will be served. **(B,D)**

## **Fri., Mar. 07: Israel. Tel Aviv to Negev.**

Upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport we are met by our Israeli Tour Manager, who will assist us with immigration and luggage formalities. Boarding our luxury touring coach we take a short journey to Tel Aviv where we check-in to our hotel for rest and breakfast. Our Israel journey begins on the Mediterranean coast and the port of Jaffa.

**Jaffa**- One of the oldest towns in Israel, Jaffa is considered one of the oldest ports in the world. Cedars of Lebanon, sent by King Hiram of Tyre and destined for Solomon's Temple, were unloaded at Jaffa. It is here that Peter brought Tabitha back from the dead, and when in the home of Simon the Tanner, he prophesied the vision of the pure and un-pure animals. (II Chronicles 2:15; Jonah 1:3-17; Acts 9:36-42) After Jaffa we will enjoy our first Israeli buffet breakfast and an opportunity to freshen up before traveling south to the Negev desert.

En-route we will visit the city of Beer Sheeva (Hebrew meaning- "Well of Seven").

Our first overnight stay is at Kibbutz Mishabe Sade where we enjoy our 'Welcome to Israel' dinner. **(B,D)**

## **Sat., Mar. 08: Negev to Dead Sea.**

After breakfast we will embark on our journey, which will include:

**Ramon Crater**- More than 100 million years old, the world's largest crater offers staggering views of the Negev desert.

**Ben Gurion's Tomb**- At Kibbutz Sde Boker we visit the small museum dedicated to this man and learn more about his life.

**Avdat**- The greatest Nabatean city, built in 4C, hosts two Byzantine churches and gives us an insight into early Christianity.

**Mt. Sodom**- Here we will vie the 'traditional' site of Sodom and Gomorra.

**Dead Sea**- No visit to the Dead Sea would be complete without experiencing the unique buoyancy of these waters. Cover yourself in therapeutic black mud and float your aches and pains away! (Genesis 14:3; Deuteronomy 3:17 4:49; Joshua 3:16, 12:3, 15:2, 5.) Dinner will be at our hotel tonight. **(B,D)**

## **Sun., Mar. 09: Masada, Dead Sea.**

After breakfast we will head into the Judean wilderness and follow the shores of The Dead Sea to visit:

**Masada**- This UNESCO World Heritage site was once Herod's mountain-top palace and fortress. Here we ascend to the site by cable car and learn about the last Jewish stand against the Romans and the mass suicide of the 960 Jewish defenders. There will be a teaching: "Standing in the Gap for Israel" Prayer and Intercession.

**Ein Gedi**- This national park and oasis hosts the caves of David's Gorge where David hid from Saul and his army. (I Samuel 24; Song of Solomon 1:14; Ezekiel 47:10)

**Qumran**- Home to the ancient Essenes, it is here that they wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls almost two thousand years ago. Here we will visit the excavated sites of Qumran and the view the location where The Scrolls were found in 1947.

(John 1; Luke 1:57-80; Isaiah 40)

Dinner will be at our hotel this evening. **(B,D)**

## **Mon., Mar. 10: Jericho to Galilee.**

Today we leave the desert topography of southern Israel and travel to the green pastures of the Galilee. En-route we will visit:

**Jericho-** Closed to tourists for the last four years, we are now allowed to enter the oldest city in the world.

**Gilboa.** A place of tragedy and triumph, Israelis flock here every year from February to April to see the multitude of wildflowers and the famed purplish Gilboa Iris (Iris Haynei). It was here that Saul, the first King of Israel and his sons died fighting the Philistines, “And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa”, (Samuel I 38:8).

