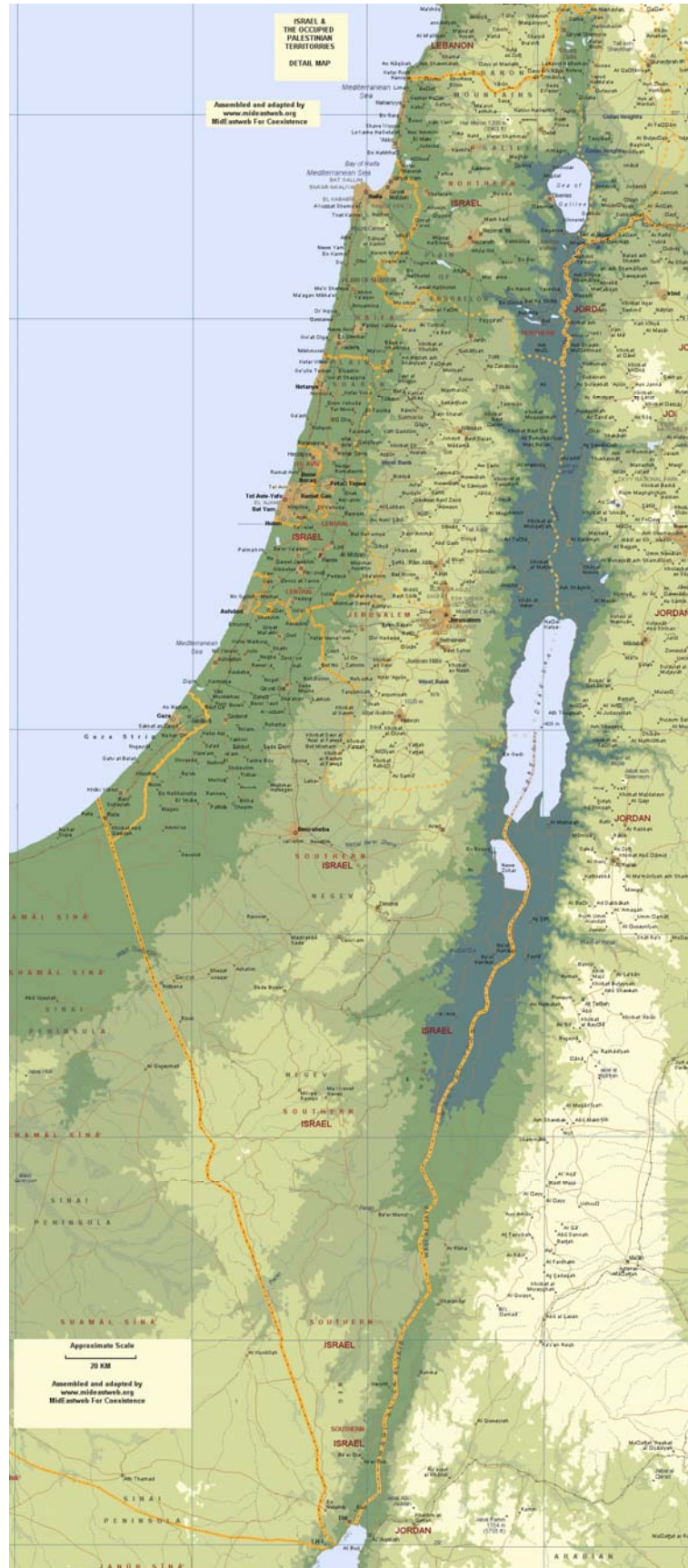


Israel Educational Tour – Spring, 2009

Israel Educational Tour

April 5-16, 2009



Practical Tips for Traveling to Israel

Important documents: Make two copies of *all* important papers – these should include your passports, plane tickets, insurance papers, etc. Leave one copy with your family or a trusted friend. Take the other copy with you to use in the event that you lose something.

What to bring: Due to unpredictable weather conditions, you should bring adequate cold-weather and wet-weather clothing, and clothing suitable for the spring-like temperatures of April. Temperatures in April may be too cool to go into the ocean, but you may bring a bathing suit for relaxing in the hotel pools and spas. Since we will do a lot of walking/hiking in and outside of Jerusalem, Nazareth and Masada, you'll need comfortable, sturdy walking shoes. Laundry/dry cleaning services are available at the hotels where we will be staying; however, these services are expensive.

Those who choose to visit Hezekiah's tunnel need to be aware that clothing and shoes will get wet (water is knee to hip deep), and they will be required to have a small flashlight.

Dressy casual attire for both men and women will be appropriate for the Sabbath and Holy Days. Coats and suits are not required for the men and dresses and skirts are not required for the women. Men should plan on wearing dress slacks and shirts, and those speaking should also wear ties. If they desire, women may wear dressy slacks.

Since hotels generally provide towels and not washcloths, you may want to bring your own.

Computers and appliances: Limited computer facilities will be available at internet cafes. All small electrical appliances (such as hair-dryers, curling irons or shavers), or a computer (including laptops) will need adapters for European electricity. (Electrical current will be 240v, 50 Hz, so remember to bring electrical transformers for any appliances or laptops that do not automatically adjust. Most electrical outlets will accept type-C plugs [2 round 4-mm prongs]). Batteries can be purchased nearly everywhere, but are considerably more expensive and of lower quality than we are accustomed to in the US. The best plan is to bring enough batteries with you to get through the trip. Check with your cell phone provider about costs and whether you can use your cell phone while in Israel.

ATM cards: ATMs are present throughout most towns in Israel (those large enough to have a bank). You can use your ATM card to get cash as you need it. However, be sure that your card will work overseas. First, the Israeli ATMs will take Cirrus and Plus (at last report). Second, your ATM card should be one that accesses your checking account, not merely a savings account. You can also use an American Express card to get cash advances from AMEX offices (there is one in Jerusalem). However, they charge a high interest rate on cash advances, so you won't want to use that except in emergencies.

Credit cards: Most restaurants, shops, etc. take VISA, MC, and American Express. Generally speaking, you will get a better exchange rate by charging a purchase than by paying for it with shekels, dollars or travelers checks. If your ATM card is a VISA or other major credit card company, you can charge such purchases just as you would use your ATM card here as a debit card.

Life in Israel – a few good guidebooks to consider are: *Israel: The Rough Guide*, *Lonely Planet Israel*, or *Fodor's Israel*. For a historical background of modern Israel, we recommend the Pulitzer Prize winning book, *O Jerusalem*, by Collins and LaPierre. Some have also recommended James Michener's *The Source*, which is historical fiction but highly accurate.

Temperatures and weather conditions: Weather in Israel is usually very sunny but it may be windy, cloudy or rainy in April. Temperatures in April range from the mid 50s to the low 70s; in the Dead Sea area they may reach the mid 80s. **Be prepared for cool, even cold temperatures at night** – even indoors. Since American buildings tend to be overheated, your hotel may seem cool at night or even during the day. Wind-chill can make the temperature feel even colder. April will probably be mild and nice!

Alcohol consumption: One aspect of the Israeli sense of personal honor is sobriety, or temperance – keeping things in balance and exercising self-control is important. Israelis have always enjoyed convivial eating/drinking, but if you get drunk – or even appear to be drunk – you will dishonor God, the church, our group, yourself and offend your hosts, the Israelis.

Drugs: Israeli laws are significantly more stringent than American laws regarding possession and sale of illegal drugs. The Israeli constitution does not afford the same rights to defendants that the U.S. Constitution does. Israeli prisons are not good places to spend time. Use wisdom and discretion as to where and when you walk or travel around the cities of Israel.

Personal security: Security is high and visible in Israel and you will generally feel safe. You should **never** leave a suitcase or bag unattended while in Israel. Any unattended bags will be confiscated by the authorities and destroyed as a security measure by the Israelis. They are very security conscious and always on alert for suspicious bags or activities. You will find that Nazareth and Jerusalem are much safer than American cities of comparable size. Unaccompanied young women may be subject to unwanted advances, pestering, or sexual harassment. A general rule is: **DO NOT TRAVEL ALONE LATE AT NIGHT**. Always go out in groups of two or more.

Culture shock: Israel both is and is not a familiar Western culture. This is a major part of what makes it so interesting. You can expect that Israel will feel more “foreign” than England or France. Since Israelis tend to be more modest than Americans, dress modestly. When visiting a church, synagogue or a mosque, women should wear a scarf or covering for their heads and keep their arms and shoulders covered, and Capri pants may not be acceptable in “holy” sites. Men should wear long pants

How can I hear English news in Israel?

Voice of America: 1260 kHz (AM)

BBC World Service: 1323 kHz (AM)

If you have access to cable, CNN International, BBC, Sky News, ABC and CBS News are available in Israel.

Is there sales tax in Israel?

There is a 17% tax on most goods and services in Israel. At retail stores, this tax is already included in the price.

What are normal business hours?

General business hours extend from 8 or 9 AM to 5 or 7 PM, Sunday through Thursday. Malls are usually open until 10 or 11 PM.

What kinds of tips are expected in restaurants?

Tip 10-15% in restaurants if the gratuity has not been included in the bill. Make sure you always check the bill carefully before tipping.

What is the difference in Time Zones?

Israel is usually 7 hours ahead of Eastern Standard/Daylight Time (USA).

What kind of money should I bring?

