

Welcome to Israel Ben Gurion Airport – Tel Aviv Israel

Tel Aviv – Jaffa: (Land Here)

- Is the major economic & culture center. Founded in 1909 as the first modern city. It is the administrative center for all the major banks, political parties, news organizations, and foreign embassies.
- The two towns sit next to each other.
- Jaffa (Yafo) the ancient Joppa is the oldest city in the Holy Land.
- II Chron 2:2-16 tells how King Hurman of Tyre used the port of Joppa to send the cedar trees to Solomon.
- Jonah 1:3 is the port that Jonah started his journey from, where he boarded a boat for Tarashish.
- It was in Joppa that Peter raised a woman from the dead (Tabitha/Dorcus) (Acts 9:34-42) and where Peter (on the roof top) received the vision that took him to Cornelius house in Caesarea. (Acts 10:9-16)
- Joppa is also the home of Simon the Tanner, where Peter stayed.

Tiberias (Location of our motel for four nights)

Looking east across the Sea of Galilee from Tiberias, towards the hills of lower Golan and the Decapolis.

- After the fall of Jerusalem it became a center of Jewish learning and is considered one of the four Holy Cities of Judaism.
- Herod Antipas built the city in A.D. 18-20, moving his capital there from Sepphoris (North of Nazereth). He named it Tiberias after the reigning Roman emperor (A.D. 14-37).
- The Gospels make no reference to Jesus' having visited the city, probably because of the ceremonial uncleanness of the burial places there and the offence this could have caused other Jews. Another deterrent would have been the presence of Herod Antipas and his soldiers.
- Across the lake, high on the Lower Golan Heights and easily visible from Tiberias, the fortress of Gamala rested on a camel's back-like ridge. The center of "freedom fighter" activity, it was here in A.D. 6 that a Pharisee scholar named Yehuda (Judah) of Gamala founded the Zealot movement. Although it was doomed to failure (**Acts 5:37**), the eastern hills above the Sea of Galilee continued to represent the growing resentment of many Galileans against the power of Rome. Just across the lake on its western side, Tiberias, the residence of Herod Antipas, faced Gamala, standing as a constant reminder of the Roman presence and its control over the region.
- Although Herod was very aware of Jesus' ministry, Herod had never seen Him until Pilate sent Jesus to him during Jesus' Roman trial (**Matt 14:1,2; Mark 6:14-16; Luke 9:7-9; 23:6-12**).
- Tiberias was easily visible from Capernaum. The people who lived and fished there would always be aware of the power of the man who had built Tiberias and who could be in residence there at any time. Conversely, when Herod was resident in

Tiberias, he could enjoy the view of the territory he controlled on the north shore of the lake. Beyond the Jordan River to the north, his brother Philip ruled Gaulanitis, the "Tetrarchy of Philip."

- One of Jesus' devoted followers was Joanna, wife of Chuza, Herod's steward (**Luke 8:3**). His was a prestigious office, one that involved the managing of Herod's finances and royal estates. Presumably Chuza lived in Tiberias, Herod's regional capital, and Joanna would have lived there with him. In the previous verse (8:2), Mary Magdalene, the woman Jesus delivered from demons, is mentioned. She was from the town of Migdal, just three miles along the shore from Tiberias. As Mary, Joanna and other women followed Jesus and financially supported Him and His disciples, they would have come to know each other well. (Had Jesus' deliverance of Mary convinced Joanna to believe in Him also?) Mary, and probably also Joanna, were present at the cross (**Matt 27:55,56; Mark 15:40-41; 23:49**). It was Mary from Migdal and Joanna from Tiberias who went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body (Luke 24:10). (May we assume that through Joanna, some of Herod's wealth found its way into Judas' "money box" (**John 12:8**) for the support of Jesus and the Twelve?)
- The day after Jesus fed the five thousand at Bethsaida on the northeastern side of the lake, "there came other small boats from Tiberias to the place where they ate the bread..." (**John 6:23**). Perhaps this crossing indicates that there were people in Tiberias who were attracted to Jesus, seeing Him as a miracle worker and even perceiving Him as a prophet (**John 6:14**). (Had Joanna been the source of their information about Jesus?)
- When the Romans put down the Jewish revolt, destroying Jerusalem in A.D.70, Tiberias became the home of the now impotent Sanhedrin after it moved there from Sepphoris in A.D. 217.
- Tiberias also became the home of the Jerusalem Talmud and later the Massoretic text of the Old Testament.

Caesarea: 32 miles north of Joppa & 60 miles NW of Jerusalem

- Destroyed in 614 AD, **Caesarea Palaestina**, also called **Caesarea Maritima** was a town built by Herod the Great about 25 –13 BC and was known as a crusader city and a major seaport.
- The site of ancient Caesarea is located on the Mediterranean Sea, about midway between Haifa and Tel Aviv. The Roman capital of Judea-Palestine for almost 600 years and later a Crusader port, Caesarea was renowned for the splendor of its public buildings.
- After the conquest of the country by Alexander the Great in 332 BC the site was occupied by Greeks and the town became Straton's Tower.
- In 22 BC Herod began constructing a new city on the site of Straton's Tower which he called Caesarea in honor of his benefactor, Augustus Caesar.
- It was a walled city with palaces, temples, a theater, a marketplace, and water and sewage systems. Elaborate entertainment facilities in the imperial tradition were erected, including a theater, amphitheater and hippodrome.
- It had the largest harbor on the eastern Mediterranean coast, named Sebastos, the Greek translation of Caesar's title "Augustus." King Herod's palace was in the southern part of the city. When completed 12 years later, only Jerusalem outshone Caesarea in splendor. It became the headquarters for Roman rule. Easily accessible to Rome, a ten-day voyage away, the city developed good trade relations with cities to the west, and became one of the major ports in the region.
- The civil life of the new city began in 13 BC, when Caesarea was made the civil and military capital of Judaea, and the official residence of the Roman procurators and governors, Pontius Pilatus (AD 26-36)
 - King Herod was a great trader. The city was named after the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus.
 - Had an amphitheater, hippodrome (used for chariot & horse racing), market area & public buildings.
 - After the revolt of Simon bar Kokhba, which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, Caesarea became the center of Christianity in Palestine; however, there is no record of any bishop of Caesarea until the end of the 2nd century, when a council was held there to regulate the celebration of Easter.
 - In the 3rd century Origen wrote his Hexapla and other exegetic and theological works while living there.
 - Eusebius was one of its archbishops, Eusebius was an early Christian writer and theologian.
 - During the Christian era in the 3rd & 4th century it housed on the most important Christian libraries and it was where Eusebius was bishop.
 - There is no record of Jesus every visiting or passing through Caesarea, however, it played an important role in early Christian history.
 - Early Christian mentions of Caesarea in the apostolic period follow the acts of Peter who established the church there when he baptized the Cornelius the Centurion (**Acts, 10, 11**). The Apostle Paul often sojourned there (**9:30; 18:22; 21:8**), and was imprisoned at Caesarea for two years before being taken to Rome (**23:23, 25:1-13**).
 - It is mentioned 17 times in the book of Acts as the scene of significant events in the beginnings of the Church:
 - **Acts 8:40** is mentioned in regards to Phillip preaching the gospel.

- **Acts 10:24-44:** Peter visits Cornelius, They all receive the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.
- **Act 12:23,** Herod's death, because he did not give praise to God.
- **Acts 18:21-22;** Paul went from Ephesus to Jerusalem, landing at Caesarea.
- **Acts 21:7-15;** Paul went from Tyre to Jerusalem landing at Caesarea.
- **Acts 21:8:** Caesarea was also home to Philip the evangelist. Where Paul received the warning about going on to Jerusalem. Agabus tied Paul's hands with Paul's belt.
- **Acts 23:35:** Paul was held for trial in the governor's palace at Caesarea.
- **Acts 24:27:** Paul was imprisoned at Caesarea for two years following his trial before the Roman governor Felix.
- **Acts 25:1-26:32:** Paul was tried a second time by Festus, the successor to Felix, King Herod Agrippa and his wife Bernice, whereupon he demanded his right as a Roman citizen to be judged by the emperor (Nero) in Rome.
- **Act 23: 23-33;** Residency of Governor Felix

Jezreel Valley

- It is Israel's largest valley and one of its most fertile regions. Two names "Jezreel" and/or "Esdraelon"
- Some references use the name Plain of Akko or Plain of Megiddo; others say Jezreel indicated only that part of the valley where the city of Jezreel was located; while others hold that Megiddo indicated both the fortified town and the plain on which it was located. For the sake of simplicity, we will use only the name Jezreel Valley.
- Valley is composed of four valley's: Valley of Beth Shean, Valley of Harod, Valley of Jezreel, & the Valley of Armageddon.
- The importance of the valley in terms of transportation continues to this day, as many trucks from Amman, Jordan travel through it on their way the port of Haifa at the northern tip of Mount Carmel.
 - One of Israel's loveliest regions, the Jezreel Valley is today lush with farms, villages, pastures and meadows, and is full of fishponds and is known as "Israel's breadbasket".
 - **(Judges 7:12).** It was the epic battleground where the Israelite Judge, Gideon, with only 300 men, defeated the Midianites and the Amalekites who were "thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore."
 - **(1 Samuel 31:1-13)** Saul's army was defeated by the Philistines in the Jezreel Valley and Saul and his three son's were killed on Mt Gilboa.
 - **(2 Chronicles 35:20-25).** King Josiah of Judah was slain on the plain of Megiddo in the Jezreel Valley while battling Neco, King of Egypt.
 - **(1 Kings 21:3).** Naboth owned a vineyard in the town of Jezreel, close to the palace of King Ahab. Ahab wanted to purchase the vineyard for the site of a garden and offered to either pay for it or replace it with another vineyard. But Naboth refused, saying, "The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."
 - **Rev 16:14-16:** Will gather the great kings of all nations for battle.
 - **Zechariah 12:9;** God declares that he will destroy all nations that attack Jerusalem.
 - At the head of the valley, on the west side, is the tel (mound) of Megiddo.
 - On the northern side of the Jezreel Valley is Nazareth, famous as the site of the announcement ("Annunciation") to Mary of her conception and the childhood of Jesus.
 - Southeastern end of the Jezreel Valley is Mount Gilboa, a barren ridge rising to a high point of 1,700 feet above the valley about 7 miles west of the Jordan River.
 - Northeast corner of the valley, about six miles east-southeast of Nazareth and twelve miles west-southwest of the Sea of Galilee, is 1,843 foot-high Mount Tabor.

- The Kishon River ("winding") is formed by small streams and wadis (mostly dry, seasonal watercourses) on Mount Gilboa to the south and west and the Nazareth hills to the north.
- The Kishon's headwaters unite in the Jezreel Valley and flow diagonally (from southeast to northwest) some 25 miles, emptying into Haifa Bay just north of Mount Carmel.
- In Old Testament times the Kishon was the scene of two of the grandest achievements of Israelite history--first, the defeat of the Canaanite general Sisera by Deborah and Barak (Judges 4), and, later, the destruction of the prophets of Baal by Elijah (1 Kings 18:40).