**Bet She’an-** This is the largest of Israel’s archeological digs. Even after its initial discovery many years ago, archeologists are today still discovering more ruins from the Roman era when Bet She’an was one of the 10 cities in The Decapolis. This ancient city, although destroyed by an earthquake in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century, offers a fabulous insight into Roman life and times. After losing the battle to the Philistines, King Saul and his sons were hung from the city walls. (Judges 4:7-8)

Once at the Sea of Galilee we shall check-in to our Kibbutz for dinner and overnight stay. **(B,D)**

## **Tue., Mar. 11: Galilee.**

After our Israeli buffet breakfast, our full touring day involves visits to:

**Capernaum-** The center of Jesus’ Galilee Ministry, Jesus lived here for a substantial period, healing the sick, preaching in the synagogue and performing miracles. The Greek Orthodox Church, Fransiscan monastery, and Roman Catholic Church of St. Peter make for an interesting kaleidoscope of varying architecture. (Matthew 9:1, 4:13)

**The Mount of Beatitudes-** We will sit on the hill where Jesus delivered his Sermon on the Mount. Looking directly south at the Sea of Galilee, the flower-filled gardens offer peace and tranquility. We will Worship and have a teaching here... (Matthew 5:1-8)

**Tabgha-** Located at the foot of the Mount of Beatitudes, this is the site of the Miracle of The Loaves and the Fishes. Here we will enjoy private worship and intercession by the shores of the Galilee. (Mark 6:34-44; Matthew 14:14-21, 16:18-19; John 21:15-19)

**Ginossar-** Here we will visit the **Jesus Boat Museum** exhibit. Discovered by accident during the drought of 1986, this fishing boat would have existed at the time of Jesus. Beautifully preserved, it is a timeless reminder of life during that time. The museum has a gift shop with quality items on sale!

**Sea of Galilee Boat Ride-** Our day ends with an unforgettable sailing on the Sea of Galilee.

Dinner tonight will be at our Kibbutz. **(B,D)**

## **Wed., Mar. 12: Upper Galilee.**

After breakfast we begin our day traveling through the Upper Galilee and Golan Heights. Today we will have the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the **River Jordan.**

**Tel Dan-** This national park and archeological site offer a blend of Israel’s natural beauty and Biblical history

**Caesarea Philippi-** Built at one of the sources of the Jordan River, the city of Panias (named by the Greeks after the goat-footed God, Pan) was later renamed by the Romans as Caesarea Philippi. It was here that Jesus revealed to the Disciples His purpose, His Church, and where Peter identified Jesus as the Messiah. (Mark 8:27; Matthew 16:13-23)

**Golan Heights-** Today we have the opportunity to view Israel from The Golan Heights. This parcel of land plays a significant role in the security of those living in the Jordan Valley and Upper Galilee.

**Bethsaida-** Also known as ‘The House of The Fisherman’, this is the home of Peter, Philip and Andrew, and also the place where Jesus fed the five thousand and healed the blind man. Here we will see recent excavations of this old city. (Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13; John 1)

After another wonderful day, we return to our Kibbutz for dinner. **(B,D)**

## **Thu., Mar.13: Nazareth to Jerusalem.**

Today we leave the Upper Galilee and travel south towards the Mediterranean coast and then Jerusalem. Today we will visit:

**Nazareth-** Here is where Jesus spent his childhood with Mary and Joseph. Nazareth is also the site of The Annunciation and where the Nazarenes attempted to throw Jesus over the cliff. Now a suburb of Nazareth, Cana is the site where Jesus performed his first miracle when he changed water into wine at a wedding. (Luke 1:26-38, John 1:46, 2:45-46; Matthew 2:23)

**Megiddo-** Hebrew for **Armageddon**, Megiddo was strategically located on the main trading routes between Babylonia and Egypt. Here King Solomon built a giant fortress and city.  
(Judges 1:27, 5:19; I Kings 4:12, 9:15; II Chronicles 35:22; Zechariah 12:12, Revelation 16:16)