For security reasons we highly recommend bringing traveler's checks. Please be aware that you will be responsible for a couple of meals on your own. The shekel (NIS - New Israeli Shekel) is Israel's legal tender. Many stores and vendors will gladly accept your dollars. You do not need to change a lot of money into shekels. American money is accepted almost everywhere.

What should I know about shopping in Israel?

Prices in Israel are much higher for those things you can easily get in the US (especially electronic goods or clothing). If you forget something you can find about everything you need in most major cities in Israel.

What are the differences in measurements in Israel?

Israel uses the metric system. Clothing and shoe sizes are also different. Here are some tables to help you make conversions.

Length:

1 kilometer [km] = 0.621 miles (10 km = approx. 6.2 mi.)

1 meter [m] = 1.094 yards = 39.37 inches

1 centimeter [cm] = 0.393 inches

Weight:

1 kilogram = 2.207 pounds

Food is sold by the kilo (fruits, vegetables) or by 100's of grams (cheese, olives, nuts)

Liquid Measure:

1 liter = 1.057 quarts

Approximate Size Conversions:

<i>Shoes:</i>	Men Israeli	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46
	Men USA	6.5	7	8	9	10	10.5	11	12
	Women Israeli	37	38	39	40	41	42		
	Women USA	5	6	7	8	9	10		

<i>Temperature:</i>	Fahrenheit	32F	50F	68F	86F	104F
	Celsius	0C	10C	20C	30C	40C

Temperature conversion equation:

Fahrenheit = $9/5$ C + 32

Celsius = $5/9$ (F - 32)

Sunset Times:

Nazareth		Jerusalem	
Tuesday, 04/07	7:02 PM	Sunday, 04/12	7:05 PM
Wednesday, 04/08	7:03 PM	Monday, 04/13	7:06 PM
Thursday, 04/09	7:04 PM	Tuesday, 04/14	7:07 PM
Friday, 04/10	7:04 PM	Wednesday, 04/15	7:08 PM
Sabbath, 04/11	7:05 PM		

CONCLUSION:

The key to a positive, fruitful experience in Israel is to be flexible; to want to learn all you can about the land, its people, its culture, and its history. Remember that we are all in this together. Together we can make this a rewarding and terrific trip!

David Johnson grew up in the St. Louis, Missouri area and was introduced to the Church of God as a teenager. His parents began attending church in 1964 and he began attending during his senior year of high school in 1965. He worked a year before entering Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas, where he received his BA in 1970. His wife, Becky, came to Ambassador College in 1967 with previous college credits and also graduated in 1970. From 1970-2005 the Johnsons served in the field ministry of the Church of God in various locations around the United States including such places as southern Oregon, the San Francisco Bay area, southwestern Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia, Houston, northern Louisiana and southern Arkansas, Atlanta, and southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky.



In 2001 he was invited to substitute teach at Ambassador Bible Center in the *Epistles of Paul* class while the regular instructor was making an international trip. In 2005 the Johnsons were asked to move to Cincinnati where he would be added to the regular faculty at ABC as well as serve in ministerial services. He currently teaches *Former Prophets, Acts*, and *Epistles of Paul*, and is co-director of the speech club. In addition to his ABC and ministerial services responsibilities, he also serves as the corporate secretary for the United Church of God, an *International Association*.

In 1981 the Johnsons attended the feast of Tabernacles in Israel and they have been eager to return ever since. They travelled together to Turkey for the Feast of Tabernacles in 2006, and he also took part in the ABC educational tour to Greece during the Days of Unleavened Bread in 2007.



Ralph Levy was born in London, England, and received his secondary education in North London. From 1970 to 1974 he worked on a bachelor's degree in linguistics and modern languages from the University of York, which included one year studying in Seville, Spain. Dr. Levy speaks fluent Spanish, as well as French and some (Mandarin) Chinese.

He came in contact with the Church of God as a teenager, and in 1975 he left England to go to Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, where he completed a B.A. degree in theology (1977), and a year of graduate study in biblical and ministerial studies in 1978. In late summer of 1978 he was employed in the Spanish department of the Worldwide Church of God as the regional editor for the Church's Spanish publications, and as a personal correspondent.

In 1981 he began to work as member of the faculty of Ambassador College (later Ambassador University), where he taught Spanish, ESL (English as a Second Language), and theology. He was ordained an elder in 1988, and moved to Big Sandy, Texas in the college's consolidation of 1990, when he began to teach in the theology department.

Dr. Levy received his M.A. degree in Education (with special interest in the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages) from California State University, Los Angeles, in 1987, and his Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Union Institute and University, in 1995. He has taught classes in the Old Testament at Ambassador University and currently at Ambassador Bible Center in Milford, Ohio. He serves as an elder in the United Church of God, at the Church's home office in Cincinnati, Ohio. He accompanied the Educational Tour to Egypt during the Feast of Unleavened Bread in 2007, and looks forward to sharing this unique educational opportunity in Israel.

Tour Participants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Home Area</i>
Anderson, Jerri	Orland, CA
Audley, Brian & Lesley	Scarborough, Queensland, Australia
Babineaux, Linda	Gretna, LA
Baker, Jacqueline	Glasshouse Mountains, Queensland, Australia
Brady, Walter	Chandler, AZ
Carlisle, Robert & Virginia	Riverside, CA
Caudle, Martha	Spring, TX
Crow, Fred	San Jose, CA
Emerson, Carol	Santa Cruz, CA
Fish, Frank & Valerie & Laurel	Sylmar, CA
Franke, Charles & Arlene	Soldotna, AK
Franke, Terry	Soldotna, AK
Johnson, David & Becky	Batavia, OH
Kennebeck, Richard & Emma	Batavia, OH
Kitt, Stanley & Lee	Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Lauver Jr., John	Etters, PA
Levy, Ralph	Milford, OH
Lipscomb, Frances	Savannah, GA
Machin, Michael & Michelle	Palm Coast, FL
McIntosh, Stacey	Tomball, TX
Peters, Tracelyn	West Palm Beach, FL
Phelps, Floyd & Doris	Williamsburg, OH
Quant, Michelle	Burleson, TX
Robertson, Mark & Ileana	Redland Bay, Queensland, Australia
Rule, Beth	The Woodlands, TX
Schmid, Robert & Erika	Westminster, CA
Schwartz, Leslie	Champaign, IL
Sodergren, Jessica	Spring, TX
Torcetti, Carl & Marcia	St Ives, St Ives, United Kingdom
Treybig, Jeanette	Houston, TX
Updegraff, David & Jean	Costa Mesa, CA
Ven Huizen, David	Anoka, MN
Wilson, Thomas	Browns Mills, NJ
Young, Thomas	Tulsa, OK
Zutz, Charles & Joanne	Woodbury, MN

Tuesday, April 7, 2009



Caesarea Maritima

The history of Caesarea begins in the 4th or 3rd century BC, when it was a small Phoenician harbor named Strato's Tower. Strato is the Greek form of a name of three different kings of Sidon in the 4th century. A century earlier, in gratitude for the assistance of a Sidonian fleet in the invasion of Greece, the Persians had granted this area of the coast to Sidon.

The city was mentioned for the first time in writing by Zenon, an Egyptian official who landed there for supplies in 259 BC. Strato's Tower/Caesarea changed hands many times over the next couple centuries. It was captured by Alexander Jannaeus in 103 BC and became part of the Hasmonean kingdom. In 63 BC, Pompey captured Strato's Tower and made it part of the Roman province of Syria. Later, Mark Antony gave it to Cleopatra.

When Antony and Cleopatra lost the Battle of Actium, Caesar Augustus gave the city to Herod the Great (c. 30 BC). Herod renamed the city "Caesarea," in honor of the generous emperor. Several other cities were given the same name, so this one was known as Caesarea Martima (Caesarea-by-the-Sea) to distinguish it from the others.

Herod began to rebuild the humble harbor on a grand scale in 22 BC, with a view to making it the principal harbor of his kingdom. He completed his work in 10 or 9 BC and celebrated with a grand games festival. The empress Livia sent pieces of her personal furniture as a gift to the city. It was an impressive transformation, ranking alongside his work at Masada and Jerusalem.

In his work on the harbor, Josephus commented that Herod had overcome nature. He had lowered huge (50x9x10 feet) limestone blocks into 120 feet of water and flanked the entrance with three gigantic statues on each side. In 1960 an American diving team confirmed Josephus' measurements of the stones.



Herod's Harbor

This site was insignificant until Herod the Great began to develop it into a magnificent harbor befitting his kingdom. The harbor was built using materials that would allow the concrete to harden underwater. The forty-acre harbor would accommodate 300 ships, much larger than the modern harbor existing today.

Promontory Palace

Josephus called this a “most magnificent palace” that Herod the Great built on a promontory jutting out into the waters of Caesarea. The pool in the center was nearly Olympic in size, and was filled with fresh water. A statue once stood in the center. Paul may have been imprisoned on the grounds of this palace (Acts 23:35).



Along the coastline a 200-foot-wide seawall was built, topped by a number of towers. The city itself was laid out on a

Hippodamian grid after the manner of Alexandria, with the main streets oriented towards the harbor. It had all the facilities of a great Hellenistic-Roman city: city walls, temples, public buildings, baths, theater, amphitheater and an intricate drainage system for sanitation. Everything was built in concrete and limestone, glistening white. Fountains throughout the city were fed by water from the hills several miles away.