Mt. Carmel

- At 580 meters above sea level (1730 feet) the Carmel Mountains tower above the Mediterranean coastline and their limestone rocks create a cliff-like landscape.
- The Mt. Carmel range borders the Samaritan Hills to the southeast, the Mediterranean shore to the west, and the Jezreel valley to the north.
- Is referenced most often as a symbol of beauty and fertility. To be given the "splendor of Carmel" was to be blessed indeed (**Isa 35:2**).
- Solomon praised his beloved: "your head crowns you like Mount Carmel" (**Song 7:5**). But for Carmel to wither was a sign of devastating judgment (**Nahum 1:4**).
- Mount Carmel is associated with the prophets Elijah. (**I Kings 18:17-40**).
- Elijah the Prophet taught in the "school of the prophets" on this mountain. On the summit of Mount Carmel, Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. *"Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel.* (1 Kings 18:19-20). Today a Carmelite monastery stands at the summit of the highest peak.
- Two other Christian sites are found on the mountain. The Carmelite headquarters and monastery complex is called Stella Maris (Star of the Sea) and stands proudly on the northernmost edge. Some believe that Elijah inhabited a cave under the church.
- During World War I, Mount Carmel played a significant strategic role. The (20th century) Battle of Megiddo took place at the head of a pass through the Carmel Ridge, which overlooks the Valley of Jezreel from the south. General Allenby led the British in the battle, which was the turning point in the war against the Ottoman Empire.
- The Jezreel Valley had played host to many battles before, including the very historically significant Battle of Megiddo between the Egyptians and Canaanites, but it was only in the 20th century battle that the Carmel Ridge itself having a significance in the battle, due to the developments in munitions.
- There is also another cave, much further down the slopes. It is here that many Jewish and Christian comes in pilgrimage. Here Elijah is believed to have studied with his pupils and may have offered advice to those who came to seek it.
- The city of Haifa sweeps up the slopes of Mount Carmel and is home to museums and multiple cultural and educational institutions.
- Today two Druze villages are situated on Mt. Carmel. The Druze religion is an offshoot of the Islam faith from about 1000 A.D. The Druze people speak Arabic, live also in the hills of Galilee and the Golan Heights, and have good relations with the Jews of Israel. They are often persecuted by Muslims.

Megiddo:

- Tel (City) Megiddo is one of the most important archaeological mounds in Israel for biblical times. The city was inhabited continuously for more than five millennia (6000-500 B.C.). It contains the remains of historic Megiddo, a fortified city that rested strategically on the ancient main road from Egypt to Syria and Mesopotamia.

- The imposing 100-foot high tel (mound) of Megiddo ("place of crowds") covers 13 acres and is located in the Jezreel Valley, 6 miles southeast of Haifa and 70 miles northwest of Jerusalem.
- Megiddo is located in the Jezreel Valley where many believe Armageddon, the final battle, will take place. (Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon" (**Revelation 16:16**)).
- From the summit there is a commanding view, not only of the Jezreel Valley, but of Mount Tabor, Mount Gilboa and Nazareth to the northeast and the Carmel mountain range to the northwest.
- Because of its location (a connecting point between the sea and the interior of the country) it has also served as an important junction and battlefield throughout history. In 1918 the British defeated the Turks here and in 1948, during the War of Independence, the Israelis overcame invading Arabs forces at nearby Mishmar Haemek.
- Joshua killed the king of Megiddo during the Conquest (Joshua 12:7, 12:21).
- The city of Megiddo was allotted to the tribe of Manasseh (Joshua 17:11; I Chronicles 7:29).
- Deborah and Barak led the Israelites to victory over the Canaanite armies of Sisera by "the waters of Megiddo" (Judges 5:19-20).
- Solomon made Megiddo one of his district capitals as well as one of his three main fortress cities (I Kings 4:12; 9:15).
- King Josiah of Judah died in battle near Megiddo when he tried to thwart pharaoh Necho's attempt to succor the Assyrians at the Battle of Carchemish (II Kings 23:29-30; II Chronicles 35:20-24).
- Western military forces gather in the Valley of Megiddo, at Armageddon, and proceed to Jerusalem to engage eastern forces advancing in that direction, and at the height of battle encounter the unforeseen intervention of the Messiah (Revelation 16:16).
- Plain of Megiddo, mentioned in an ancient Egyptian document (over 3,500 years old), was one of the chariot cities of Kings Solomon and Ahab.
- Excavations have uncovered the ruins of 25 cities dating from 4,000 to 400 B.C. Ruined structures, now visible, belong to the fortified "chariot city," built by King Solomon in the 10th century B.C.
- The Israelites often had to bury their water sources (so enemies would not cut them off), and tunnel out to them. The city of Megiddo is a great example of this. The tunnel is a well preserved, ancient water system, dating from the 9th century B.C. It is a remarkable piece of engineering consisting of a large shaft, sunk 120 feet through rock, meeting a tunnel cut more than 200 feet to a spring outside the city. The spring was hidden by a wall and camouflaged by a covering of earth.
- Megiddo guards the most important highway of the ancient world, the Via Maris that connected Egypt with Mesopotamia.
- In ancient times, it was a most important city, overlooking the only pass through the mountain ranges running north-south along the length of Judea-Palestine.
- The main highway linking Egypt with Syria and Mesopotamia, called by the Romans "Via Maris" (Way of the Sea), ran through this pass.
- This seemingly tranquil place is mentioned repeatedly in the Bible and in the ancient archives of Egypt and Assyria as the scene of battles between great empires.
- By St. John's time (1st century AD), at least 13 battles had been fought at Megiddo and in the surrounding Jezreel Valley [four at Megiddo itself, four at Mount Tabor,

one at Mount Gilboa, one at the Hill of Moreh (Endor), one at the city of Jezreel and two at other locations in the valley].

- **About 1200 BC** - During this period the Israelites invaded Palestine. Megiddo lay in the territory allotted to the tribe of Manasseh.
- Megiddo is mentioned in the Bible both in the list of the cities conquered by Joshua (**Joshua 12:21**) and in the list of Canaanite cities not conquered by the settling Israelites (**Judges 1:27-28**).

Mt. Gilboa

- Mount Gilboa (from Hebrew *gal* and *ba`ah*, meaning "swollen heap") is not a single mountain, but a barren ridge rising to a high point of 1,700 feet, separating the Harod Valley from the plain of Jezreel (also called plain of Esdraelon), about 7 miles west of the Jordan River.
- At the foot of Mount Gilboa is Ma'ayan Harod National Park, containing a cave in which arises the spring of Harod, where the Judge Gideon selected his 300 warriors to battle the Midianites.
- Gilboa was the site of an Israelite encampment where Saul, first king of Israel, prepared to do battle against the Philistines:
- "The Philistines assembled and came and set up camp at Shunem, while Saul gathered all the Israelites and set up camp at Gilboa." (**1 Samuel 28:4**)
- "Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me." But the armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so Saul took his own sword and fell on it." (**1 Samuel 31**)
- Saul and his three sons died on Mt Gilboa (**I Chron 10:1**)
- Saul's head, along with his sons were hung in the temple of Dagon at Beth Shan. (**I Chron 10:10 & I Sam 31:10**)
- Saul and his sons bodies were buried in Jabesh. (**I Chron 10:11 & I Sam 31:12**)
- Mount Gilboa is on the southeastern side of the Jezreel Valley.
- **February to April, Israelis flock to Gilboa to see the multitude of wildflowers, especially the famed purplish Gilboa Iris (purple color).**

Mt Tabor: - 1,843 feet above sea level

The Basilica of the Transfiguration, this is one consideration of the place called "mountain set apart"

- It lies some ten miles from the Sea of Galilee and six miles southeast of Nazareth.
- The mountain is symmetrical, resembling an upside down tea cup, standing alone in the plain.
- A prominent hill (mountain) southwest of the Sea of Galilee, with very little foothills. Mount Tabor was the staging area for the armies of Deborah and Barak, as they faced the assembly of Canaanites and their chariots arrayed below them on the plain to the west (**Judges 4:6, 12, 14**).
- It was on Mount Tabor that the Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna killed Gideon's brothers (**Judges 8:18-19**).
- Many identify Mount Tabor as the site of the Transfiguration. This is highly unlikely, however, for several reasons.
- The historian Josephus mentions a Roman fortress located on Mount Tabor at the time of Christ. Probably other structures were also on Mount Tabor since this had been a well-

populated region for at least a century. The presence of these structures would diminish the likelihood of this being the setting for such a sensitive and significant event that Jesus meant for His closest disciples.

- The height of Mount Tabor would hardly be considered a "high mountain" (**Mark 9:2**), especially in comparison with other high mountains (Mt Hermon) in the vicinity of where Jesus was teaching. (Compare the following scripture when looking at the site for the transfiguration – Where Jesus was at – Mark 8:22; Bethsaida – Mark 8:27; Caesarea Philippi – Mark 9:30-35; Ministering in Galilee, possible Upper Galilee because they then went to Capernaum.
- Mount Tabor was located a considerable distance from Caesarea Philippi, (Mark 8:27) where Jesus had made His historic announcement (He predicts His death – Mark 8:31) to His disciples
- The group had passed higher mountains than Mount Tabor, including the 4,000-foot Mount Meron, as they traveled south from Caesarea Philippi towards their destination at Capernaum.
- Mount Tabor was located a day's journey south of Capernaum. It would have been unlikely that Jesus and His disciples would have traveled this distance beyond Capernaum and then retraced their steps back to that city on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.
- A snaking road leads through pine forests to the summit of the mountain and the Roman Catholic Church of the Transfiguration and adjacent monastery.

Cana

The Church of the Miracle at Cana – Many Christians celebrate their wedding here.

- A town in the highlands of Galilee; the traditional site is Kefr Kana, about four miles north-northeast of Nazareth on the road to Tiberias, the other site is Khirbet Kana, nine miles north of Nazareth. Josephus, who at one time lived in Cana claims this site.
- Philip, in turn, sought out Nathanael from Cana, a small town twenty five miles west of Bethsaida to share about the new-found Messiah (**John 1:35-45**).
- Cana would become the site of Jesus' first two miracles in Galilee. In the first, He would provide wine for a wedding (**John 2:1-11**). In the second, Jesus would heal a boy in Capernaum, home of John and James, twenty miles away on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, while remaining in Cana (**John 4:46-54**).

Nazareth

- Nazareth with the Church of the Annunciation
- The village of Jesus' time was located at the site of the modern church and the surrounding hills hid it from those passing through the Jezreel Valley beyond.
- At the top center of photo is the so-called "Mount of the Leap," or "Mount of Precipitation," recalling the incident in **Luke 4:29**, in which the townspeople tried to throw Jesus off a hill for supposed blasphemy.
- The ancient town of Nazareth is in the lower Galilee at about 1250 feet above sea-level. It lies roughly halfway between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea.
- The city of Nazareth is located in the heart of an undulating valley, where Jesus spent his boyhood and lived with Joseph and Mary (**Luke 1:26-38 & Matt 2:23**).
- Nazareth has the honor of being known as the "home town" of Jesus Christ. In fact, many Christian people often refer to their Savior as "Jesus of Nazareth".

- It was in Nazareth that the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce the coming birth of Christ.
- Joseph and Mary lived there after their marriage, and it was from there, as the well-known account goes, they went down south to Bethlehem to register for the census that had been ordered by the Roman rulers.
- It was during that trip that Jesus was born, in Bethlehem. Jesus did not however get to see Nazareth for some time - after being warned by another angel (we can be reasonably sure that there were always a great many powerful angels around Jesus all His life, until, at the end, they had their orders to just stand back and watch Him be brutally assaulted and killed), Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt with the newborn Jesus to save His life from Herod. There they remained for a time until after the tyrant's death.
- Nazareth is in the area that was allotted to the Israelite tribe of Zebulun during the Old Testament period although it is not mentioned by name at all in that part of the Bible. It is located in Galilee, about 100 kilometers (65 miles) north of Jerusalem.
- Today's visitors concentrate on the Basilica of the Annunciation - consecrated by Pope Paul VI in 1964, recalling the announcement of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary of the approaching virgin birth (**Luke 1:26-38**) as well as the Church of St. Gabriel, Mary's Well, and the "Synagogue Church", where Jesus preached from the prophet Isaiah (**Luke 4:16-30**).