**Mount Carmel-** Overlooking the city of Haifa with the Mediterranean Sea and Jezreel Valley on either side, we stand where the Prophet Elijah performed his miracle and called upon the fire of God to conquer the Prophets of Baal.  
(I Kings 2, 15:4, 25; Isaiah 33:9; Zechariah 12:12)

**Caesarea-** The ancient Roman seaport capital of Israel where Pontius Pilate had his base.

This afternoon we shall arrive in Jerusalem, via Mt. Scopus, check in to **The Novotel Hotel**, and relax after our first few days in The Holy Land. Dinner will be served at our hotel. **(B,D)**

### **Fri., Mar. 14: Jerusalem.**

After breakfast we will spend our first full day in Jerusalem visiting:

**Mount of Olives-** We begin our day by viewing Jerusalem from the Mt. of Olives. Photo opportunities abound at this time with the prominent Golden Dome of the Rock. From here we shall walk down to The Garden of Gethsemane along the same path as that Jesus took when entering the city on Palm Sunday.

**Garden of Gethsemane-** This is the site where Jesus prayed at the Rock of Agony in the Garden. -"*My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.*"  
(Matthew 26:36-56; Mark 14:32-50; Luke 22:39-53; John 18:1-14)

**Mount Zion-** Assumed by the Byzantine pilgrims as the original City of David, this piece of land would have existed outside the original city walls.  
(II Kings 2:10; Matthew 26:17-35; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:7-38; John 13-17)

**David's Tomb-** Visit the stone cenotaph laid by Crusaders in the Church of the Apostles.

**Upper Room-** This is the traditional site where Jesus instituted a new Passover celebration and the new Covenant in His blood. (Mark 14:15)

**Old City-** Here we will walk through the streets of the Armenian and Jewish quarters of old Jerusalem

Dinner is served at our hotel this evening. **(B,D)**

### **Sat., Mar. 15: Jerusalem, Bethlehem.**

After breakfast we will spend our morning in Jerusalem and afternoon in Bethlehem visiting:

**Yad Vashem-** Israel's national monument, memorial and museum to the Holocaust.

**Bethlehem-** After lunch we visit Bethlehem where we shall see both the Church of Nativity (the oldest standing church in The Holy Land) and Shepherds' Fields before perusing the local shops.

Dinner will be served back at the hotel in Jerusalem. **(B,D)**

### **Sun., Mar. 16: Jerusalem.**

After breakfast we have a truly memorable final day, which will include the following:

**Davidson Centre-** This new facility uses state-of-the-art technology to bring the Temple Mount to life. This will give us a better understanding of the magnitude of Herod's construction versus what we see today.

**Via Dolorosa-** The one mile long route through the Old City of Jerusalem, from the point of condemnation by Pontius Pilate to Golgotha, Calvary Hill.

**Holy Sepulcher Church-** Stations X - XIV on The Via Dolorosa, this is the site of the Crucifixion of Jesus and where he was laid to rest.

**Garden Tomb-** Preserved by The Garden Tomb Association, these beautiful gardens surround the traditional site of The Garden Tomb. Many believe that this was the actual garden of Joseph of Arimathea. (John 19:41)

Dinner will be at our hotel this evening. **(B,D)**

### **Mon., Mar. 17: Free day, Jerusalem.**

Our last day in Israel has been left open so we can peruse the shops of Ben Yehuda street and walk through the Old City, for one last time.

*This evening we will enjoy our 'Farewell Dinner' at our hotel in Jerusalem. It will be a wonderful time to share and reflect on what this journey has meant to you. (B,D)*

### **Tue., Mar. 18: Tel Aviv to Toronto.**

Alas, this morning we check out from our hotel and take the transfer to Tel Aviv airport. Here we will say goodbye to our Tour Manager and driver.

Our return flights will bring us back to Canada in the early afternoon. Group seating will be pre-assigned by the airline for our flight. Breakfast, lunch and complimentary in-flight service will be provided.

**(B,L)**

**B = Breakfast L = Lunch D = Dinner**