The Theater

Herod the Great also constructed a theater with a seating capacity of 3500. According to Josephus, this is where the death of Herod Agrippa occurred, as recounted in Acts 12. The theater was covered with a skin covering (vellum), and visitors probably brought cushions with them to soften the stone seats.

Dominating the city was the Temple to the Divine Caesar (of which almost nothing remains), which enclosed two colossal

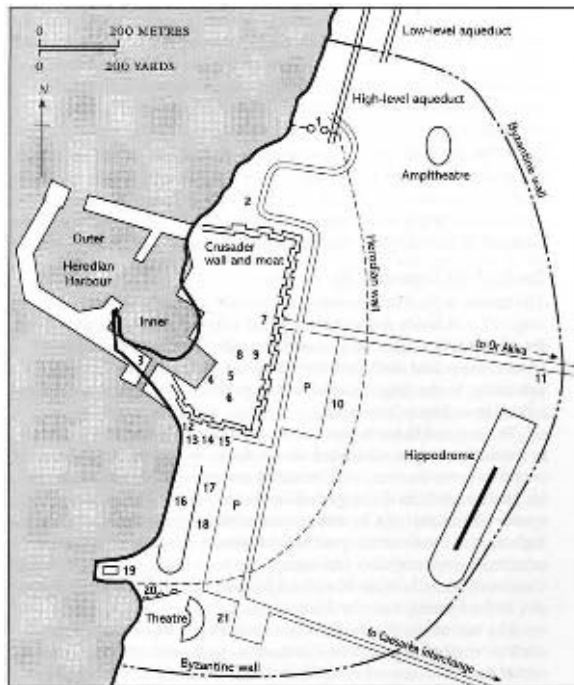
statues: one of Augustus modeled after the Zeus of Olympia and one of Roma copied from the Hera at Argos.

The Aqueduct

The lack of fresh water at Herod's new city required a lengthy aqueduct to bring water from springs at the base of Mt. Carmel nearly ten miles away. In order that the water would flow by the pull of gravity, the aqueduct was built on arches and the gradient was carefully measured. Later Hadrian and the Crusaders would attach additional channels to Herod's aqueduct.



Herod's health began to decline after this (Acts 12:19-23 says he died at Caesarea, being "eaten of worms"), but his great city did not. It became an official residence of Roman governors (such as Pontius Pilate), played a significant role in the lives of the Christian apostles, and became an important Byzantine city.



▲ Fig. 57. Caesarea (after Ziek and Porat). The Herodian harbour is superimposed on the present coastline. 1. Herodian city gate; 2. Synagogue area; 3. Crusader citadel; 4. Herodian quay; 5. Octagonal church; 6. Great mosque/Crusader cathedral; 7. East gate; 8. Frankish house; 9. Covered Crusader street; 10. Byzantine street and statues; 11. Arch; 12. Entrance to the Crusader city; 13. Byzantine bath; 14. Archive building; 15. Ticket office; 16. Amphitheatre; 17. Vaulted warehouses; 18. Storage buildings; 19. Herod's palace; 20. Byzantine fortress; 21. Pontius Pilate inscription.

A Jewish community was soon established in Herod's new city, but the pagan citizens refused them citizenship. The strife between the two communities was resolved by Emperor Nero in favor of the Roman citizens. One of the causes of the First Jewish Revolt (66-70 AD) was a massacre of the Jews of Caesarea and the desecration of the synagogue by the Gentile citizens.

The Roman general Vespasian, who was sent to crush the Revolt, made Caesarea his headquarters until his legions declared him emperor there in 69 AD. His son, Titus, who led the final assault on Jerusalem, condemned 2,500 Jews to gladiatorial fights in Caesarea's amphitheater in celebration of his brother Domitian's birthday. Caesarea also witnessed the execution of many of the Jewish captives of the Second Jewish Revolt (CE 132-135). A noted Jewish scholar who supported the Second Jewish Revolt, Rabbi Akiva, was tortured and executed in Caesarea.

After the Revolt was suppressed, Jews were forbidden to live in Jerusalem and many came to Caesarea. In the 3rd century, important

rabbinical schools began to be established here, including those of Rabbi Bar Qappara and Rabbi Hosheya. Several synagogues were built between the 4th and 7th centuries.

Christianity was established in Caesarea in the 1st century AD and it is the setting for several events recorded in Acts. In Acts 10, Peter has a vision that leads him to Caesarea, specifically to the Roman soldier Cornelius, to preach to the Gentiles for the first time. Philip the Evangelist lived in Caesarea with his four daughters (Acts 21:8). From here Paul sailed for his native Tarsus when forced to flee from Jerusalem (9:30), and here he landed when returning from his second missionary journey (18:22). In Acts 24-25, Paul was imprisoned here for two years. He demanded a trial because of his Roman citizenship, and was duly sent to Rome where he was executed around 59 AD. Some of Paul's letters to Christian communities may have been written in Caesarea.

Origen of Alexandria arrived in Caesarea in 231 AD and lived here for 20 years. He established a great library in the city, which was added to by Pamphilus (d. 309 AD) and had 30,000 volumes by 630 AD.

In 303 AD, Procopius was martyred in Caesarea during Diocletian's persecution. Eusebius (see below) describes him as an ascetic and scholar who refused to sacrifice to the pagan gods, affirming instead the existence of the one God.

Eusebius of Caesarea, the first church historian and the first biblical geographer, was a student of Pamphilus and bishop of Caesarea from 315 to 330. Here he wrote his *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Onomasticon*, an atlas of biblical sites that remains an important source for today's archaeologists.

Byzantine Caesarea was even larger than the Roman city. Covering some 160 hectares, it had city walls, baths, churches, administrative buildings, shops, an amphitheater, a new hippodrome and theater, and was still laid out on a grid pattern. The harbor was repaired as well: in 502 the emperor Anastasius (491-518) was praised with the words, "The city welcomes ships with confidence and she is filled with all necessities." The Byzantine walls were probably built under Justinian.

Shortly before or after the Islamic conquest, the southern half of the city was abandoned and used for irrigated agricultural plots and garden terraces. The port had gone out of use by this time, but the fertility of the hinterland helped Caesarea remain one of the richest cities in the area.

Caesarea was captured by the Muslims in 640 AD, who crept in through the low-level aqueduct. The early Islamic city was much smaller, but the harbor was repaired and deepened, and in the Abbasid period rectangular courtyard houses and streets were laid out on the edge of the harbor. Ceramic remains indicate a lively trade with Egypt.

Many cisterns and cesspits date from the Fatimid period and store rooms attest to continuing successful commerce. Fatimid remains have also been found on the great podium fronting the harbor and in graves south of the city. A rich treasure discovered in a well indicates both the prosperity and increasing lack of security of the Fatimid town.

In the early 12th century, Caesarea was captured by the Crusaders. The city initially surrendered to Godfrey de Bouillon, but a revolt in 1101 led to the city being sacked by Baldwin I. The town declined, although it was the seat of an archbishop and had a cathedral and other churches. The Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights owned property here and there may have been a Genoese quarter.

Caesarea was captured in 1187 by Saladin, who reduced its defenses but abandoned it to the Crusaders in 1191. Some refortification began in 1217, but this was dismantled by al-Mu'azzam Isa in 1219. It was started again in 1228 and finally completed in 1251 by St. Louis IX of France. The city fell to the Mamluk sultan Baybars in 1265 and was destroyed by al-Ashraf in 1291.

Caesarea was just a small village from the 16th to 19th centuries. Because it was easily accessible from the sea, the ruined city was pillaged of its building materials for the rebuilding of Akko and Jaffa in the 18th and 19th centuries. Some of Caesarea's most beautiful stones can be seen in the 18th century structures of Jezzar Pasha in Akko.

In the 19th century a Circassian settlement was attempted and in the 1880s a Bosnian village was established as these Muslim peoples fled from Russian Christians. The Crusader fortress was rebuilt as their administrative center, and the inner harbor area contained the marketplace and mosques. The inhabitants fled from the Israelis in 1948.

Elijah and Mount Carmel

The prophet Elijah came on the scene in the ninth century BCE, during the reign of evil King Ahab of Israel. Ahab was as evil as he was mostly because of his scheming, pagan wife Jezebel, who influenced him very heavily. It was no surprise that Elijah came into conflict with both Jezebel and Ahab.

Elijah the Tishbite hailed from the Transjordanian region of Gilead, from where he proclaimed the 3½ year drought that came on Israel because of the evil of the ruling couple (1 Kings 17:1, James 5:17). During this time he was miraculously sustained by ravens at the Brook Cherith on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Later, at God's command, he made the long journey to Sidon, on the Mediterranean coast north of the border of Israel, where he lodged with a widow and worked a number of famous miracles, including the miraculous provision of bread and the resurrection of the widow's son (1 Kings 17).

From Sidon he journeyed southward to Samaria, the capital of the ten-tribed northern kingdom of Israel, where he confronted evil king Ahab. There Ahab accused Elijah of being the troubler of Israel (presumably because of the drought, and his prophesying), an accusation Elijah threw



back at Ahab, the real troubler of Israel, who had abandoned the true God for worship of the Baals (1 Kings 18:17, 18). Here Elijah proposed the famous duel between himself and the priests of Baal, to take place on Mount Carmel, located on the Mediterranean coast, northwest of the city of Samaria. Mount Carmel is significant for its strategic location and noted for its lush and fertile land.