Sea of Galilee

- Also known as the Lake of Gennesaret, Lake Tiberias and Lake Kinneret.
- A comparatively small lake, fed by the River Jordan and lying 600 feet below sea level, where violent storms rush down from surrounding mountains causing very rough water.
- The lake is 13 miles long & 7 miles wide
- From the Sea of Galilee, the water is purified and pumped into large pipelines that bring the life-giving water to the towns and cities all over the country.
- .Here Jesus:
 - Rebuked the winds and the sea (**Matthew 8:26**)
 - performed the miracle of the Multiplication of the loaves and fishes (**Luke 5:1-11**)
 - and walked on water (**Mark 6:48; Matthew 14:25**)
 - taught from Peter's boat (**Mark 3:7-9**) .
 - "Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered round him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge." (**Mark 4:1**)
- The Sea of Galilee is one of Israel's four seas and, in addition to being a repository of dozens of Christian holy sites, is a vacation paradise for Israelis and tourists.
- The largest city on the lake is Tiberias, one of the four holy cities of Judaism, and the beaches and villages surrounding the lake are a haven for tourists.

Magdal

- Two miles north of Tiberias, along the lakeshore, was the city of Magdala, home of Mary Magdalene.
- In the same manner as Jesus was identified as a Nazarene (from the town of Nazareth), Mary Magdalene came from Magdala.
- The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out." (**Luke 8:1-2**)
- Mary became one of the inner circle of Jesus' followers, a witness to his crucifixion, and the first witness to his resurrection: (**John 20:1**).

- The Bible (NIV, RSV) uses the alternate names "Magadan" (as in **Matthew 15:39**): "After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan." and "Dalmanutha" (as in **Mark 8:10**): "He got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha."
- The plain of Gennesaret at the base of the cliff was where Jesus and his disciples landed after a severe storm on the lake, during which Jesus walked on the water: (**Mark 14:25 -34**)
- In 1986, the so-called "Jesus Boat" was discovered in the muddy lake bottom near Magdala's ancient harbor. Constructed in about 40 BC, it was in use during the time of Jesus. Now, it is on display in the Yigal Allon Museum at nearby Kibbutz Ginnosar,
- Looking west toward the Plain of Gennesaret and site of Magdala from a boat on the Sea of Galilee. Looming some 1,300 feet above the lake, far left, is the steep cliff of Mount Arbel.
- Mount Arbel rises above the narrow wadi (ravine) below, known as the Valley of the Doves through which passed the important international highway between Damascus and Egypt, called by the Romans "Via Maris" (Way of the Sea). This strategic pass was also known as the Valley of the Robbers" because bandits used to plunder caravans traveling up and down it. Jesus, his family, and his followers would have passed through this valley on many occasions, particularly when traveling back and forth between Capernaum and Nazareth or Cana.

Capernaum

- **Matt 4:13**; The location of Capernaum (or *Kfar Nahum* in Hebrew) is along the border of the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Its location is 2 1/2 miles from the point where the Jordan River enters the Sea of Galilee and about 10 miles from present-day Tiberias.
- Ruins of Capernaum, was a well to do city. One indication is the white stones used in the building, plenty of black basalt stones in the area.
- Matthew and Mark refer to Capernaum as Jesus' hometown and the center of Jesus' ministry.
- Jesus' lived here for a substantial period, healing the sick, preaching in the synagogue and performing miracles (Matthew 9:1, 4:13).
- Capernaum is the location of a third/fourth century marble synagogue, one of Israel's best preserved.
- This "white synagogue" was not the one Jesus taught in, as related in Mark 1:21. This was proven by several seasons of excavations in the 1960's.
- Beneath the synagogue floor, archaeologists found a treasure trove of more than 10,000 Roman coins from the 4th and 5th centuries AD. In the course of further digging, a black basalt wall was discovered running underneath the limestone blocks. At first it was assumed that it was a foundation, but at one corner, the basalt wall did not align with the limestone structure above. After more digging below the synagogue's limestone paving, a cobbled floor of black basalt was found, scattered with potsherds dated to the 1st century AD. Taking into account the fact that the Jews of the ancient world customarily built new synagogues on the sites of older ones, it was probably the one built by the Roman centurion (**Luke 7:1-5**) and the place where Jesus taught (**Mark 1:21, John 6:59**).
- Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen living in the village.
- Jesus was confronted by a demoniac while teaching here (**Mark 1:23-27**).
- Jesus healed the servant of the centurion. (**Matt 8:5**) This Roman official was credited with building the synagogue (**Luke 7:3**).
- Mark 5:38-42, Jesus heals Jairus' daughter.

- In this synagogue, Jesus gave sermon on the bread of life (**John 6:35-59**).
- Healed Peters Mother in law-(**Matt 8:14-15**)
- Jesus prophesied destruction the place (**Matt 11:23-24**)
- The House of St Peter, built over the site where Peter's house was located.
- Capernaum controlled at least 5 miles of the lake shore and was important enough to have a contingent of Roman soldiers, commanded by a centurion (**Matthew 8:5-8**).
- It also had a customs house where new arrivals paid tolls to Herod Antipas' tax collectors. These officials were reviled by the Jewish inhabitants, who saw them as collaborators in a harsh and corrupt political system.
- Matthew (Levi) worked as a tax collector and lived in Capernaum, it's here he accepted Jesus' call to discipleship (**Matthew 9:9**) and it is here that Jesus dined with him. (**Matt 9:10**) Jesus made an important decision here, because in accepting Matthew invitation to dine, Jesus was reaching out to the unacceptable, the unsavory, or does He stay in the circle of the acceptable, the righteous.
- It was prominently situated on the Via Maris, the main road running northward from Egypt along the Mediterranean coast to Lebanon.
- An extension branched off from the coast at Caesarea, passing near Mount Tabor and over to the Sea of Galilee, where it went around the west side of the lake through Capernaum, continuing on toward the Golan Heights, then to Damascus and Mesopotamia. In fact, the present road from Tiberias to Capernaum follows the same route.
- In **Mark 1:22 and Luke 4:31-37** Jesus captivates his audience with his teaching, with his authority, and his ability to cast out a demon's, after this he enters the house of Peter and Andrew, with James and John. (**Mark 1:29**)
- **Matthew 23:2**; Moses seat – People sat around the sides – Table in the middle to speak from.
- Capernaum became the headquarters for Jesus' Galilean ministry (**Matthew 9:1**).
- Jesus taught in the synagogue of Capernaum (**Mark 1:21; 3:1; Luke 4:33-38**).
- The man with a palsy was healed when his friends let him down into the house where Jesus lived after removing the roof (**Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26**).
- Jesus healed the woman who had an "issue of blood" (**Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48**).
- Jesus healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day in the synagogue (**Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11**).
- Capernaum, Korazin, and Bethsaida were the venue for most of Jesus miracles (**Matthew 11:20-24**).
- Jesus pronounced a curse on the city of Capernaum because of the unbelief of so many of its inhabitants (**Matthew 11:23-24; Luke 10:15**).
- Jesus revealed Himself to be the "bread of life" in a sermon delivered in the synagogue of Capernaum (**John 6:30-59**).

THE SYNAGOGUE - (1st cent. A.D.)Excavations under the IV cent. Synagogue

Even before our recent excavations, several scholars had suggested that the famous first century synagogue visited by Jesus was most probably buried under the monumental white synagogue. Albright, for example, lamented: "It is a pity that no earlier remains have yet been discovered. It is by no means unlikely that there are foundations of an older synagogue under the ruins of the third-century (sic) synagogue of Capernaum, but no one is likely to pull down this splendid structure on the chance of finding inferior remains beneath it". What Albright deemed as an improbable and formidable task was indeed accomplished by Franciscan archaeologists. Starting from 1969, Fr. Corbo and the writer exposed all the areas surrounding the white synagogue, and cut several trenches inside the building in order to clarify and study earlier remains hidden under the fourth century synagogue. The main results of this long and painstaking research are as follows: (1) The white synagogue was built upon an artificial podium. (2) The podium or raised platform was not built on virgin soil but upon an area of the village. After removing both the thick layer of mortar underneath the stone slabs of the pavements and the artificial fill of the platform, several structures were found dating back to the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Actually in trench 21 even a Late Bronze Age structure of the 13th century was exposed. (3) These remains consist of superimposed stone pavements, basalt stone walls, doorways, staircases, water-channels and fire places. Though a complete plan of these structures is still impossible, due to the limits of the trenches, it is clear that these elements belong to private houses. They were found imbedded in the areas of the side aisles of the prayer hall, in the area of the porch, and finally in the area of the E court. (4) A quite different picture emerged from the trenches cut in the large area of the central nave of the prayer hall. Here in fact only a basalt stone pavement was traced dating back to the first century A.D. That pavement covered an older layer of occupation where pottery and some coins of the Hellenistic period were found. Both Fr. Corbo and the writer agree that the very large stone pavement of the first century A.D. uncovered beneath the central nave of the white synagogue does belong to the long-looked for synagogue built by the Roman centurion and visited by Jesus.

The IV cent. Synagogue under which

lies the I cent. Synagogue

Several reasons are given for this identification. To start with, the area of the first century stone pavement is too large to be interpreted as belonging to a private house, and is therefore better understood as the remains of a public building. It is reasonable to interpret that public building as a synagogue. It is well known in fact that religious structures were normally rebuilt in the same sacred area through the centuries. In the specific case of Capernaum, the presence of an earlier synagogue would better explain why the fourth century Jewish community of the village chose this very spot to raise the monumental white synagogue in spite of the fact that the chosen area was extremely close to a Christian shrine. Finally, this identification takes into account the fact that pilgrims (as Egeria) located the first century synagogue in the area of the white synagogue. We must turn now to a second element, i. e. to what we called the "basalt stone wall" and see if that structure might be also related to the first century synagogue. The "basalt stone wall" was found both under the peripheral walls of the

fourth century prayer hall and under the stylobate.

The doorway of the IVth century Synagogue

However the "basalt stone wall" is continuous in the first case, whereas under the stylobate is discontinuous or in some cases completely missing. Both Fr. Corbo and the writer agree on one important point: the "basalt stone wall" predates the white synagogue and is better understood as belonging to an earlier synagogue. In other words, the "basalt stone wall" was simply reused as the foundation of the white synagogue, but effectively was not simply a foundation, but the remaining wall of an older synagogue. This interpretation becomes plausible as soon as the "basalt stone wall" is carefully studied both in relation to the foundations of the E court and to the walls of the prayer hall.

