



Christian Heritage Tour of

✡ ISRAEL ✡



February 21 - March 1, 2019

Join us for this unique experience as we visit

Jerusalem • Bethlehem • Nazareth

The Sea of Galilee • Capernaum • The Golan Heights

Caesarea • The Jordan River • Qumran and Masada

The Western (“Wailing”) Wall • The Mount of Olives

The Garden Tomb • The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

and many other key sites in Jewish history and the life of Christ

— A 10-day guided tour with —

Dr. Jeffrey Breshears

Founder and President of The Areopagus Christian Study Center

DAY 1:

We fly from the USA to Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel. Our tour begins the next morning promptly at 8:30 a.m. (in which case you may prefer to fly to Israel a day earlier.)

DAY 2:

Our tour bus departs Ben Gurion Airport at 8:30 a.m. for our first full day in Israel.

We travel to **Caesarea Maritima** to see the ruins of the magnificent port city built by Herod the Great and the scene of the apostle Paul's trial before the Roman governors Felix and Festus and the Jewish King Herod Agrippa (Acts 23:23-26:32). We visit the palace where the Roman procurator (governor) resided, the amphitheater, the hippodrome, and the Roman aqueduct that provided fresh water for the city.



Caesara Maritima

Our next stop is **Mt. Carmel** where the prophet Elijah challenged King Ahab and the prophets of Ba'al (I Kings 18).

From Mt. Carmel we travel on to **Beit-Shea'n/Scythopolis**, one of the most fascinating archaeological sites in Israel that includes a theater, baths, a main street, a temple, a basilica, and an amphitheater that date back to Roman and Byzantine times.

Following our visit to Beit-Shea'n, we check into our hotel in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee.

DAY 3:

Our first visit is to **Tabgha** on the northwest shore of the **Sea of Galilee** (a.k.a. Lake Tiberias or Lake Gennesarat, where Jesus had one of his most memorable post-Resurrection encounters with his disciples and where he instructed Peter to "Feed my sheep" (Mark 6:30-46; John 21). We then board a boat for a beautiful cruise on the Sea of Galilee. After arriving on the far side of the lake, we view the famous "Jesus boat" – an ancient fishing boat that dates back to the 1st century.



The synagogue in Capernaum

Our next destination is the **Mount of Beatitudes**, the spectacular setting for Jesus' famous "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. 5-7; Luke 6). Proceeding on to **Capernaum** where Jesus ministered on several occasions (Matt. 8:5-22; Mark 1:21-34; Luke 4:31-44), we visit the ruins of the ancient **synagogue** where he taught (Matt. 4:13; Luke 4:31-37; John 6:25-59) and the reputed "house of Peter" where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14-16; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38-39).

We conclude our day with a visit to **Bethsaida**, another town in Galilee that the New Testament identifies as the hometown of the disciples Peter,

Andrew, and Philip (John 1:44; 12:21; Matt. 11:21; Luke 10:13).

Day 4:

We begin our tour in **Nazareth**, Jesus' home town (Matt. 2:23; 21:11; Mark 1:24; 10:47; Luke 2:51; 4:16; John 1:45; 19:19; Acts 2:22; 3:6; 10:38). Nazareth Village features a re-enactment of everyday life in the first century A.D., after which we visit the Church of the Annunciation where the angel Gabriel revealed to Mary that her son Jesus would be the long-awaited Messiah who would "save his people from their sins" (Luke 1:26; 2:51; Matt. 1:18-21).



Church of the Annunciation – Nazareth

Leaving Nazareth, we visit **Cana**, the site of Jesus' first miracle when he transformed water into wine at a wedding feast (John 2:1-11; 4:46).

Our day ends at **Megiddo**, where archaeologists have unearthed twenty levels of civilization dating back some 6,000 years, and from which we view the majestic **Jezreel Valley**. Megiddo is also associated with **Armageddon**, the site where some Bible scholars believe the last great End-times battle will be fought prior to the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 16:16).

Day 5:

We travel to **Tel Dan**, the source of the **River Jordan**, before proceeding on to **Caesarea Philippi**, a beautiful area and the site where Peter testified that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matt. 16:13-18).

Northeast of Caesarea Philippi is the **Nimrod Fortress**, a Muslim castle built in the 1220s by a son of Saladin on the southern slopes of **Mount Hermon** (Hebrew: the "sacred" mountain) that overlooks the **Golan Heights** and provides a panoramic view of Lebanon and Syria. Mount Hermon is one of two sites associated with the Transfiguration of Christ (Matt. 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-9).

Day 6:

We begin with a visit to a popular baptismal site at the **Jordan River**, which is the narrowest point of the river before it enters the Dead Sea. This location also provides a view of the country of Jordan to the east.

From there, we proceed south to **Qumran**, the home base for the 1st century Jewish monastic community, the **Essenes**, and the famous caves where the **Dead Sea Scrolls** were first discovered in 1947.

Further south we arrive at the base of the majestic mountaintop ruins of **Masada**, where we take a cable car to the summit. Masada was the site of one of Herod the Great's elaborate palace complexes, and following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army in 70 A.D. it was where Jewish rebels (the Zealots) made their last stand against the Romans in 73 A.D.