Here the southern side of Mt. Carmel near the coast can be seen. Mt. Carmel was most significant in ancient times as a barrier to traffic along the coastal plain. The 1500-foot high limestone mountain impeded armies and merchants traveling to the Jezreel Valley.



Biblically, Mt. Carmel 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).

Baal was the male member of the pagan pantheon, while Asherah was the female mother goddess, also known as Astarte or the Queen of Heaven. Worship of these pagan gods had been a blight on Israel since the time when Balaam succeeded in corrupting Israel by inducing marriages with Moabite women (Numbers 25). The durability of that corrupting influence made Elijah's victory particularly significant. The circumstances made it even more so.



This is probably the best view of the area of Elijah's contest, assuming tradition is correct. The monastery of Muhraqa is at the top of the hill, but tradition places the contest slightly lower near a spring. The crowds of Israelites would have filled the spacious territory around to see whose God would win.

It was 450 to one! 450 priests of Baal against one true prophet of God. The two sacrificial bulls were laid on wood, and the priests of Baal invited to "do their thing," as Elijah mocked. They danced, prayed, and called out to Baal for almost an entire day, begging him to act; but there was no response from the hapless pagan god!

To make the point, Elijah had his sacrifice drenched with water three times before he prayed. At his prayer, God sent fire from heaven that consumed the sacrifice, the water, the dust, and the wood! Predictably, this miracle persuaded the assembled and terrified masses of people, who confessed that the LORD, Elijah's God, was the true God! In the afterglow of the victory, Elijah had the prophets of Baal executed, an act that conformed with the law against apostasy (Deuteronomy 13:6-11).

But the vengeful Jezebel was furious! She vowed to kill Elijah, prompting him to flee well to the south, to Beersheba in southern Judah, and then on to Horeb (AKA Mount Sinai), the location of his suicidal moment in the cave and his encounter with God, in the famous "still, small voice" (1 Kings 19:1-18).

From Horeb Elijah was instructed to make another extremely long journey northeast to the Wilderness of Damascus, where he anointed Elisha as his successor (19:19-21). From there he returned to Samaria for another confrontation with the miserable Ahab, who exhibited an almost death-bed repentance shortly prior to his death in battle (21:17-29; 22:29-40).

Elijah's work is echoed in the Malachi prophecy (Malachi 4:5-6), fulfilled in the work of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:14), and in the work of the Church of God prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ (Matthew 17:10-13).

Akko (Acre)

Akko is one of the northernmost cities on Israel's Mediterranean coast. The city projects out into the sea, and is surrounded by water on three sides.

There are two possible sources for the name of the city. According to Jewish lore, there was a flood during the generation of Enosh, a biblical character. As the waters of the flood rose towards modern Akko, God said 'Ahd koh!', which means 'until here' in Hebrew. Over the years, the name got shortened to 'Ahko', or Akko. Greek legend, on the other hand, claims that Hercules was once seriously injured. He found the herbs necessary for recovery in the area of Akko. Accordingly, the name of the city would then be derived from the Greek word 'Aka', which means 'healing'.



Acco is only referenced once in the Bible by this name. In Judges 1:31, it is referred to as one of the places the Israelites failed to hold. In the New Testament, Acco was known as Ptolemais, and was one of the stops on Paul's final return to Jerusalem (Acts 21:7). Ptolemais was situated on the main sea and land route in ancient times. It served as the main port of the region until Caesarea was built. Herod the Great received Augustus Caesar at this site, since Caesarea had not yet been completed. Vespasian first

docked at Ptolemais when he came to subdue the First Jewish Revolt. Later, the Arab inhabitants changed the name back to "Acco."

History

Akko is one of the oldest continuously-inhabited cities in the world. It is first mentioned in written records in 3500BC, when it shows up in Egyptian hieroglyphs. Later on, the Kambizes used its port as their base in their campaign to conquer Egypt in 525BC, suggesting that Akko already had a sophisticated and well-developed port.

According to Jewish scholars, it is debatable whether or not Akko is part of the Land of Israel that is said to have been allotted to the Jewish nation by God. The Old Testament suggests that it was not part of Israel during the reign of Joshua, the period of the Judges or the reign of King Saul. King David is said to have been the first to annex it, and for a while it had the distinction of being the northernmost city in the land of Israel.

After Alexander the Great took over the Middle East, he set up a mint for coins in Akko. The city was then taken by the Syrian-Hellenists, which precipitated the Maccabee rebellion. Most of the Maccabee battles are believed to have taken place in and around Akko. Yonatan, one of the Maccabee brothers, was killed in a battle in Akko. When the Romans conquered the area, Julius Caesar paid it a visit, and for years after all the city's documents were dated from his stay there. During the Middle Ages, it was famous enough that Marco Polo made it a stop on his journey to the East.

The Middle Ages brought many wars to Akko. Crusaders, Mamelukes, Syrian Muslims and Chinese Mongols all fought over the strategically located city. Later, Napoleon attacked the city, hoping to use it as his base for capturing the entire Middle East. The governor of Akko, Ahmed Al-Jazzar ('The Butcher'), successfully rebuffed the attack with the help of some British forces and aided in the end of Napoleon's attempt to rule the world. As Napoleon retreated for home, he is quoted as having said, 'Had Akko been mine, the world would have been mine'.

When the British began their rule over Palestine, they captured Akko and used one of the old Crusader fortresses as a prison for captured members of the Irgun-Jewish underground. Today, Akko is a picturesque fishing port, and home to Israel's steel industry. The old city contains many buildings which date back to the Crusader era and before. It also has two oriental markets, several museums and a handful of restaurants. The city inhabitants are a peaceful blend of Arabs and Jews who co-exist in harmony.

Walls

Akko is one of the few cities in the world whose walls have remained standing over the centuries, despite being attacked by many large and powerful armies. The modern-day walls, which are built vaguely in the shape of a pentagon, with moats, counter walls, towers, and guns as secondary defense, were built in stages between 1750 and 1814. But the walls of Akko, having never been completely destroyed, have a history that goes back almost a millennium.



The old city of Akko was fortified for the first time in the days of Ibn Tolon, a ruler during the time of the Ptolemy rule over modern-day Israel. The wall was fixed and improved in 1071 in preparation for the invasion of the Seljuk Turks and again in 1099 in anticipation of the Crusaders. In the 1200s, the Crusaders built the wall up higher, added some new ones and constructed towers. Their renovations were clearly insufficient, because in 1291 the Mamelukes razed most of the wall when they captured the city. Akko retained the damaged walls until 1750,

when Dahar El-Omar, a Bedouin ruler, built them back up. Between 1800 and 1814, the current walls were completed by Al-Jazzar. They are unbelievably thick, with watchtowers and counter walls, and are protected by guns. Napoleon's forces were defeated at the eastern wall, known as 'Napoleon's Wall', when the defending forces allowed his army to scale the outer wall and trap themselves in the moat, where they were easily shot down. The wall is still completely intact, with even the guns in their original positions.

Fortress

The Akko fortress is the largest building in the old city. It comprises the most complete remains of a Crusader fortress in Israel. It was built by the Hospitaller Order of Knights in the early 1200s, and an Ottoman fortress was built on top in the late 1700s.

The Baths

The Hamam al Basha, or Turkish bath, was built by Al-Jazar in 1795 and kept working until the mid-20th Century, when it was finally shut down. Today it appears exactly how Al-Jazar had it designed, but also includes a video presentation that explains how the baths used to operate and all the functions that they performed for the people of the city.

Wednesday, April 8, 2009



Sea of Galilee



View from Arbel

The Plain of Gennesaret spreads out below the Arbel cliffs. About five miles long and two miles wide, this stretch of land alongside the Sea of Galilee's northwest shore was renowned for its fertility. Josephus wrote that it was "wonderful in its characteristics and in its beauty. Thanks to the rich soil there is not a plant that does not flourish there, and the inhabitants grow everything: the air is so temperate that it suits the most diverse species."

The Sea of Galilee is fed by the Jordan River, rainfall and springs on the northern side. More properly designated a lake, the Kinneret (the OT and modern name) is 13 miles long and 7 miles wide. At its deepest point the lake is only 150 feet deep. The rabbis said of it, "Although God has created seven seas, yet He has chosen this one as His special delight."



The peaceful calm of the Sea of Galilee can quickly become transformed by a violent storm. Winds funnel through the east-west aligned Galilee hill country and stir up the waters quickly. More violent are the winds that come off the hills of the Golan Heights to the east. Trapped in the basin, the winds can be deadly to fishermen. A storm in March 1992 sent waves 10 feet high crashing into downtown Tiberias and causing significant damage.

Hippos and Harbors

Hippos (Susita) was a major city of the Decapolis located on a round hill overlooking the shore. The modern harbor of Kibbutz En Gev is visible below it. In the first century, at least 16 harbors were located on the lake. All the lake's settlements had their own harbor, even if it was very small. The largest one belonged to Gadara had a 200 meter breakwater.



Wooden Boat Reconstruction

In 1986 a wooden vessel from the first century was discovered near Nof Ginosar on the lake's northwestern shore. Studies have determined the type of wood that was used (mainly cedar and oak), the style of construction (mortise and tenon joints), the date (on the basis of construction techniques, pottery and Carbon 14 tests) and the size (26 by 7 feet - big enough for 15 men). Pictured is a reconstruction of what the ancient boat might have looked like. This was formerly on display at Kibbutz En Gev.