Remains of the IVth century Synagogue

To start with, the foundations of E court were built independently: they simply abut to the "basalt stone wall". Secondly, they are made up of beautiful stone blocks carefully executed and with an excellent refinement of the courses, while the courses of the "basalt stone wall" are inferior both in quality and in finish. Why this striking difference of foundations? Why did the courtyard which was a secondary unit rest upon excellent foundations, while much poorer foundations were found for the prayer hall which was the most important part of the fourth century synagogue? The only answer we can provide is this: the prayer hall simply reused as foundations the walls of a pre-existing building, while the foundation of the E court was built anew much later. This conclusion is strengthened when we analyse the interrelation between the "basalt stone wall" and the courses of the prayer hall resting upon it. As we have said, the "basalt stone wall" is conspicuously discontinuous beneath the stylobates of the prayer hall. What is worse, the N stylobate of the prayer hall rests upon a shaky fill and in that area the "basalt stone wall" is completely missing. Secondly, there is a shift in axiality between the "basalt stone wall" and the outer walls of the prayer hall. Finally, since the "basalt stone wall" sloped from N to S, the builders of the white synagogue had to taper all the stones of the first course in the opposite direction, i. e. from S to N, and, furthermore, they used pebbles to fill the undulant top of the "basalt stone wall". For all these reasons we must conclude that the "basalt stone wall" belongs to a synagogue predating the white synagogue. What is the relation between the "basalt stone wall" and the first century stone pavement found in the central nave? The director of the excavations believes that both elements belong to the first century synagogue. Another possibility is in my opinion that the "basalt stone wall" constitutes an intermediate stage between the first century synagogue and the white synagogue of the late fourth century A.D

The Mount of Beatitudes

- On a high hill, northwestern point of the Sea of Galilee, across the road from Tabgha is the place where tradition says Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, which includes the eight "Beatitudes" recorded in **Matthew 5:3-11 & Luke 6:20**
- This was also the area that Jesus selected the twelve disciples. (**Luke 6:17**)
- With its view toward Capernaum and Tabgha, the hill is shaped with a natural hollow that serves as a natural amphitheater amplifying the speaker's voice.
- The flower-filled gardens of the Mount of Beatitudes are a treat for visitors. The mountain is topped by a Catholic chapel built in 1939 by the Franciscan Sisters with the support of the Italian ruler Mussolini.
- Luke 6:17; Jesus chose his disciples while in this area, prior to giving the Beatitudes.
- Once known as Mt. Eremos, this hill is located between Capernaum and Tabgha and is just above the "Cove of the Sower." This spacious hillside provides much room for crowds to gather, as evidenced by preparation for 100,000 Catholics to observe mass nearby with the Pope's visit in March 2000 (it rained and fewer came, but the space was available).

Can point this out from the Mt. of Beatitudes

Standing on the Mt. of Beatitudes, this would be to the southwest looking toward the Sea of Galilee

The Sower's Cove

- The small bay, known by some as "The Sower's Cove," is located on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee between Tabgha and Capernaum. It lies at the foot of the traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount (The Mount of Beatitudes).
- A Roman road, following one of the routes of the International Coastal Highway between Egypt and the east, passed just above the cove.
- The gradual slope of the hill, which rises from the shore of the lake, forms a **natural amphitheater**. **Acoustical** research has demonstrated that 8,000 to 10,000 people could be accommodated within hearing distance of a speaker at the shore. It has been demonstrated that the voice of a person standing on a rock in the water or in a boat would be easily audible.
- This cove is located in one of the most beautiful places along the shoreline of the lake.
- To the northwest, the hills of northern Galilee rise behind the Plain of Gennesaret. The whole length of the lake would have been visible, with the Decapolis ridge on the southeast and the new city of Tiberias on the western shore, some five miles away.
- Fishing boats would have been pulled up on the shore nearby, their owners, probably known to Peter and Andrew and the Zebedee brothers, mending nets.
- This cove, with its unique acoustics, would have provided an excellent site for Jesus to give His Parables of the Kingdom. (The bay is also known as "The Cove of the Parables.")
- Several considerations support this view:
 - (1) It would fit the setting as recorded by Mark (and also Matthew). "And He began to teach again by the sea. And such a very great multitude gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down, and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And He was teaching many things to them in parables..."(**Mark 4:1-2**).

- (2) Mark records the events that followed His teaching, "And on that day, when evening had come, He said to them, 'Let us go over to the other side.' And leaving the multitude, they took Him along with them, just as He was, in the boat..." (**Mark 4:35-36**).
- Given the fact that a large multitude was present and that Jesus taught them from a boat at the shore, it would be difficult to find another site where this event could have occurred. The "Sower's Cove" alone seems to provide the physical and acoustical context in which Jesus could have given this important teaching.
- This event occurred on the same day that the Pharisees had charged Him with casting out a demon by the power of Satan. From Capernaum, where this event took place, it would have been only a short walk to this little bay, that Jesus and the local citizens would have passed many times. Seeing that the crowd had grown and desiring to give them this teaching, Jesus may have led them to this choice place to meet with them.
- On an earlier occasion, just before He gave the Sermon on the Mount, He had also anticipated dealing with a large crowd. "And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the multitude, in order that they might not crowd him" (**Mark 3:9**). This same precaution may have preceded His ministry from a boat as He gave the Parables of the Kingdom.
- In the parable of the sower, Jesus cited four kinds of soil to illustrate the four possible heart conditions that characterize reception of His teaching.
 - Examples of each kind of soil He mentioned would have been evident around this cove.
 - His audience would readily understand these familiar images, if not their spiritual meaning.

Tabgha (Ein-Sheva)

Church of the Primacy of Peter (John 21:1-19)

- Located 2 miles west of Capernaum
- Tabgha was a prosperous fishing village located on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.
- The name Tabgha is a corruption of the Greek word *Heptapagon* which means "seven springs."
- Tabgha is the traditional location for the calling of the disciples. It is believed that here Jesus walked along the shore and called out to Simon Peter and Andrew who were casting their nets into the lake.
- Walking along, Jesus saw two other brothers, James and John who were preparing their nets with their father Zebedee.
- In John 21, Jesus met again with the disciples for the "last breakfast."
- Here he restored Peter to himself after the disciple's three denials by asking him three times if Peter loved Jesus.
- Site of the Miracle of the Loaves and the Fishes, and the post resurrection appearance of Jesus (**Mark 6:34-44; Matthew 14:14-21; John 21:15-19**).
- An early Byzantine Church was discovered in 1932 and rebuilt in 1982 as the church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes.
- Mosaics were discovered including a view of marshes and water birds, and a basket with loaves of bread and two fishes.
- At the foot of the Mount of Beatitudes, visitors to Tabgha visit not only the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes (He took the five loaves and two fish, fed five thousand – **Matt 14:19-21**), but also the Church of St. Peter's Primacy, "built on a rock that

commemorates Peter as the head of the church” (**John 21:15-19**, Jesus tells Peter to “feed my lambs, feed my sheep”), and the Octagon Pool.

Golan Heights



- Golan" is the name of a city mentioned in the Bible as a "City of Refuge". It has also come to denote a geographic region stretching from the biblical site westward towards the Sea of Galilee.
- Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War (and again in the 1973 Yom Kippur War). In 1981, Israel applied its "laws, jurisdiction and administration" in the Golan Heights with the Golan Heights Law. Golan Heights has been annexed by Israel, and is under Israeli law, but this is not internationally recognized and United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 considers the area part of Israeli occupied territories.

Israel maintains it may retain the area under the text of Resolution 242 calling for its right for "safe and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force".

- Before the Six-Day War, the strategic heights of the Golan, which are approximately 3,000 feet (1,000 m) above the bordering Hulah Valley in Israel, were used to frequently bombard civilian Israeli farming communities far below them.
- UN Security Council Resolution 497 stating that "the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights is null and void and without international legal effect."
 - The number of Jews moving into the Golan Heights is around 75,000 settlers who live in more than 30 Jewish-only settlements, illegal by international law.
- In the 700s BC the Assyrians gained control of the area, but were later replaced by the Babylonian and the Persian Empire.
- In the 5th century BC, the Persian Empire allowed the region to be resettled by returning Jewish exiles from Babylonian Captivity.
- The Golan Heights, along with the rest of the region, came under the control of Alexander the Great in 332 BC, following the Battle of Issus. Following Alexander's death, the Golan came under the domination of the Macedonian noble Seleucus and remained part of the Seleucid Empire for most of the next two centuries. It is during this period that the name Golan, previously that of a city mentioned in Deuteronomy, came to be applied to the entire region (Greek: Gaulanitis).
- The Maccabean Revolt saw much action in the regions around the Golan and it is possible that the Jewish communities of the Golan were among those rescued by Judas Maccabeus during his campaign in the Galilee and Gilead (Transjordan) mentioned in Chapter 5 of 1 Maccabees. The Golan, however, remained in Seleucid hands until the campaign of Alexander Jannaeus from 83–80 BC. Jannaeus established the city of Gamla in 81 BC as the Hasmonean capital for the region.
- The Golan Heights are bordered on the west by a rock escarpment that drops 1,700 feet (500 m) to the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River; on the south by the Yarmouk River; on the north by the international border with Lebanon, and on the east by a largely flat plain, called the Hauran.
- When the French Mandate of Syria ended in 1944, The Golan Heights became part of the newly independent state of Syria.

- Two tribes were associated with the region during the time of Joshua, the tribe of Dan - **Deuteronomy 33:22**: "And of Dan he said: Dan is a lion's whelp, that leapeth forth from Bashan" and Tribe of Manasseh.
- Qatzrin is regarded as "the capital of the Golan Heights" and as such hosts a large number of attractions. The ancient Talmudic village of Qatzrin is fully excavated and one can tour the different houses in the village as well as the remains of a large synagogue.

Katzrin

- (Qusrin)(Qazrin Park) (Contains the ruins of an ancient Jewish Talmudic Village)(built in the 4th-5th centuries)
- The ruins of the ancient Jewish village of Katzrin are located in the central Golan, some 13 km. northeast of the Sea of Galilee.
- The buildings have particularly thick walls of trimmed basalt stones. The extensive use of stone was an architectural solution to the absence of suitable wood in the Golan
- The village was built on a gentle slope surrounded by fertile fields.
- The synagogue was discovered in 1967. Located in the Golan Heights north of the Sea of Galilee.
- A synagogue, 3rd period, Jews faced the altar when they prayed, which faced Jerusalem. Prior to the 3rd period they faced the entrance which faced Jerusalem. Women sat in the balcony.
- Bema, the place where the priest sat as he spoke to groups. It represented standing before the judgment seat. Foundation stones are from Jesus times.

Korazin

- ("Chorazin" in KJV and ASV)
- It was situated on the basalt hills above Capernaum, about 2 miles up the Wadi (Arabic: ravine) Kerazeh, and was one of numerous towns that thrived in the Galilee after the destruction of the Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 AD.
- Korazin ("Chorazin" in KJV and ASV) is best known as one of the cities (together with Bethsaida and Capernaum) condemned by Jesus for not accepting his teachings: (**Matt 11:21 & Luke 10:13**)
- Korazin is home of the one of Galilee's most intact ancient synagogues.
- The now-excavated ruins of this once flourishing Jewish town are spread over an area of 25 acres, subdivided into five separate quarters.
- Ruins include residential buildings, streets, houses, ritual bath (mikveh; mikvot plural), olive press and a large 2nd century AD synagogue.
- "Chorazin" (named for the ancient city, about 2 miles north of Capernaum) on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee where Sussita (Hippos) once stood.

Mount Hermon ("devoted mountain") – 9,232 feet above sea level

- The tallest peak in Israel at 9,232 feet, has three summits, about 1/4 mile from the other. It extends some 16 to 20 miles from north to south and is visible for miles around.