Masada

Our final stop is a swim in the **Dead Sea** before we make our way up to **Jerusalem**.

Day 7:



Church of the Nativity – Bethlehem

Our first destination is **Bethlehem** and the historic **Church of the Nativity** that marks the traditional site where Jesus was born (Luke 2:1-20; Matt. 2:1-12). We also visit a popular souvenir gift shop in Bethlehem.

Following our visit to Bethlehem, we travel south to **Herodion** (or Herodium), one of Herod the Great's fortified palace complexes. This is one of the most intriguing archaeological excavations in recent years, and in 2007 an Israeli archaeologist discovered the mausoleum where Herod was buried.

We conclude our day at the **Mount of Olives** overlooking Jerusalem and the **Garden of Gethsemane** where Jesus prayed and was arrested the night before his crucifixion (Matt. 26:36-56; Mark 14:32-50; Luke 22:39-53; John 18:1-11).



Garden of Gethsemane

Day 8:

The Garden Tomb

In the early afternoon we have time for shopping before our day ends in the beautiful and serene **Garden Tomb** where we celebrate Communion. This is always a highlight of every Christian tour of Israel.

Day 9:

20:20), and the **Ophel Excavations**, a network of streets, shops, residences, and archaeological ruins that date to the 1st century. We also visit the **Pool of Siloam**, built at the same time as the Hezekiah Tunnel by King Hezekiah. The Pool of Siloam is also where Jesus healed the blind man in John 9:6-11.

Our day ends with a visit to **Yad Vashem**, the site of Israel's magnificent **Holocaust History Museum**. The name "Yad Vashem" is taken from Isaiah 56:5 – "To them I will give within my temple and its walls a *memorial* and... an everlasting name that will endure forever." Yad Vashem is always a highlight of every tour of Israel.

Day 10:

The climax of our trip is a walk down the **Via Dolorosa** (the path that Jesus took on his way to his crucifixion) to the magnificent **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, originally built in the 4th century on orders of the emperor Constantine to enshrine the sites where Jesus died (Golgotha) and the tomb where he was buried and resurrected. The *aedicula* surrounding the site of Jesus' tomb was recently restored in late-2017.



Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Our first stop is the **Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu**, built on the site where some believe the house of the high priest Caiaphas once stood and where Jesus was tried. This is also where Peter denied Christ the night before his crucifixion.

Traveling through the **Kidron Valley** and **Hezekiah's Tunnel**, built by King Hezekiah (r. 715–686 BC) to provide a water supply for the city when it was besieged by the Assyrians in 701 BC (II Kings 20:20; II Chron. 32), we enter the city through the **Zion Gate** and proceed to the newly-rebuilt **Jewish Quarter** where we visit the "**Upper Room**," the traditional site of the Last Supper.

We begin the day by visiting the historic **Western ("Wailing") Wall** and the **Temple Mount**. We then proceed to the **Southern Steps** where Jesus reportedly wept over Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37-39).

Following a short **film** on 1st century Jerusalem, we visit some of the most significant ruins of ancient Jerusalem including the historic **City of David** (southeast of the current city walls), the **Hezekiah** (or **Siloam**) **Tunnel** (II Kings

Next, we visit the **Church of St. Anne**, built by Crusaders in the 1130s over a grotto reputed to be the childhood home of Mary, the mother of Jesus. We also visit the nearby **Pool of Bethesda** where Jesus healed a disabled man on the Sabbath (John 5:1-15).

After lunch we leave for the airport in Tel Aviv for our return flight back home.

The Christian Heritage Tour of Israel Summary

Land cost only is \$2,795 per person based on double occupancy. Single supplement is \$790 based on current exchange rates.

Price includes:

- Accommodation in 4- or 5-star hotels.
- All ground transportation.
- Local Israeli guides who are specialists in their field.
- All entrances to museums, etc.
- Daily buffet breakfasts and dinners.
- All gratuities except for driver and guide which we will collect on Day 6.

Not included:

- Lunches;
- Rabbit Tunnel walk (\$10) and Hezekiah's Tunnel (\$5).
- Airfares and extra nights not included.

Deposit:

- \$800 deposit due by June 1, 2018.

PLEASE NOTE:

A U.S. **passport** with 6 months validity beyond the departure date is required of all American citizens.

We recommend that you purchase **comprehensive travel insurance** that covers health, luggage and trip cancellation. Travel insurance is not included in the tour price, but it can be purchased inexpensively.

Our tour begins on **February 21, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.** at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, so please plan your flight to arrive at least 2 hours before the start of our tour (or the day before). There are many good hotels in the area.

For more information contact

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Jefrey Breshears, Ph.D., is a former university history professor and the founder and president of The Areopagus, a Christian study center and education ministry in Atlanta, Georgia that sponsors seminars and forums on Christian history, apologetics, and contemporary cultural issues.

Dr. Breshears is also the author of several books, including:

- *Introduction To Bibliology: What Every Christian Should Know About the Origins, Composition, Interpretation, Canonization, and Transmission of the Bible.*
- *The Problem of Christian Anti-Intellectualism.*
- *The Absolute Truth About Relativism.*
- *Natural Law: The Moral Foundation for Social and Political Civility.*



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