St. Peter's Fish

Three types of fish were primarily sought by fishermen in antiquity in these waters. Sardines likely were the "two small fish" that the boy brought to the feeding of the 5000. Sardines and bread were the staple product of the locals. Barbels are so known because of the barbs at the corners of their mouths. The third type is called musht but is more popularly known today as "St. Peter's Fish." This fish has a long dorsal fin which looks like a comb and can be up to 1.5 feet long and 3.3 lbs in weight.



Capernaum

Capernaum is not mentioned in the Old Testament, which is natural since archaeological evidence shows that it was uninhabited until the 2nd century BC.

Capernaum is frequently mentioned in the Gospels and was Jesus' main base during his Galilean ministry. It is referred to as Jesus' "own city" (Mt 9:1; Mk 2:1) and a place where "he lived" (Mt 1:13). It was the home of Peter, Andrew, James, and John (Mk 1:21, 29).



"They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up." (Mark 1:21-22, 29-30)

Many familiar Gospel events occurred in this village. Capernaum is where Jesus first began to preach after the Temptation in the wilderness (Mt 1:12-17) and called Levi from his tax-collector's booth (Mk 2:13-17). It was while teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum that he said, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (Jn 6:54)

Capernaum is where Jesus healed a centurion's servant without even seeing him (Mt 8:5-13; Lk 7:1-10), Peter's mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-15; Mk 1:29-30); the paralytic who was lowered through the roof (Mk 2:1-12), and many others who were brought to him (Mt 8:16-17). And it was Capernaum that Jesus had set out from when he calmed a storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mt 8:23-27).

Jesus was harsh with his adopted home when it proved unrepentant despite his many miracles. "And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you" (Mt 11:23-24).

History

Now predominantly an archaeological park, Capernaum was a fishing village inhabited continuously from the 1st century BC to the 13th century AD. As the first town encountered by travelers on the other side of the Jordan, it was equipped with a customs office and a small garrison overseen by a centurion.

Capernaum was a Jewish village in the time of the Christ. It was apparently poor, since it was a Gentile centurion that built the community's synagogue (Luke 7:5). The houses were humble and built of the local black basalt stone.

Christian presence is attested early in Capernaum and the village was predominantly Christian by the 4th century AD. Rabbinic texts from the 4th century imply considerable tension between the Jewish and Christian communities of the town.



The synagogue of Capernaum is located just inland from the shore with its facade facing Jerusalem. It has been difficult to date, with scholarly opinion ranging from the 2nd to 5th centuries. It stands on an elevated position, was richly decorated and was built of imported white limestone, which would have contrasted dramatically with the local black basalt of the rest of the village. All of this would have given the building great beauty and status.

The dating of this synagogue is debated, but it is clearly later than the first century. Excavations have revealed a synagogue from the time of Jesus with walls made of worked stone and 4 feet thick.

These earlier walls were preserved up to 3 feet high and the entire western wall still exists and was used as the foundation for the later synagogue.

Jesus was confronted by a demoniac while teaching here (Mark 1:21-27).

In Capernaum, Jesus healed the servant of the centurion. This Roman official was credited with building the synagogue (Luke 7:3).

In this synagogue, Jesus gave sermon on the bread of life (John 6:35-59).

The House of Peter

Excavations revealed one residence that stood out from the others. This house was the object of early Christian attention with 2nd century graffiti and a 4th century house church built above it. In the 5th century a large octagonal Byzantine church was erected above this, complete with a baptistery. Pilgrims referred to this as the house of the apostle Peter.



to lose a coin (Lk 15:8).

After the Islamic conquest in 638, the village shifted east, where houses, a jetty, a fish market and a church dedicated to St. John Theologos existed until the mid-10th century. The town's prosperity was badly affected by an earthquake in 746 and never recovered.

In the Crusader period, Capernaum was all but abandoned. The site was too exposed for Crusaders to safely build there, despite their considerable interest in its religious importance. In the 13th century, a visitor reported that "the once renowned town of Capernaum is at present just despicable; it numbers only seven houses of poor fishermen."

The site remained virtually abandoned until the Franciscans bought the land in the late 19th century. They raised a fence to protect the site, planted palms and eucalyptus trees from



Australia to create an oasis for pilgrims, and built a small harbor. Most of the early excavations (1905-26) and restorations were conducted by Franciscans. St. Peter's House was discovered in 1968.

In 1990, the Franciscans built an unusually-shaped modern church over the site of St. Peter's house. Hexagonal in shape and rather spaceship-like in appearance, it is elevated on pillars and has a glass floor, so that visitors can still see the original church below.

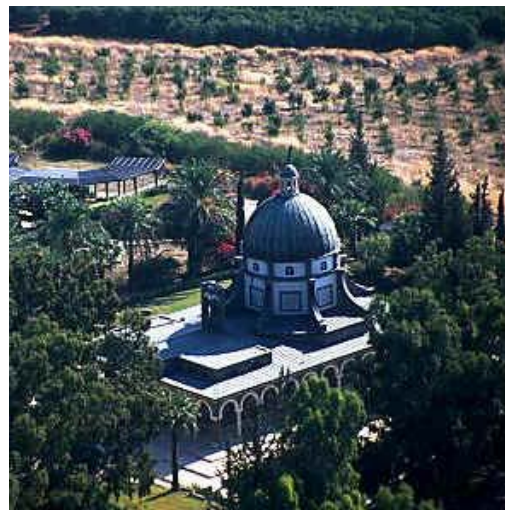
Mount of Beatitudes

The *Sermon on the Mount* is recorded in Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6. The alleged discrepancy between Matthew's version being on a hill and Luke's being on a level place is easily reconciled with observation of many level places on the Galilean hillsides. *Scripture gives no indication of the exact location of this event*, but the Byzantines built a church to commemorate it at the bottom of the hill. Some of Napoleon's men placed it on the nearby Arbel mountain.



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).

The mountain is topped by a Catholic chapel built in 1939 by the Franciscan Sisters with the support of the Italian ruler Mussolini. The building which was constructed by the noted architect Antonio Barluzzi is full of numerical symbolism. In front of the church, the symbols on the pavement represent Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, Charity, Faith and Temperance. Inside the church hangs the cloak from Pope Paul VI's visit in 1964.





Plain of Gennesaret

The Mt. of Beatitudes overlooks the four-mile long Plain of Gennesaret, an area famed for its fertility. Josephus said this plain was the location of “nature’s crowning achievement.” Several times the New Testament records that Jesus was in this area including when he healed the multitudes here and faced Pharisaic condemnation for ritual impurity (Mark 6-7).

Megiddo



Inhabited from the Chalcolithic period, Megiddo has approximately 26 levels of occupation. American excavators from the Oriental Institute worked from 1925 with the ambitious goal of excavating every level in its entirety. They made it through the first three levels before concentrating the work on certain areas.

Megiddo is widely regarded as the most important biblical period site in Israel. Surrounded

by mighty fortifications, outfitted with sophisticated water installations, and adorned with impressive palaces and temples, Megiddo was the queen of cities of Canaan and Israel.

Megiddo began to dominate the surrounding countryside in the 4th millennium B.C.E. (ca. 3500) – at the dawn of urbanization in the Levant. Its monumental architecture provides the most impressive evidence of the rise of the first cities in the region.

Early Bronze Altar

Part of a large religious complex from the third millennium B.C., this sacrificial altar is striking in its size (10m diameter) and location (behind the temple).

A staircase leads up to the altar, a small temenos (enclosed sacred space) fence surrounded it, and large concentrations of animal bones and ashes were found in the vicinity.



In the late 4th, 3rd and 2nd millennia B.C.E. Megiddo was probably the most powerful city-state in the north of Canaan. When the Canaanite city-states revolted against Pharaonic attempts at hegemony, it was at Megiddo that they assembled to do battle. The Egyptian army, led by Pharaoh Thutmose III, surprised the rebels by choosing the most dangerous route of attack – through the narrow 'Aruna Pass. After routing the Canaanite forces and capturing rich booty, Thutmose III laid siege to the city for seven months. His decisive victory enabled him to incorporate Canaan as a province in

the empire of the New Kingdom. The description of the battle of Megiddo is the earliest account of a major war in antiquity.



Megiddo Pass

From the earliest times (Early Bronze) to the earliest historical records of the area (Thutmose III) to the future (Revelation 16), Megiddo assumes a prominent role. This is largely owing to its strategic location astride the Megiddo Pass (Wadi Ara) and inside the busy Jezreel Valley. The modern road follows the ancient one; the tell is just off the bottom right corner.

Six letters sent by Biridiya, King of Megiddo, to the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten in the 14th century B.C.E. were discovered in the archive of el-Amarna in Egypt. The letters indicate that Megiddo was one of the mightiest city-states in Canaan. The magnificent ivories found in the Late Bronze Age palace at the site also attest to the city's wealth and grandeur and its varied cultural contacts in this era.