- The higher areas are snow-covered throughout most of the year, and each winter brings snow to all elevations over 3,900 feet.
- According to the Bible the mountain was called Sirion by the Sidonians and Senir by the Amorites (**Deut 3:9; Ps 29:6; 1 Chr 5:23; Song 4:8; Ezek 27:5**).
- At times it is referred to as Mount Hermon (**Deuteronomy 3:8; Joshua. 11:17; 1 Chronicles 5:23**), while in **Joshua 11:3** and **Psalms 89:12**, it is simply Hermon.
- The mountain served as the northern boundary of the Land (Galilee) promised by God to Israel (Deut 3:8)
- Mount Hermon marks the northern limit of Joshua's victorious campaigns (**Joshua 12:1**) and it was in the dominion of Og, king of Bashan (**Joshua 12:5**), a district east of the Jordan known for its fertility. After Og's fall, it came under Israelite control.
- The peak is rightfully included among the sites for the Transfiguration of Jesus (**Matthew 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28**). While Christian tradition places the event on Mount Tabor, near Nazareth, the gospels of Matthew and Mark imply that Jesus was in the Caesarea Philippi area before ascending the unnamed "high mountain," and Mount Hermon is in this district.
- After six days Jesus took with Him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus."
- **Matt 1:22**, All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophets.
- **Exodus 34:28**: Moses was there with the Lord for 40 days and nights without eating bread or drinking water.
- **1 Kings 19:8** Elijah traveled 40 days and nights until he reached Horeb (Mt Sinai) the mountain of God. It was here where Elijah told God he was the only one left.
- **Matt 5:17**, Jesus states that He did not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them.
- **John 1:45** that the law and the prophets wrote about the one who was to come.
- The tower of Lebanon" in the Song of Solomon (looking towards Damascus) is supposed to be Mount Hermon.

Caesarea Philippi (Banias)

- The city called Caesarea Philippi in the New Testament was beautifully situated on a triangular terrace, 1,150 feet above sea level and about 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, overlooking the fertile northern end of the Jordan River valley.
- To the northeast towers Mount Hermon, 9,232 feet above sea level.
- The area is one of the most lush and beautiful in Israel, with an abundance of water, groves of trees and grassy fields.
- The site is now preserved within the Nahal Hermon Nature Reserve where visitors can see one of the three main sources of the Jordan River, and an impressive waterfall.
- **Jesus comes to Caesarea Philippi –**
- We have only slight knowledge of this period in Jesus' ministry. It is told only by Matthew and Mark.
- In Matthew, Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi after performing three great miracles: the feeding of the 5,000, walking on the water, and the healing of a Phoenician woman's child.

- Neither Gospel, however, tells us that Jesus actually entered this classically pagan center, full of temples, Greek theaters and statues.
- **Matthew (16:13)** tells us only that he "came to the region of Caesarea Philippi," while **Mark (8:27)** relates that he "went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi." There, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say I am?" They replied that some identified him with Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist or one of the prophets, to which he asked: "Who do you say I am?" (**Matthew 16:15**). Acting as the group spokesman, Peter replied with his memorable statement: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- It was no accident that Jesus chose this region to reveal his true nature
- Six days later (according to both gospels), the Transfiguration occurred. Although Christian tradition places the event on Mount Tabor, near Nazareth, it was probably in the area of Caesarea Philippi (some scholars believe nearby Mount Hermon was the "high mountain" where Jesus took Peter, James and John).
- While in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus made what was probably the most crucial decision of his ministry; he decided to head south towards Jerusalem and a confrontation with the authorities there: "From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." (**Matthew 16:21**)
- The steep cliff of the cult area with the cave of Pan. Named for the god, Pan, Panias (or Baniyas in Arabic) was built as Caesarea Philippi by Philip, son of Herod. Five cult niches that once held statues are carved into the cliff east of the cave, and three of them include Greek inscriptions. One refers to Galerius, a priest of Pan, another relates to Echo, the mountain nymph and lover of Pan; yet another refers to Diopan, the god who loved music. Hermon river starts in this area.
- Perched on a hill two miles to the northeast of Baniyas is Nimrod's Castle, the largest complete fortress in the Middle East. It controlled the northern Galilee and the route to Damascus. Nine of the defense towers remain, along with much of the outer wall, a keep and the moat.
- According to legend, the castle was originally built by "Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord," listed in Genesis 10 as a son of Cush and great-grandson of Noah, built it high so he could shoot his arrows at God. The castle overlooks Baniyas--the ancient city of Caesarea Philippi--and the source of the Hermon River. It commands beautiful views of the Hula Valley, the mountains of Naphtali, the Lebanon Mountains, and the Anti-Lebanon Range.

Dan

- Tel Dan is also known as Tel el-Qadi (Mound of the Judge in Arabic, Tel Dan, "Dan" being "judge", or "judging one"), is an archaeological site in Israel in the upper Galilee next to the Golan Heights.
- The Dan (or Leddan) River (**right**), which emerges at the foot of the mound, is the largest and most important of the three principal sources of the Jordan River.
- Its springs provide water equivalent to the water flow of the other two sources combined. It is fed by the snow and rain which fall on Mount Hermon, the tallest mountain in Israel.
- These natural advantages and its location on the main trade route from the Galilee to Damascus made Dan one of the most important cities of the northern part of the Kingdom of Israel.

- Today, Dan is one of the most attractive archeological sites in Israel. Excavations at the site began in 1966, and have not stopped since.
- The discoveries are of special importance for understanding the Biblical narrative which repeatedly mentions the city.
- **Judges 18:28-29** the city was rebuilt and named Dan.
- **Gen 14:14** tells when Abraham pursued the tribes that took Lot and his possessions, he followed them to Dan and then on to Hobah, north of Damascus.
- The territory allotted to the tribe of Dan after the Conquest extended to the Mediterranean coast (**Josh 19:40-47**). This included the strategically important International Coastal Highway and the area controlled by the Philistines. When it became impossible for the tribe to possess their territory or even to defend themselves against the pressure exerted by the Philistines in the Shephelah (**Judg 1:34**), its members sought a more secure location.
- The tribe sent five spies to search for a suitable place for the tribe (**Judges 18**). Ultimately they selected Laish, which they conquered and possessed (**Josh 19:47**). Not all the tribe of Dan migrated to Laish. Some, including Samson and his family, remained in the disputed territory, continuing their contacts with the Philistines. Eventually this remnant was absorbed by the tribe of Judah (**2 Kgs 15:29**).
- The events of the transition (**Judges 18**) and subsequent choices resulted in the tribe of Dan's becoming the most idolatrous of all the tribes.
- Idolatrous worship practices were established in Dan during the priesthood of Moses' grandson, Jonathan, and were continued by his descendants (**Judg 18:30**). The city finally became a national center of idolatry under Jeroboam I (**1 Kgs 12:29-33**).

[Bet She'an](#)

- Beth-shan, "house of rest" or "place of quiet," lies some four miles west of the Jordan River, fifteen miles south of the Sea of Galilee, and about forty-five miles north of Jericho.
- The soil in the area was very fertile. Numerous springs irrigated the land, making it a very productive region. The city and half of the Harod Valley lie below sea level.
- Beth Shean is situated in the lush area where the Jezreel Valley meets the Jordan Valley; 15 miles south of the Sea of Galilee.
- Bet She'an's location has often been strategically significant, as it sits at the junction of the Jordan Valley and the Jezreel and Harod Valley's, essentially controlling access from the interior to the coast, as well as from Jerusalem to the Galilee.
- Scripture records that there were at least two temples there during the time of Saul and David: the temple of Ashteroth and the temple of Dagon (**1 Chr 10:10**).
- Archaeologists have identified 18 different levels of occupation in the tell (city), indicating that this was one of the oldest cities in Palestine.
- Beth-shan and the surrounding towns were assigned to the tribe of Manasseh, (**Josh 17:10-11**) but fearing the iron chariots of the Canaanite inhabitants, the Israelites failed to drive the Canaanites out of Beth-shan (**Josh 17:12-13**).
- When Saul and his three sons died on Mount Gilboa, the Philistine victors carried their decapitated bodies to Beth-shan and hung them on the city wall to humiliate the Israelites. When they heard of this travesty, the men of Jabesh-gilead marched through the night, a distance of twelve miles, to recover the bodies of the king and his sons. They carried them back to Jabesh-gilead where they burned them and buried the ashes (**1 Samuel 31**).
- Israel finally conquered Beth-shan during the reign of King Solomon, some four hundred years after Joshua's conquest of the area (**1 Kgs 4:12**).

- In Hellenistic times, the city of Scythopolis ("City of the Scythians") was built on the valley floor at the foot of the ancient tell. It became one of the chief cities of the Decapolis and the only city of the ten Decapolis west of the Jordan River.
- During the first century A.D., the Romans developed the city into one of the most imposing in all Palestine. It boasted a 7,000-seat theater, a colonnaded street and extensive buildings.
- When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard of what the Philistines had done to Saul, all their valiant men journeyed through the night to Beth Shan.
- During the eighth century CE the city was destroyed by a powerful earthquake.
- Beth She'an is one of Israel's most prominent archeological sites, with a major Roman theater, the Roman-Byzantine *Cardo* (**cardo** or **cardus** was a north-south-oriented street in cities & military camps)
- **Cardus maximus**, the *cardo* served as the center of economic life. The street was lined with columns, shops, and merchants vendors; *Decumanus Maximus*, an east-west street.
- There are also remains of a Byzantine church with an impressive mosaic floor.
- Amphitheatre where Gladiators performed and where Christians were persecuted.
- One of the oldest cities in the Holy Land.
- It is thought that the individual that Jesus cast the legion of demons out of is the same person that evangelized this town.
- The land around Beth Shean is fertile, with an abundance of water; the surrounding countryside is mainly agriculture.
- The Western Bathhouse: 100 m. long and 90 m. wide, was constructed in the 4th century. A monumental propyleum (gateway), with columns and carved friezes connected the street to a mosaic-paved colonnade, which led to the bathhouse courtyard. The courtyard was surrounded, on three sides, by broad porticos paved with mosaic or colored marble tiles. The mosaics, according to an inscription, were replaced in 535 with marble pavement. The bathhouse itself consisted of eight halls with an open pool and fountains in front of it. At its center were large halls heated by hypocaust. A hypocaust is an ancient Roman system of central heating. The word literally means "heat from below", from the Greek *hypo* meaning below or underneath, and *kaiein*, to burn or light a fire. Hypocausts were used for heating public baths and private houses. The floor was raised off the ground by pillars, called *pilae* stacks, and spaces were left inside the walls so that the hot air and smoke from the furnace (*praefurnium*) would pass through these enclosed areas and out of flues in the roof, thereby heating but not polluting the interior of the room. By placing the fire here, the draught would take the heat under the floor, and up through the walls to chimneys located in the corners of the room. Rooms requiring the most heat were placed closest to the furnace, whose heat could be increased by adding more wood. It was labour-intensive to run a hypocaust as it required constant attention to tend the fire, so it was only the wealthy that could afford to have it. Stone domes covered the halls, the floors were paved with marble slabs and the walls were decorated with paintings. The building also included two public latrines. The many inscriptions engraved in stone or incorporated in the mosaic pavements indicate renovations and changes made by the provincial governors. An outstanding addition in the 6th century was an apse built in the western portico of the courtyard; it served for public gatherings.
- The Theater:
 - The monumental theater of Scythopolis stands at the southern end of Palladius Street and is the best preserved building from Roman times. Performances consisted mainly

of light entertainment such as acrobatics, impersonations and sports competitions, though plays were also presented. The theater, 110 m. in diameter, was built on a hillside, its rear wall partly cut into bedrock. Its facade towards the tel, where the Temple of Zeus stood, was surrounded by plazas. The theater had 7,000 seats made of limestone, in three blocks. Only the lower tier of seats, consisting of 13 rows including the lowest one reserved for dignitaries, remained complete. There were nine radial staircases, but only the core of the middle block remained, as the limestone seats had been removed at a later time. A row of large pilasters around the outside of the structure indicates that there existed an upper block of seating, of which nothing remains today. Eight arched passageways led the spectators into the theater. The semicircular orchestra area was paved with marble; it was reached via arched passageways that ran under the blocks of seating. The raised stage, also paved in marble was built on a row of arches. The scenae frons, the architectural backdrop to the stage, was 21 m. high. The side facing the seats consisted of niches that held statues, and a row of alternating black and red granite columns supporting decorated friezes. Along a corridor, behind the scenae frons, were cubicles for the use of the performers and stagehands. Three openings in the northern wall of this corridor provided direct access from Palladius Street.

- The Eastern Bathhouse:
 - The main part of the bathhouse contained rooms and halls, including a caldarium heated by a hypocaust. A large latrine, with a colonnaded courtyard, had rows of evenly spaced stone toilet seats along its walls, and drainage channels beneath them.

Harods Spring)(Gideon's Spring)(Will stop here)

At the foot of Mount Gilboa is Ma'ayan Harod National Park, containing a cave (**left**) in which arises the spring of Harod, where the Judge Gideon selected his 300 warriors to battle the Midianites:

- The historic Spring of Harod is located in a cave at the base of Mount Gilboa on its north side, about two miles east of Jezreel.
- "So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, 'Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink.' Three hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. The Lord said to Gideon, 'With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the other men go, each to his own place.'" ((Judges 7:4-8).)

Bethany

- Bethany is located on the south-eastern slope of [The Mount Of Olives](#).
- Bethany is about 2 miles (3 kilometers) east of Jerusalem, on the road to [Jericho](#).
- Bethany is perhaps best-known from the story of [Lazarus](#) (**John 11:1-44**). Jesus often visited his good friend Lazarus, and his sisters Martha and Mary, at their home in Bethany. Jesus performed the miracle of raising Lazarus back from the dead at a tomb near the village.
- The Triumphal Entry in which Jesus rode the [Donkey](#) into Jerusalem began from Bethphage and Bethany (**Mark 11:1-10**). Jesus returned that night, along with the Twelve, to Bethany (**Mark 11:11**)

- The next day, after Jesus overturned the tables of the money-changers in the Temple area (**Matthew 21:12-13 & Mark 11:15-17**), He returned again to Bethany where He spent the night with The Twelve. (**Matthew 21:17**)
- The incident of Jesus cursing the Fig Tree that had no fruit was at Bethany. (**Mark 11:12-14**)
- Another well-known event in Bethany was when Jesus was anointed by the lady with a jar of expensive perfume. (**Matthew 26:6-13**).
- Bethany "house, place of unripe figs" is a village located on the E slope of Mt. Olives.
- It was the home of Lazarus and was associated with important events in Scripture history. Home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, and of Simon the Leper, **Matt. 26:6**; Jesus lodged there, **Matt. 21:17**; vicinity of the Ascension, **Luke 24:50**.

Jerusalem

Cenacle –

- Place of the Last Supper – Upper Room – Where the disciples received the Holy Spirit – Next to the David's Tomb and all the burial spot for all the Kings of Judea

Church of the Dormition

- The **Dormition Church**, situated on Mount Zion outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem, facing the Zion Gate, was built between 1906 and 1910, after Sultan Hamid gave this plot of land to Kaiser Wilhelm II as a gift.
- According to Christian beliefs, this is the place where Mary, the mother of Jesus "fell asleep".
- The church is located near King David's Tomb.
- David's Tomb is located on Mt Zion

- **The City of David** is the birthplace of the city of Jerusalem, the place where King David established his kingdom, and where the history of the People of Israel was written. 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.
- In the year 1004 B. C. E. King David conquered the city from the Jebusites and established his capital there. It was here where the People of Israel were united under King David's rule, here where the Holy Ark was brought and here where the First Temple was built by King Solomon, King David's son.
- One of the most fascinating parts of the City of David is the tunnel of Shiloh - a 533-meter-long tunnel that was carved during the period of King Hezekiyahu. The tunnel extends from the city, Gihon Spring, to the well at Shiloh, and is an astounding engineering feat.

Pinnacle of the Temple

- Jesus 2nd temptation – SE Corner – Highest point of the temple mount. It is believed that this is where the trumpet was blown to announce the Sabbath and other Holy Days

Tower of David

- The citadel of [Jerusalem](#), known as the "Tower of David," has been a landmark of the city since ancient times.
- The citadel is located on the western side of the [Old City](#), just south of the [Jaffa](#) Gate.
- It was once the fortress that guarded Herod's Palace.
- Its location was chosen for topographic reasons – this is the highest point of the southwestern hill of [Jerusalem](#), higher than any other point in the ancient city, including the Temple Mount

Church of the Holy Sepulcher

- Originally built by the mother of Emperor Constantine in 330 A.D., the Church of the Holy Sepulcher commemorates the hill of crucifixion and the tomb of Christ's burial.
- The Crusaders rebuilt the church and much of what is standing today is from that time period.
- Inside the church is a rocky outcropping which is the traditional place where the cross was placed.
- Archaeological excavations have demonstrated that this site was outside the city but close to one of its gates and thus would have been a good location for a crucifixion.
- Today this chapel is controlled by the Greek Orthodox Church.

Dome of the Rock was built atop the earlier location of the Temple, the Dome of the Rock was erected by the Muslim ruler Abd el-Malik in 688-691.

Moslem Cemetery built with the idea of stopping Jesus from returning through the Eastern Gate because the Moslems think Jesus would not enter a cemetery.

Hinnom Valley also know as **Gehenna** –

- A place where the wicked are punished after death. The valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, also called in [Hebrew](#) Gai-Ben-Hinnom, where some of the Israelites sacrificed their children to Moloch, which, on this account, was afterward regarded as a place of abomination, and made a receptacle for all the refuse of the city, perpetual fires being kept up in order to prevent pestilential effluvia.
- In the New Testament the name is transferred, by an easy metaphor, to Hell.
- There are stories of [fires](#) that were kept burning via the adding of brimstone ([sulfur](#)). Light a [match](#) and one knows what [sulfur dioxide](#) smells like.
- Originally it referred to a [garbage](#) dump in a deep narrow [valley](#) right outside the walls of outside [Jerusalem](#) (in modern-day [Israel](#)) where fires were kept burning to consume the refuse and keep down the stench.
- It is also the location where bodies of executed criminals, or individuals denied a proper burial, would be dumped.
- It is mentioned in the [Old Testament](#) several places:
- **II [Chronicles](#) 28:3;** (Ahaz, son of David, sacrificed his sons in the Valley of Hinnom); **II [Chron](#) 33:6;**(Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, sacrificed his sons)
- **2 [Kings](#) 23:10;** King Josiah, grandson of Hezekiah, destroyed Topheth, an altar upon which the children were sacrificed, and all the articles of Baal & Asherah in the Kidron Valley.

- **Jeremiah 7:31**;(Talks about the people of Judea building high places of Topheth in the Valley of Hinnom where sacrifices were offered of sons and daughters)
- **Jeremiah 19:2-6**;(Lord talking to Jeremiah about bringing a disaster because of their sacrificing their children to false Gods, Molech.)
- **Jeremiah 19:6**, the Lord refers to this place as the Valley of Slaughter.
- In the Book of **Matthew, 23:33**, Jesus observes,
 - "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of **hell**?"
 - Jesus used the word *gehenna*, not *hell*, and his audience understood quite well that *gehenna* meant a place of condemnation, where Jews had previously cast aside the worship of the true God to defile themselves by committing abominations. Human garbage, sinners, would be consumed and destroyed forever.

Kidron Valley

- **The Kidron Valley is located along the eastern side of Jerusalem**, between the Temple Mount (see Mount Moriah) and the Mount of Olives. Many important events of Bible History have occurred, and many tremendous events of Bible Prophecy will occur, in or very near the Kidron Valley.
- Jesus Christ traveled through the Kidron Valley many times to and from Jerusalem, including on His way to visit Lazarus at Bethany, the Triumphal Entry in which He rode a Donkey from the Mount of Olives to the city, or crossing the valley from the "Last Supper" to the Garden of Gethsemane where He was arrested That Fateful Night.
- The Pool of Gihon is located in the Kidron Valley. The Brook Kidron runs through the valley during the wet season, but remains dry much of the year.
- King David crossed the Kidron Valley to escape his rebellious son Absalom (**2 Samuel 15:23,30**).
- King Asa (see Kings of Israel and Judah) burned his grandmother's pagan Asherah pole in the Kidron Valley (**1 Kings 15:13**)
- It became for some time a dumping place for destroyed pagan items (**2 Chronicles 29:16, 30:14**). By the time of King Josiah, the Kidron Valley had become the city cemetery, burial place of the common people. (**2 Kings 23:6, Jeremiah 26:23**).

Pool of Bethesda

- This is one of the few sites that there is actually little debate about. It is located just north of the temple mount.
- This is the "exact" location where Jesus healed the man at the waters of the Pool of Bethesda. The story is found in John 5.
- The colonnades were visible at the time of Christ, but the pools would not have been enclosed like it now is. At that time, the floor level was much lower.

Mount Moriah;

- God said to Abraham; take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you. (**Genesis 22:1-3**)

- "Then Solomon began to build the house of The Lord Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where The Lord had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. He began to build in the second month of the fourth year of his reign." (**2 Chronicles 3:1-2**)
- The original Temple of God in Jerusalem, patterned after The Tabernacle In The Wilderness, was completed by King Solomon about 950 B.C. (**1 Kings 6:1-38**). It survived over 360 years before it was destroyed by the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. (**2 Kings 25:1-9**).
- Today, Mount Moriah is under Muslim control. The gold-topped Dome Of The Rock is the most famous present-day sight atop the Temple Mount, while Jews pray below at The Western Wall.

Mt Olives

- King David fled over the Mount of Olives to escape from Absalom's rebellion (**2 Samuel 15:30**).
- After King Solomon became corrupt, he built pagan "high places" there (**1 Kings 11:7**).
- King Josiah destroyed Solomon's idolatrous altars, by which time it had become known as the Hill of Corruption (**2 Kings 23:13-14**).
- Ezekiel had his vision of The Lord and the flying cherubim above it (**Ezekiel 11:22-23**).
- The people gathered olive branches there for the first Feast of Tabernacles after their return from The Babylonian Exile (**Nehemiah 8:15**).
- Jesus regularly went up onto the Mount of Olives (**Luke 22:39**). He often traveled over it on His way to Bethany to visit His friend Lazarus.
- His famous Olivet prophecy is named after it (**Matthew 24:1-51**).
- The Triumphal Entry of Jesus riding on a Donkey and his colt into Jerusalem took place over and down the Mount of Olives (**Luke 19:28-44**).
- Jesus prayed with His disciples there just before His arrest That Fateful Night (**Luke 22:39-46**).
- Jesus was arrested there, during which Peter struck the servant of the high priest with a sword and cut off his ear (**Luke 22:49-51**).
- Jesus appeared to the disciples on the Mount of Olives after His Resurrection, and He ascended into heaven from there (**Acts 1:1-12**).
- Acts 1:10-12 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet.
- "At that time the sign of The Son of Man will appear in the sky (see Signs In The Heavens), and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see The Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other." (**Matthew 24:30-31**)
- "Then The Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. On that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then The Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with Him. (**Zechariah 14:3-5**)

Western Wall / Wailing Wall

- In the midst of the Old City in Jerusalem is the section of the Western supporting wall of the Temple Mount which has remained intact since the destruction of the [Second Jerusalem Temple](#) (70 C.E.).
- It became the most sacred spot in Jewish religious and national consciousness and tradition by virtue of its proximity to the Western Wall of the Holy of Holies in the Temple, from which, according to numerous sources, the Divine Presence never departed.
- The Western Wall became a permanent feature in Jewish tradition about 1520.
- From December 1947, after bloody incidents with the Arabs, Jews were no longer able to approach the Wall. After the capitulation of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City in May 1948, Jews were prevented for 19 years from even looking at the Wall from afar, in spite of a paragraph in the [cease-fire agreement](#) granting freedom of access to the holy places.
- The Wall was liberated on the third day of the [Six-Day war](#) (June 7, 1967) by Israel's parachutists.