The Bible lists the king of Megiddo among the Canaanite rulers defeated by Joshua in his conquest of the land (Josh. 12:21). According to I Kings (9:15), King Solomon built Megiddo together with Hazor and Gezer. At that time the city had become the center of a royal province of the United Monarchy. The Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak took Megiddo in the second half of the 10th century. His conquest of the city is affirmed both in his inscriptions at the Temple at Karnak and in a stele erected at the site. In the 9th and 8th centuries B.C.E., the rulers of the Northern Kingdom refitted the fortress even more elaborately than before. The palaces, water systems and fortifications of Israelite Megiddo are among the most elaborate Iron Age architectural remains unearthed in the Levant.

Iron Age Water System

Needing secure access to its water supply, Megiddo utilized different water systems over its history.

In the 9th century B.C., Ahab constructed a massive system with a 30 meter deep shaft and a 70 meter long tunnel. This continued in use until the end of the Iron Age.





Tunnel to Spring

This Iron Age tunnel connected the bottom of Ahab's shaft to the spring. Before its construction, Megiddo residents had to leave the city walls in order to get water from the spring.

This tunnel was hewn from both ends at the same time (like Hezekiah's Tunnel) and its builders were only one foot off when meeting in the middle.

In 732 B.C.E., the Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser III took the

region from the Northern Kingdom. In the following years Megiddo served as the capital of an Assyrian province. With the fall of the Assyrian empire the great religious reformer, King Josiah of Judah, came to Megiddo to confront Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, who was on his way to assist the crumbling Assyrian army in its last-ditch efforts against the Babylonians. Josiah was killed by Necho (II Kings 23:29). Recollection of this event, along with the memories of the great battles fought here, may have contributed to the idea in the Book of Revelation (16:16) that Armageddon would at the end of days be the gathering place of the armies to take part in the last battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil.

It was from here that Assyria staged its deportation of the people of the Northern Kingdom of Israel; opening the way for centuries of messianic yearning.

In the modern era Megiddo has also played a decisive role in battles for the control over the Jezreel Valley. In World War I, British Field Marshal Edmund Allenby, leading an Australian cavalry division and the Tenth Indian infantry, dislodged from the advantageous heights of the mound a group of about 100 Turkish fighters defending the last vestiges of the Ottoman Empire. Allenby used tactics similar to those of Thutmose III (over 3000 years earlier), by cutting through the 'Aruna Pass and catching the Turks unaware. The historical significance of the site prompted Allenby to include the name of Megiddo in his family's hereditary title.

Because of Megiddo's great significance for both Christians and Jews, the site was chosen as the historic meeting place for the 1964 visit of Pope Paul VI with Israel's president, Zalman Shazar, and prime minister, Levi Eshkol. It was the first visit ever of a pope to the Holy Land.

Night to Be Much Observed

(Approved by the Council of Elders in May 2003)

The evening at the beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread is a very special evening in the Church of God. On this evening most members invite other members to their homes to enjoy a meal and fellowship. Others may choose to gather in a restaurant or similar location to celebrate the evening. There was a time in the Church of God when all members gathered together as congregations to celebrate the *Night to Be Much Observed*. Currently, most members gather in small groups in homes or other locations.

In the United Church of God it is our desire to continue this very special observance. We find mention of this evening in Exodus 12:42: *"It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations"* (King James Version). Other translations render this expression: *"night of watching,"* and *"to keep vigil."* We celebrate the evening in commemoration of these events from long ago as described in the pages of the Bible. We also recognize the symbolism for a Christian today. As the Israelites departed from Egypt, so must we repent of sin. As we remove leavening from our homes, we symbolize our repentance of sin and our acceptance of Christ's sacrifice as our Passover. It is only through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ that our sins may be removed from us.

The *Night to Be Much Observed* begins the first Holy Day of the spring. It is a joyous occasion that we celebrate in worship of the great God. If you plan to celebrate this special evening in a restaurant or other public place, we recommend that you make plans in advance to have a private room or some location where you may be able to truly enjoy the fellowship of your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Thursday, April 9, 2009

First Holy Day of Unleavened Bread

<i>AM Service</i>	
<i>Time:</i>	10:30 AM
<i>Song Leader:</i>	Mark Robertson
<i>1st Split Sermon:</i>	Charles Franke
<i>2nd Split Sermon”</i>	Fred Crow
Nazareth Synagogue Tour	
Lunch	
<i>PM Service</i>	
<i>Time:</i>	3:00 PM
<i>Song Leader:</i>	Bob Carlisle
<i>Sermonette:</i>	Robert Schmid
<i>Sermon:</i>	David Johnson

Nazareth

Modern Nazareth is a predominantly Israeli Arab city of some 65,500 inhabitants. Although it was included in the 1947 United Nations partition plan as part of the Arab state, its location is too far north to be included in the territories presently administered by the Palestinian Authority, and it has a reputation as a peaceful city in which Christian and Muslim Arabs have co-existed with little strife.

Its New Testament history is not inspiring. Early on, Jesus' newly named disciple Nathaniel famously asked "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). The question may have reflected the knowledge that Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2, Luke 2:4-7, John 7:42), or the view that Nazareth was small and unimportant. Its spiritual skepticism is reflected in Mark's comment that Jesus was unable to work mighty miracles in Nazareth because they had known Him as a child, and hence failed to understand the significance of His ministry (Mark 6:1-6). The inhabitants of Nazareth once even attempted to kill Jesus by throwing Him off a cliff (Luke 4:29).



Matthew's account tells of Joseph and Mary's flight to Egypt, and their subsequent return to Nazareth, once the cruel scourge of Herod's massacre of the innocents had passed (Matthew 2:13-23).



But it is Luke's account that preserves perhaps the most interesting event of Messiah's work in Nazareth, when He entered the synagogue on a Sabbath and began to read. It was, of course, no coincidence that He read to them from the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1, 2: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to

proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD" (Luke 4:16-19).

His stopping in mid-verse (prohibited in later rabbinic Judaism) so startled everyone in the synagogue, as did His bold declaration that Isaiah's prophecy was right then being fulfilled in their presence (verse 21) caused quite a stir. How dared Joseph's son be so audacious, they asked? Their anger at Him, and the attempt to kill Him, marked the end of Jesus' sojourning and work in Nazareth.



Friday, April 10, 2009



Today we will visit the extreme north of Israel, known anciently as **Bashan**, or perhaps better known in the modern world as the **Golan Heights**. This region is situated to the east of the Jordan River, in the extreme north.



The Golan is a basalt plateau which rises in the northeast to an average altitude of 900 m (3,000 ft) above sea level. The Golan Heights is bordered by Mt. Hermon on the north and the Yarmuk River on the south. At the northeastern corner is an inactive chain of volcanic cones. Their activities in the past created thick basalt layers, resulting in rocky terrain unsuitable for intensive agriculture. Instead, it is used mainly for grazing and pasture. The situation of the Golan Heights results in a significant amount of winter rainfall, with large run-off in the spring through numerous wadis draining to the Huleh Basin and the Sea of Galilee.

Dolmens

Hundreds of dolmens have been found in the Golan Heights. Used for burial in the basalt areas where grave digging is difficult, dolmens were used for burial during both the Early Bronze I and Intermediate Bronze periods. The dolmen was most likely intended as a burial chamber for the chief of a clan, or another member of the nomadic elite. A dolmen is constructed of two large vertical stone slabs capped by a horizontal stone, which can weigh up to 30 tons.



The area has an interesting biblical history. It was conquered by Israel under Moses, when the technologically more advance Og king of Bashan and his family were routed and put to death (Numbers 21:33-35; Deuteronomy 3:1-11), an event that took place just prior to the Balaam/Balak attempt to curse Israel. When the land was assigned under Moses, Bashan was part of the territory given to the half tribe of Manasseh (Deuteronomy 3:13); the other half-tribe dwelt on the western side of the Jordan. The tribe of Dan is also mentioned as inhabiting Bashan (Deuteronomy 33:22).

Cows of Bashan, Oaks of Bashan

Cattle have been raised in this area, in ancient times as well as today. Both beef and dairy cattle are currently raised in the Golan Heights. In biblical times, this area was known for its cattle and its oak trees. Amos 4:1-2 (NASB) “Hear this word, you cows of Bashan...” (cf. Ps 22:12). Zechariah 11:2 (KJV) “Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down” (cf. Isa 2:13).



When the cities of refuge were established and located under Joshua, Golan features as one of them (Joshua 20:8, 21:27). Those guilty of manslaughter, that is killing without premeditation, might flee to these cities for refuge. Later, King Solomon appointed a governor of the area when Israel was at the height of its power (1 Kings 4:13). After the kingdom had split, Bashan slipped away from the Northern Kingdom as Hazael, king of Syria, conquered it (2 Kings 10:32,33). This took place right after the bloody coup of king Jehu of Israel.

Since biblical times, this area has belonged to many empires, including the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Persians, who, under wise King Cyrus, allowed the Jews to resettle the area. It later fell under the Seleucid wing of Alexander's Greek empire, and later under the Romans. The first Jewish-Roman War failed to pry the area from Roman control; Josephus records that the Jewish inhabitants of Gamla (a town of Golan) committed mass suicide rather than succumb to Roman crucifixion or slavery. The Golan later fell under Muslim, Druze and Turkish control.