Garden of Gethsemane (Olive Press)

- After singing the Psalms of praise in the Cenacle (**Psalms 113-118**), Jesus went to the Mount of Olives with his disciples (**Mt.26, Mk.14, Lk.22**).
- Then Jesus said to them four prophecies: "You will become deserters because of me this night, for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered" (**Zec.13:7**). But after my resurrection I will go ahead of you to Galilee" (**Mt.28:7**):
- The disciples did not like it, and Peter immediately responded: "Even though all doubt you and fall, I will never fall". And Jesus replied to Peter, "Truly, I say to you: This very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times" (**Mt.26:33-35**)
- Jesus came to the Garden of Gethsemane, and said to his disciples, *"sit here while I am go over to pray... pray that you may not be put to test"... He took Peter, John, and James along with him, and he began to be filled with anguish and distress. And he said to them, "My soul is filled with sorrow even to death. Remain here and stay awake with me". He went a little further and fell to the ground, and prayed"* (**Mt.26:36-39, Lk.22:40**).
- Jesus prays three times, say the Gospels, and the three times with the same words: *"Abba, my Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me; yet, not my will but yours be done"* (**Mk.14:36, Mt.26:39-44, Lk.22:42**).
- Father himself has to forsake him (**Mt.27:46**, as prophesied in Psalm 22) Jesus loaded himself with all the sins pass, present, and future to expiate them.

Church of All Nations

- The *Church of All Nations* was built by the Italian architect Antonio Barluzzi between 1919-1924. The name commemorates the contributions made by many countries to its construction. It is also known as the *Basilica of the Agony*, in reference to agony Jesus suffered on the eve of His Passion.

In front of the high altar there is a large fragment of rock on which Jesus is supposed to have prayed the night before the Passion.

Southern steps of the Temple.

- Steps leading to the original entrance to the temple mount and to the Second Temple.
- It is certain that Jesus climbed these steps when he visited the temple in Jerusalem.
- At the age of 12 it is believed that Jesus taught from these steps.
- Sacrifices were brought up these steps to be sacrificed

St Anne's Church

- The **Church of St. Anne** is a beautiful 12th-century Crusader church, erected over the traditional site of the birthplace of Anne (Hannah), the mother of Mary. It is an excellent example of Romanesque architecture.
- The church is right next to the **Bethesda Pool**, believed to be the site where Jesus healed a paralytic (**John 5:1-15**).
- Saint Anne's acoustics, designed for Gregorian chant, are so perfect that the church is virtually a musical instrument to be played by the human voice. Pilgrim groups come to sing in the church throughout the day, and you, too, are welcome to prepare a song of any religion--only religious songs are permitted. The church's acoustics are most amazing when used by a soprano or a tenor solo voice.
- St. Anne's Church is located in the Muslim Quarter, near the Lion's Gate.

Jordan River

The name Jordan is derived from the Hebrew *yarden* meaning "descender" and simply denotes its rapid descent from its headwaters, at more than a thousand feet above sea-level, to its mouth at the Dead Sea, the lowest point on the earth's surface at nearly 1,300 feet below sea-level.

- Jordan river, (200 mi) (320 km) long, formed in the Hula basin, N Israel, by the confluence of three headwater streams and meandering S through the Sea of [Galilee](#) to the [Dead Sea](#).
- From its multiple river sources (the Bareithit, the Hasbany from [Mount Hermon](#), the Leddan, the Baniyas) to Lake Huleh.
- The region of Palestine's longest and most important river and the world's lowest river below sea level. It flows through the northern section of the Jordan trough, a part of the [Great Rift Valley](#) ; between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, the Jordan valley is called the [Ghor](#) .
- There it forms the border between Israel and the [West Bank](#) (W) and the nation of Jordan (E).
- **West Bank** territory, formerly part of [Palestine](#) , after 1949 administered by Jordan, since 1967 largely occupied by Israel (est. pop. 2,386,000), 2,165 sq mi (5,607 sq km), west of the Jordan River, incorporating the northwest quadrant of the Dead Sea.
- Since mid-1994 limited Palestinian self-rule has existed in portions of the West Bank under the [Palestinian Authority](#) .
- Israelis who regard the area as properly Jewish territory often refer to it by the biblical names of [Judaea](#) and [Samaria](#) .
- The largest and most historically important cities are [Hebron](#) , [Nablus](#) , [Bethlehem](#) , and [Jericho](#) . East [Jerusalem](#) is regarded as part of the West Bank by Arabs; however, Israel has incorporated it into the larger Jerusalem economy and municipality.
- Deep and turbulent during the rainy season, the Jordan is reduced to a sluggish, shallow stream during the summer.
- Although the river is not navigable, its waters are valuable for irrigation.

- Israel's National Water Carrier Project uses the Sea of Galilee as a reservoir, and Jordan's East Ghor project diverts water from the Yarmuk River.
- Many Christian visitors to Israel are baptized in the River Jordan at Kibbutz Kinneret (Yardenit), where the Jordan flows south out of the Sea of Galilee.
- In the Upper Galilee, the River Jordan is ideal for white water rafting (spring) and kayaking (summer and fall).
- Jesus was baptized in the river by John the Baptist near Jericho (**Mark 1:9-11 & Matt3:13-17**).
- The first mention of the Jordan is when Abraham and Lot parted company: "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw that the Jordan valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of The Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar; (South side of the Dead Sea) this was before The Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan valley, and Lot journeyed east; thus they separated from each other." (**Genesis 13:10-11**)
- Jacob was renamed *Israel* at the ford of the Jabbok River, a tributary of the Jordan: "The same night he arose and took his two wives [see Leah and Rachel], his two maids, and his eleven At the end of their Wilderness Journey, after Joshua succeeded Moses as the leader of the people, the Israelites entered the Promised Land by crossing the Jordan River that, like the Red Sea, was miraculously divided for them (**Joshua 3:15-17**).
- The prophets Elijah and Elisha were active on both sides of the Jordan. **II Kings 2** tells how Elijah and Elisha separated the waters of the Jordan and where Elijah was taken up into heaven.
- The Jordan River was the area where John The Baptist conducted much of his ministry. Jesus Christ was baptized by John in the Jordan River.
- In earlier times, the Israelites possessed the territory of both sides of the Jordan. Today the Jordan River forms much of the international boundary between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan.

Judean Desert

- Jerusalem is built right on the edge of this desert. In the time of the First and Second Temples, the High Priest would release the scapegoat to carry the sins of the people into the Judean desert.

Jericho

The hills west of Jericho are known as the Mount of Temptation, traditionally the wilderness region where Jesus was tempted for forty days (Matt 4:1).

✚ It was to these hills that Rahab directed the spies to escape detection by the men of Jericho (Josh 2:16).

- Oldest city in the world; largest oasis in the world; population 21,000, 6 miles north of the Dead Sea and 2 miles north of the original Jericho.
- Three springs feed 500,000 people;
- Agriculture: Tangerines, limes, grapes, peppers, & oranges.
- A perennial spring supplies abundant water (more than one thousand gallons an hour), making Jericho a productive tropical oasis. It was called "the city of palm trees" (Deut 34:3), an indication of the extraordinary production of dates.
- Joshua 6; Joshua was told to march around Jericho for seven days, God would deliver Jericho into their hands.

- Joshua 6:24 states that Joshua burned the city and (6:26) Joshua pronounced a curse on anyone who attempted to rebuild the city, at the cost the their first born son.
- Joshua 2:1, Rahab, the prostitute, hid the two that Joshua had sent to spy out the land.
- II Kings 2:13-22, water from the spring of Elisha, Elisha sprinkles salt on the water to make it pure. Never again will the water from this spring make people sick or make the land unproductive.
- The main road that led westward from Herodian Jericho up the steep-walled Wadi Qelt was notoriously dangerous. Bandits found it easy to hide in the ravines and behind rocks, from where they could quickly attack lone travelers. It is likely that the incident Jesus used in His message about the "Good Samaritan" took place on this road, just west of Jericho, and that the inn to which the Samaritan took the Jewish victim was located in the safety of Herodian Jericho.
- Israel's last king, Zedekiah, fled to Jericho in an unsuccessful attempt to flee the Babylonians who were laying siege to Jerusalem. Apparently, the king was planning to escape eastward through Moab. When the Babylonians caught him, they killed all his sons, put out his eyes, and took him in chains to Babylon (**2 Kings 25:1-7; Jer 52:1-11**).
- Zacchaeus held the office of a regional collector of taxes for the Roman government. It is understandable that he would reside in Jericho, given its climate, resources, strategic location, and the wealth of the area which could be taxed. It was heard that Jesus called him down from the tree.
- The fact that in Jesus' time there were actually two Jerichos may be reflected in the differences in the accounts of healing two blind men (Bartimaeus)(Matt 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43).
- During the Hellenistic and Hasmonean periods, a new Jericho, sometimes called "Herodian Jericho," appeared a mile west in the Wadi Qelt.
- Intended to be a royal center for the Hasmonean kings of Judah in the first century B.C., it later became the eastern capital and winter residence of Herod the Great. The city flourished from 105 B.C. until it was taken by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Qumran:

- Qumran, is located on a plateau some 330 feet above the northwest shore of the Dead Sea.
- Its fame comes from a break-away sect known as the Essenes who are thought to have lived and studied here for two centuries, from the end of the Hasmonean period, through the great revolt of the Jews against the Romans, and left in the surrounding caves the magnificent legacy now called the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- Many scholars believe the Essenes wrote, copied, or collected the scrolls at Qumran and deposited them in the caves of the adjacent hills.
- On the basis of inkwells and "writing benches" found at this site, archaeologists have suggested that a second story room at this site was the place where scrolls were copied.
- An Arab sheep herder, a boy, found the scrolls while looking for a lost goat in 1947. He found pottery jars measuring 25 to 29 feet high, a total of around 200 scrolls were found in 11 caves and in cave 4 over 400 manuscripts were found.