*Nimrod's Fortress*

Known in Arabic as Subebe (from the Crusader name L'Asibebe), this English name for the castle mistakenly associates it with Nimrod, an ancient figure of great strength mentioned in Genesis 10:8-9. This is one of the castles that was built by the Muslims, but it changed hands several times in the 12th century. The fortress was strengthened in the 13th century and most remains visible today are from that period. The mountain is over 400 m (1,300 ft) long, and in places its width reaches 150 m (490

ft). The summit rises to an elevation of 800 m (2,600 ft) above sea level. The castle is also known as the Citadel of the Mosquitoes since swarms tend to rise up at times and cover the entire area.

In the twentieth century, this area fell under both British and French mandate control after the First World War, and when the French mandate ended in 1944, it became part of Syria. After the 1948-49 War of Independence, an armistice line was established between Israel and Syria, though it was repeatedly violated, especially by Palestinian guerrillas prior to 1967, when Israel conquered the territory in the Six Day War.

The status of the Golan remains uncertain. Israel annexed the territory in 1981, though that move has never been recognized by the international community. Syria demands the return of the Golan as part of any future peace treaty, and indeed this was almost accomplished in the 1999-2000 US-sponsored peace talks, which ultimately failed over a dispute concerning access to the waters of the Sea of Galilee. Subsequent peace talks have yet to produce fruit.

The Golan Heights are presently populated largely by Druze and Jews, as well as some Muslims. Disputes over citizenship of the Druze have left most as Syrian citizens, with Israeli residence. In spite of the contention on the international scene, relations between Jews and Arabs on the Golan have been relatively free of tension.



Mt. Hermon

Mt. Hermon is the southern tip of the anti-Lebanon mountain range. The highest peak of Mt. Hermon is 9,230 ft. The highest point inside Israel's borders today is Mizpe Shelagim, the "snow observatory," at 7,295 ft. In the Bible it is known as Ba'al Hermon, Sirion, and Sion. Psalm 133 gives an image of the pleasantness and fruitfulness of this mountain. It speaks of the bounty of water, a place that receives much precipitation. Hermon, on average, gets 60 inches of precipitation a year (in 1992 it received 100 in). It is quite possible that the Transfiguration took place somewhere on the slopes of Mt. Hermon, as Jesus and his disciples were previously noted to be in the "region of Caesarea Philippi." Caesarea Philippi sits at the base of Mt. Hermon and thus Mt. Hermon could be the mountain where Jesus took the disciples.

Caesarea Philippi (Banias)



Caesarea Philippi

Situated 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee and at the base of Mt. Hermon, Caesarea Philippi is the location of one of the largest springs feeding the Jordan River.

This abundant water supply has made the area very fertile and attractive for religious worship. Numerous temples were built at this city in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Biblical History

Apparently known as Baal Hermon and Baal Gad in the Old Testament period, this site later was named Panias after the Greek god Pan who was worshiped here.

There is no record of Jesus entering the city, but the “great confession” and the transfiguration both occurred in the vicinity of the city (Matt 16:13), then known as Caesarea Philippi.





Grotto of Pan

The spring emerged from the large cave which became the center of pagan worship. Beginning in the 3rd century B.C., sacrifices were cast into the cave as offerings to the god Pan.

Pan, the half-man half-goat god of fright (thus "panic"), is often depicted playing the flute. This city known as Panias has been corrupted in the Arabic language to its modern name of Banias.

Sacred Niches

Adjacent to the sacred cave is a rocky escarpment with a series of hewn niches. We know that statues of the deity were placed in these niches by depictions of such on coins of the city. One niche housed a sculpture of Echo, the mountain nymph and Pan's consort. Another niche housed a statue of Pan's father, Hermes, son of nymph Maia. Inscriptions in the niches mention those who gave large donations.

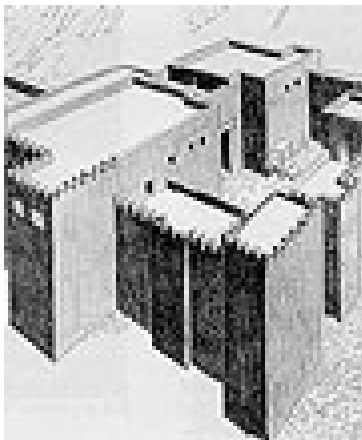


Tel Dan



Headwaters of the Jordan

The largest of four sources of the Jordan River, the Dan Spring emerges at the base of Mt. Hermon next to Tel Dan. It flows for four miles before joining the second largest source of the Jordan River, the Banias Spring. Together the four sources (also the Iyon and Hasbani) of the Jordan River drain a total area of more than 2700 sq. kilometers.



Reconstruction of the Israelite city gate complex

The mound of the biblical city of Dan is located at the foot of Mount Hermon in the northeast of the country. The fertility of the area around Dan is mentioned in the Bible: *For we have seen the Land, and behold, it is very good.* (Judges 18:9)

The site extends over an area of 200 dunams (50 acres). The Dan River, one of the sources of the Jordan River, emerges at the foot of the mound.

These natural advantages and its location on the main trade route from the Galilee to Damascus made Dan the most important city of the northern part of the Kingdom of Israel. Today it is one of the most attractive archeological sites in Israel. Every year since 1966, large areas have been excavated; the discoveries are of special importance for understanding the biblical narrative which repeatedly mentions the city of Dan.

Canaanite Dan

During the Canaanite period the city was known by the name Leshem (Joshua 19:47) or Laish (Judges 18:29). During the 18th century BCE, Laish was fortified with huge man-made earthen embankments which created ramparts encircling the entire city. The ramparts of Canaanite Dan constitute one of the best examples of the defense systems common in that period.

On the eastern side of the city, an intact city gate complex was preserved, consisting of two towers flanking a recessed arched gateway. Stone steps led from the outside to the 2.4 m. wide entrances. The 18th century BCE ramparts with the gate provided adequate defense for Canaanite Laish. During this period, the patriarch Abraham came to the city, after defeating the kings of the north who took his nephew Lot prisoner. (Genesis 14:14)

Laish Becomes Dan

Above the destruction level of the last Canaanite city, a new occupation level was revealed, very different in architectural character and material culture. This new settlement pattern represents the conquest and settlement of the city by the tribe of Dan during the 12th century BCE. The tribe of Dan had previously occupied a small area in the western foothills of the Judean mountains. The Bible relates how 600 members of the tribe migrated northward and after conquering Laish *...called the name of the city Dan after the name of Dan their father.* (Judges 18:29)

The Israelite Bamah (High Place) of Dan

Nearly all archaeologists agree that this excavated podium was the one that Jeroboam constructed to house the golden calf at Dan. Archaeologists now think the platform was roofed.

Evidence of a four-horned altar has been found as well as religious objects such as three iron shovels, a small horned altar, and an iron incense holder.



Above the spring, on the northern side of the mound, the cultic precinct of the Israelite city of Dan was exposed. The existence of a cultic center at Dan is attested to in the biblical text: *...and the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image.* (Judges 18:30) The High Place exposed at Dan was established by Jeroboam I, king of Israel at the end of the 10th century BCE, after the division of the kingdom. Jeroboam I built altars bearing a golden calf in two cities: *...he set one in Beth-el and the other he put in Dan...and the people went up to worship...even unto Dan.* (1 Kings 12:29-30)

The sanctuary occupied an area of about 60 x 45 m. In the broad courtyard, enclosed by a wall with rooms around it, stood an altar. It was restored in the mid-9th century BCE by Ahab, king of Israel, who had a large (20 x 18 m.) bamah erected. The outer walls of the bamah were composed of large ashlar with a groove between the courses, which originally contained a wooden beam; this is reminiscent of the construction of the Solomonic Temple in Jerusalem: *...with three courses of hewn stones and one course of cedar beams.* (1 Kings 6:36; 7:12)

During the reign of Jeroboam II at the beginning of the 8th century BCE, a monumental staircase was added to the southern side of the bamah and a smaller altar was erected. In one of the rooms bordering the cultic enclosure, three iron shovels (54 cm. long) were found, which may be identified as *mahta* and *ya'eh* which were used in the Temple in Jerusalem to remove the ashes from the altar.

The bamah of Dan was destroyed when the city was captured by Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, in 732 BCE. Soon thereafter, it was restored but never regained its former importance.

An inscription from the Hellenistic period, in Greek and Aramaic, incised on a flat limestone slab, was found at the site. It mentions Zoilos (Zilas in Aramaic) who made a vow “to the god who is in Dan.” This provides proof positive of the identification of the site as biblical Dan.

The Israelite City Gate Complex

On the northern frontier of the kingdom, Dan was particularly well fortified. This gatehouse was built in the ninth century, probably by Ahab, and is part of a series of gateways discovered.

The foreground of this picture is the area of the discovery of the Dan Inscription which mentions the “House of David.”



The monumental city gate complex and a long section of the wall of Israelite Dan were exposed at the foot of the southern side of the mound. A 400 m² square leads to the gate complex, which is composed of an outer and an inner gate, both built of large basalt stones. Beyond these gates, a magnificent processional road winds its way up the slope to the city.

The inner gate is the best preserved and is a good example of Israelite city gates during

biblical times. It consisted of four guard rooms, two on each side of a paved passageway. The threshold, made of a large basalt stone, includes the doorstep and hinge-sockets which once supported the massive wooden doors.