Valley of the Shadows:

- Saint George's Monastery, completed by the end of the fifth century, 420AD, was built into the north side of the Wadi Qelt that leads eastward to Jericho.
- The main road that led westward from Herodian Jericho up the steep-walled Wadi Qelt was notoriously dangerous.
- Bandits found it easy to hide in the ravines and behind rocks, from where they could quickly attack lone travelers.
- It is likely that the incident Jesus used in His message about the "Good Samaritan" (Luke 11:30-37) took place on this road, just west of Jericho, and that the inn to which the Samaritan took the Jewish victim was located in the safety of Herodian Jericho.
- The monastery was built next to the cave where the prophet Elijah stopped enroute from Sinai and was fed by ravens.
- The present monastery was rebuilt around 1900 by the Greek Orthodox Church, 15 miles between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Dead Sea/Salt Sea – 1,380 feet below sea level

- In Scripture it is called the Salt Sea (Gen 14:3; Num 34:12; etc.), the Sea of the Arabah (Deut 3:17; 4:49; etc.), Eastern Sea (Ezek 47:18; Joel 2:20; Zech 14:8). The name Dead Sea has been applied to it since the 2nd cent AD, and it was also called the Asphalt Sea by early writers or Lake Asphaltitis
- The salt concentrate is not like that of the average oceans of the world. It is so great that when a bather walks into the water, at a point approximately at his chest, the dense water lifts him up and he will float. Indeed no one is able to swim in the water. The salt and mineral content is so great that it burns the eyes and any open wound.
- The salt content of the Dead Sea has been measured as 5 times that of the oceans. The high salinity is the reason that very little life is found in the waters - it truly is a dead sea.
- 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.
- In Ezekiel 47:8 there is a specific prophecy over the dead sea and the surrounding area that the water will ".. be healed and made fresh". The dead sea will become a normal sea and even fish will live in the sea. This is also backed up in Zechariah 14:8, which says that "Living waters will go out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea (likely the Dead Sea) and half to the western sea (the Mediterranean)..."
- The lake was not known as the Dead Sea until the second century A.D. The Old Testament refers to it as the Salt Sea (Gen 14:3; Josh 3:16), the Sea of Arabah (Deut 3:17), the Eastern Sea (Ezek 47:18; Joel 2:20), and the Sea (Ezek 47:1-11).
- At the south end of the beautiful, yet barren Dead Sea area, there is a mountain known as Mt. Sodom. It is adjacent to this area that the city of Sodom and Gomorrah were located.
- The Bible indicates that there were more than just the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that were destroyed that day. (Gen 19:1)
- So far, at least 5 cities (Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela -- also called Zoar) have been discovered that were turned to ash and have sulfur balls strewn throughout them.
- The location of each of these was found by scrutinizing satellite maps of the area, locating geometric shapes, particularly square or rectangular areas.

- Visits to each location, with the subsequent finding of a city turned to ash and many sulfur balls (brimstone in the King James version of the Bible), provided confirmation.
- For the sins of their inhabitants Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim were destroyed by "brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven" (Genesis 19:24-25)
- Deut 34, talks about Moses climbing Mt Nebo, to the east of the Jordan River. (can be seen from the Dead Sea on a clear day) Moses was 120 years old when died and he is buried in the land of Moab.
- The surface is 1,380 feet below the level of the Mediterranean which makes it the lowest dry point on earth.
- Geologically, this is part of the great rift valley that runs from Turkey in the North down to Ethiopia. the Bekaa valley in Lebanon, the Hula Valley in northern Israel, the Jordan River Valley, the Dead Sea, the Arava Valley that runs South to Eilat, separating Israel from Jordan, and the Gulf of Eilat are all part of this enormous geological feature that is deepening and widening as the plate carrying the Arabian Peninsula rotates counterclockwise.
- Joshua 3:16 also called the Sea of the Arabah
- Looking west across the Dead Sea:
 - **Mount Nebo** is a prominent peak of the Abarim Range that parallels the eastern shore of the Dead Sea (**Deut 32:49; 34:1**). This line of mountains is also referred to as Pisgah (**Deut 3:17, 27; 4:49; Josh 12:3; 13:20**).
 - Mount Nebo rises 2700 feet above sea level. The drop down to the Dead Sea at 1300 feet below sea level measures some 4,000 feet.
 - Pisgah also refers to a particular peak associated with Mount Nebo (**Deut 34:1**).
 - Soon after the people had arrived at the Plains of Moab across from Jericho, God directed Moses to appoint Joshua as his successor. As a prelude to this historic transition, God prepared Moses for the final event of his life, viewing the Land from the Abarim ridge and dying there. "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Go up to this mountain of Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel. And when you have seen it, you too shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was" (**Num 27:12,13**).
 - To climb the 4,000 feet to the top of Mount Nebo would have posed a significant physical challenge for a person of any age. The Scripture records, however, that "Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated" (**Deut 34:7**). God provided Moses with continued keen eyesight, so he could see the Promised Land from north to west to south, and with the physical stamina to climb the mountain to view it. On the Plains of Moab there was a month of mourning but no funeral or burial. Moses never had to climb down from the mountain. He never had to report to the people what he had seen. Perhaps he never had to explain why he would not be leading them across the river into the Land. They watched him leave the camp and begin his climb, following his figure until it was out of sight. They waited for him to come down, but they never saw him again. Had Moses told them why he was climbing the mountain, a somewhat unusual act for their aged leader? How many times would they have looked up to those heights, as they mourned below, wondering exactly what had transpired on the 4,000 foot heights of Mount Nebo?
- Just to the Northwest of Mt Nebo is located the Plain of Moab:
 - The plain is located directly opposite Jericho on the eastern side of the lower Jordan Valley.
 - The Plains of Moab is a flatland that extends some ten miles from north to south and seven miles from east to west.

- The hills of Moab surround the Plains of Moab on three sides and rise steeply to the north, east, and south.
- When Israel entered this area, they were forced to battle Sihon and drive the Amorites out of the area (**Num 21:21-22:1; Judges 11:18-23**).
- It is estimated that about two million Israelite men, women, and children camped on the Plains of Moab before entering the Land. In the census taken by Moses and Eleazar the priest, 601,730 adult males were counted. If this figure is expanded to include women and children, the total number would easily have reached two million Israelites (**Num 22:1; 26:3,51,63; Josh 3:1**).
- It was on the Plains of Moab that God spoke through Moses the message of the book of Deuteronomy.
- Elijah was on the Plains of Moab when he was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind. He and Elisha had crossed to the eastern side of the Jordan River on dry ground at a point opposite Jericho. It is easy to imagine the chariot of fire, horses of fire, and the whirlwind sweeping across those flatlands, catching Elijah up to heaven (**2 Kgs 2:8-12**).

Masada

- On an isolated rock overlooking the Dead Sea at the edge of the Judean Desert 967 men, women and children - the last remnants of Jewish resistance to Imperial Rome - await their fate. The rock that has become their final refuge is called Masada.
- The diamond-shaped prominence is about 600 meters long and 200 meters wide rising almost vertically on its higher eastern side to a height of 450 meters above the desert floor. There are only two paths that lead to the summit of Masada.
- Although Masada is not mentioned in the Bible by name, it is possible that this was David's place of refuge during his flight from Saul and where he wrote some of his Psalms. If so, David was probably referring to Masada as the "stronghold" (**1 Sam 22:4-5; 23:14; 24:22**), using it to depict God as his fortress and rock of refuge (**Ps 18:2, 31; 71:3; 144:2**).
- In A.D. 66, at the beginning of the Great Revolt against Rome, a group of zealots called Sicarii captured Masada from the Roman garrison stationed there.
- During the period of the revolt, Masada became a place of refuge for others fleeing Roman rule.
- The last of the refugees arrived at Masada in A.D. 70, after the destruction of the temple. They built a synagogue, public hall and ritual-baths. This group lived there for three years until A.D. 73 when units of the Roman army arrived to take Masada.
- The siege lasted several months during which the army built an earthen ramp up the western side of the mountain. They used Jewish slaves to build the ramp so that the Jews on Masada would not roll rocks down the hill to kill them.
- When there was no hope of escape, the Jews on Masada chose to die rather than live as slaves under Rome. Nine hundred men, women and children committed mass suicide. Only a few women and children survived by hiding in covered cisterns.
- Before the suicide, they burned all the buildings on Masada except the storehouses to demonstrate to the Romans that they did not die because they had no food. The mass suicide and ensuing destruction of the fortress occurred on the 15th day of Nisan in A.D. 73,



- the night before the Roman Tenth Legion took Masada.
- The valor of the Jewish zealots residing on Masada during the Roman siege is celebrated as the supreme example of self-sacrifice for the preservation of the nation of Israel.
 - Today, when the recruits of the Israel Armored Corps take their oath of allegiance, they do so on Masada to remind each generation of the price their forefathers paid for their nation. They cry: "Masada shall not fall again!"
 - Masada lies in an arid region that lacks a permanent water supply. In spite of this, during the zenith of Masada's history, more water was stored on this fortified mountain than on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Herod the Great built a water system by installing dams in the nearby *wadis* (valleys) to divert the winter rains into channels that directed the water into cisterns built in the northwest side of the cliff. From there, slaves carried the water to the upper reservoir.
 - King Herod built two elaborate palaces on Masada. The "hanging palace," on the northern end of the summit, extended down the promontory of the mountain on three levels. The lowest level is 115 feet from the top. Winding staircases provided access to each level. The other larger palace was located on the western side of the mountain.
 - The caldarium (hot room) had a suspended floor supported by 200 small brick pillars. Hot air from an adjacent furnace was blown under the floor and through a network of clay pipes built into the walls to allow the room to be heated to the desired temperature.

Temple Mount

- Solomon began to build the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah. It was on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David. (**2 Chronicles 3:1**)(**I Kings 3 & 4**)(**II Sam 24:18**)
- The Temple Mount is identified in Jewish tradition as the area of Mount Moriah where Abraham offered up his son in sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-18)
- Here King Solomon built the First Temple in 965 BC, took 7 years to build it. It was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE, but 70 years later Jews returning from exile built the Second Temple on the same site. King Herod refashioned it into an edifice of great splendor.
- One of Herod's greatest building projects was in Jerusalem. He wanted to enlarge and embellish the Temple, but the mountain on which Solomon had built the First Temple and on which Zachariah and Haggai had built the Second was just too small for his plans.
- Following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70, the area of the Temple was deliberately left in ruins till 638.

Garden Tomb

- (**John 19:38-42**) After this Joseph Of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave. So he came and took away His body. Nicodemus also, who had at first come to Him by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds' weight. They took the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb where no one had ever been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, as the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there."

- The interior of the tomb measures 14 feet / 4.3 meters wide, 10 feet / 3.0 meters deep and 7½ feet / 2.3 meters high. Only one of the two graves inside appear to have been used, yet it does not appear as though the body had been left there for very long - there are no bones or other signs of natural decomposition.
- The interior meets all of the requirements for the account in The Bible - there is room for Peter and John to enter (John 20:3-9), and a place for the two angels to sit when they spoke with Mary of Magdala (**John 20:10-18**).

Gordan's Calvary - Golgatha

Most evangelical Christians believe this is the place where Jesus was crucified. The hill is part of Mount Mariah and overlooks the ancient main road that led to Jericho and Damascus in New Testament times.

- This is in keeping with the Roman tradition of performing executions in places where as many people as possible would pass by close enough to see their suffering victims and read the charges against them that were nailed with them to their crosses, yet far enough away so the stench would not overpower the city.
- The Romans who used it until the fourth century, when emperor Constantine abolished it. Crucifixion can go on for many hours, or even days. But then, that seemed to be the point - the authorities wanted the condemned person to suffer as much as possible, for as long as possible, to serve as a warning to others.
- Crucifixion wasn't just a form of execution - it was also a political tool devised to keep the people in line. The usual crucifixion began with the victim being flogged and severely beaten.
- He was then forced to carry or drag the crossbeam of the cross to the place of execution, where the upright post was already firmly fixed in the ground.
- He was then bound or nailed to the crossbeam which was then raised up and attached to the post about 10 to 12 feet (3 or 4 meters) off the ground.
- The feet were then nailed to the post. The legs were then often broken with an iron bar.
- The death of the victim, depending upon age and physical condition, would usually be the result of heart failure, suffocation or exhaustion.
- (**John 10:17-18 KJV**) "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."
- (**Mark 15:37**) "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost."
- (**Mark 15:44-45**) "And Pilate marveled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead.
- And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph."
- (**John 19:31-34**) The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, for that Sabbath day was an high day, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.