Outside this gate, five undressed stones (up to 60 cm. in height) were found standing erect. They served as *matzevot* (erect stones) marking a cultic place. In this context, Josiah's deed comes to mind: *he broke down the high places at the gates which were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city...* (2 Kings 23:8)

Also outside this gate a bench was exposed, reminiscent of the place where the elders sat in biblical times, a custom referred to many times in the Bible. (Genesis 19:1; Psalms 69:13; Ruth 4:1-2)

Next to the opening of the gate itself, four squat, decorated stones served to hold four pillars supporting a canopy. This may have been a place for the ruler next to the gate or a place for an idol to be set up.

It is probable that the king or judge sat here when he came to the city. *Then the king arose, and sat in the gate and they told all the people, saying behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king.* (2 Samuel 19:8)



The Aramaic Stele

Fragments of a large inscribed basalt stele were found in the square located in front of the Israelite city gate complex. The largest of these fragments measures 32 x 22 cm. and, of the original inscription, thirteen lines have been partially preserved. The language is ancient Aramaic.

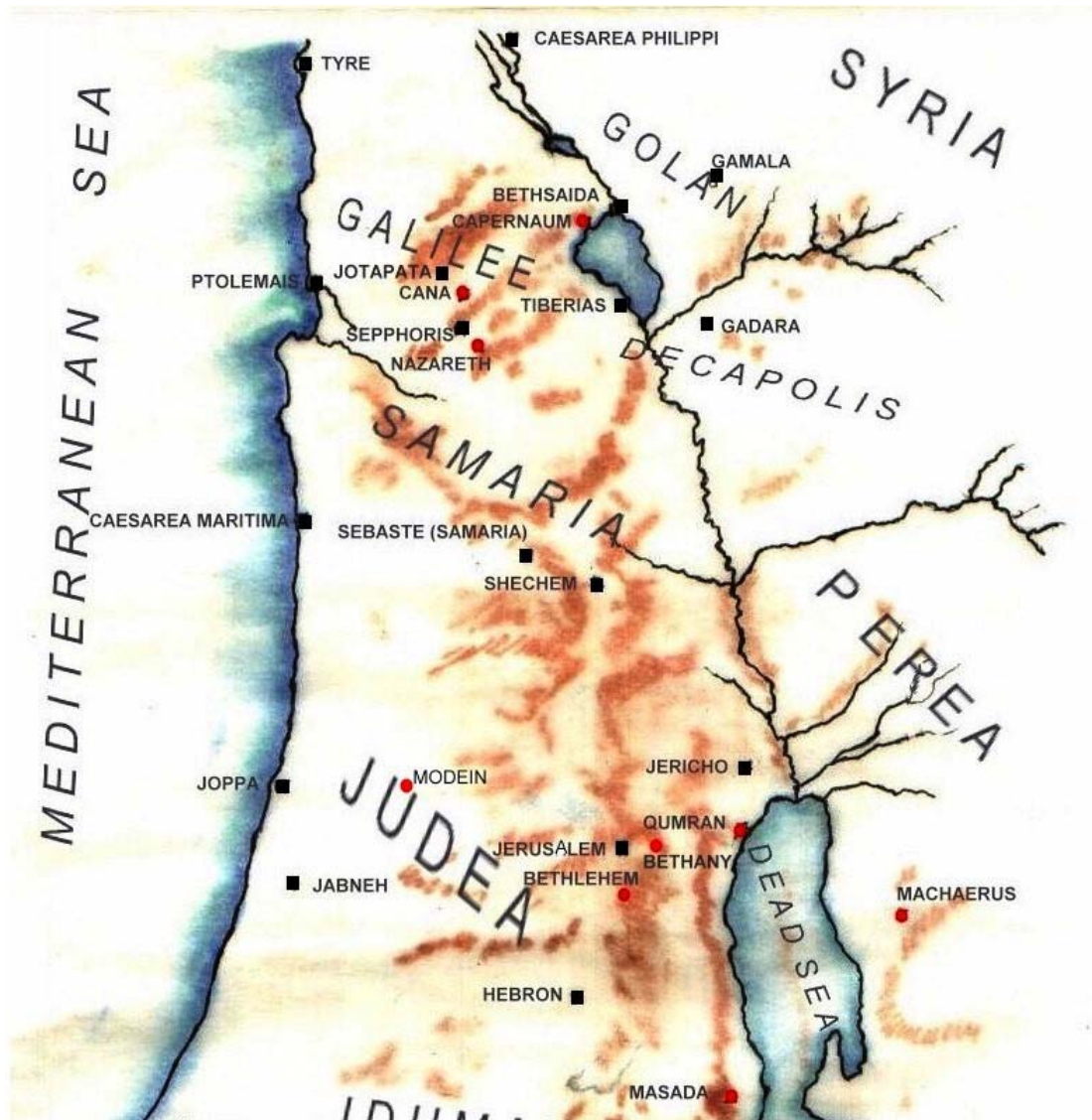
The 9th century BCE and the beginning of the 8th century BCE were marked by military conflicts between the kings of Israel and the expanding kingdom of Aram-Damascus. (1 Kings 15:20) Thus the stele was erected by one of the Aramean kings of Damascus who captured Dan - although which king cannot be ascertained as yet. It is probable that in lines 7-8 two kings of Israel and Judah, who ruled at the same time, are mentioned: Jehoram, king of Israel and Ahaziah, king of Judah, referred to as a king of the House of David. These two kings were allies and were defeated by Hazael, king of Aram-Damascus. (2 Kings 8:7-15, 28; 9:24-29; 2 Chronicles 22:5)

The stele describing Hazael's victory over his enemies was, in all probability, erected by him when he conquered Dan in the mid-9th century BCE. It is reasonable to assume that Jehoash, king of Israel, who fought the Arameans three times and defeated them (2 Kings 13:25) recovering territories previously lost, including the city of Dan, symbolically smashed the stele erected there by Hazael, king of Aram-Damascus.

Although the broken stele raises serious historical problems, it is one of the most important written finds in Israel and the first non-biblical text which mentions the House of David by name. It is hoped that more fragments of this unique stele will be uncovered in future excavations.

Sabbath, April 11, 2009

<i>AM Bible Study</i>	
<i>Time:</i>	10:30 AM
<i>Bible Study:</i>	David Johnson
Lunch	
Sepphoris, Cana Tour	
<i>PM Service</i>	
<i>Time:</i>	3:00 PM
<i>Song Leader:</i>	Fred Crow
<i>1st Split Sermon</i>	Bob Carlisle
<i>2nd Split Sermon:</i>	Frank Fish



Sepphoris



Josephus called Sepphoris “the ornament of all Galilee.” Herod Antipas chose this site in 4 B.C. as the capital of his government. He most likely built the theater as well. Josephus said Sepphoris was the largest city in Galilee and an exceptionally strong fortress at the time of the First Revolt in 66 A.D. The people of Sepphoris supported Vespasian in the Jewish Revolt, surrendering to the Romans and thus preventing the destruction of the city (War III.2.4). They

even minted coins in honor of Vespasian as the “peace maker.”

Excavations

This aerial view gives an interesting perspective of the archaeological work. Modern archaeologists typically excavate in squares (approximately 5 meters on each side), leaving the sides (balks) as a vertical record of the excavations. Some archaeologists remove the balks after they have served their purpose; others choose to leave them indefinitely. Sepphoris was first excavated by L. Waterman of Michigan University in 1931. In 1983, J. F. Strange of the University of South Florida



began a survey of buildings, cisterns, and burial systems. A joint team from Duke University, North Carolina, and The Hebrew University began work in 1985.



Colonnaded Street

Sepphoris was rebuilt and fortified after Galilee came under the rule of Herod Antipas. He made Sepphoris his capital until he built Tiberias in 19 A.D. Some scholars believe that Joseph and Jesus may have helped in the reconstruction of Sepphoris. Since Herod Antipas rebuilt the city about 4 B.C., and since stone is the main building craft of the area, Joseph, living in the nearby Nazareth, was probably a builder in stone as well as wood. Sepphoris was

about an hour's walk from Nazareth. This colonnaded street was built in the Roman period and was one of the main streets of city.

Nile Mosaic

In one large building are many mosaic floors, including the Nile mosaic in the largest room. This mosaic shows festivities in Egypt when the Nile reached its peak. The lighthouse from Alexandria, the Pharos, is also depicted. This was one of the seven wonders of ancient world. The tower in the center of the hunting scene is a Nilometer, which was used to measure the rise of the Nile during the inundation.





"Mona Lisa"

At the summit near the theater is a large dining room floor from the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. The house was built around a colonnaded yard and had two floors. The building included a central triclinium and was most likely the home of an important Gentile person. It might have been the city or district governor. The triclinium mosaic includes 1.5 million stones in 28 colors. The beautiful woman in the mosaic is known today as the

"Mona Lisa of the Galilee." She is depicted wearing a laurel garland and earrings. A similar figure was on the southern side of the frame and can still be partly seen today.

Cana

The Arab village of Kafr Cana in the Lower Galilee is identified in Christian tradition as Cana of the Galilee. Here, Jesus performed the miracle of the wine, when he went to a wedding of a poor couple and turned water into wine.

In the 17th century Kafr Cana was officially recognized by the Vatican, and the pope officially confirmed that Kafr Cana is indeed Cana of the Galilee. Following this recognition the village was added to the list of Christian holy places. Some researchers identify Kafr Cana with the Kana mentioned in the ancient Egyptian Amarna letters (from about 4,000 years ago).

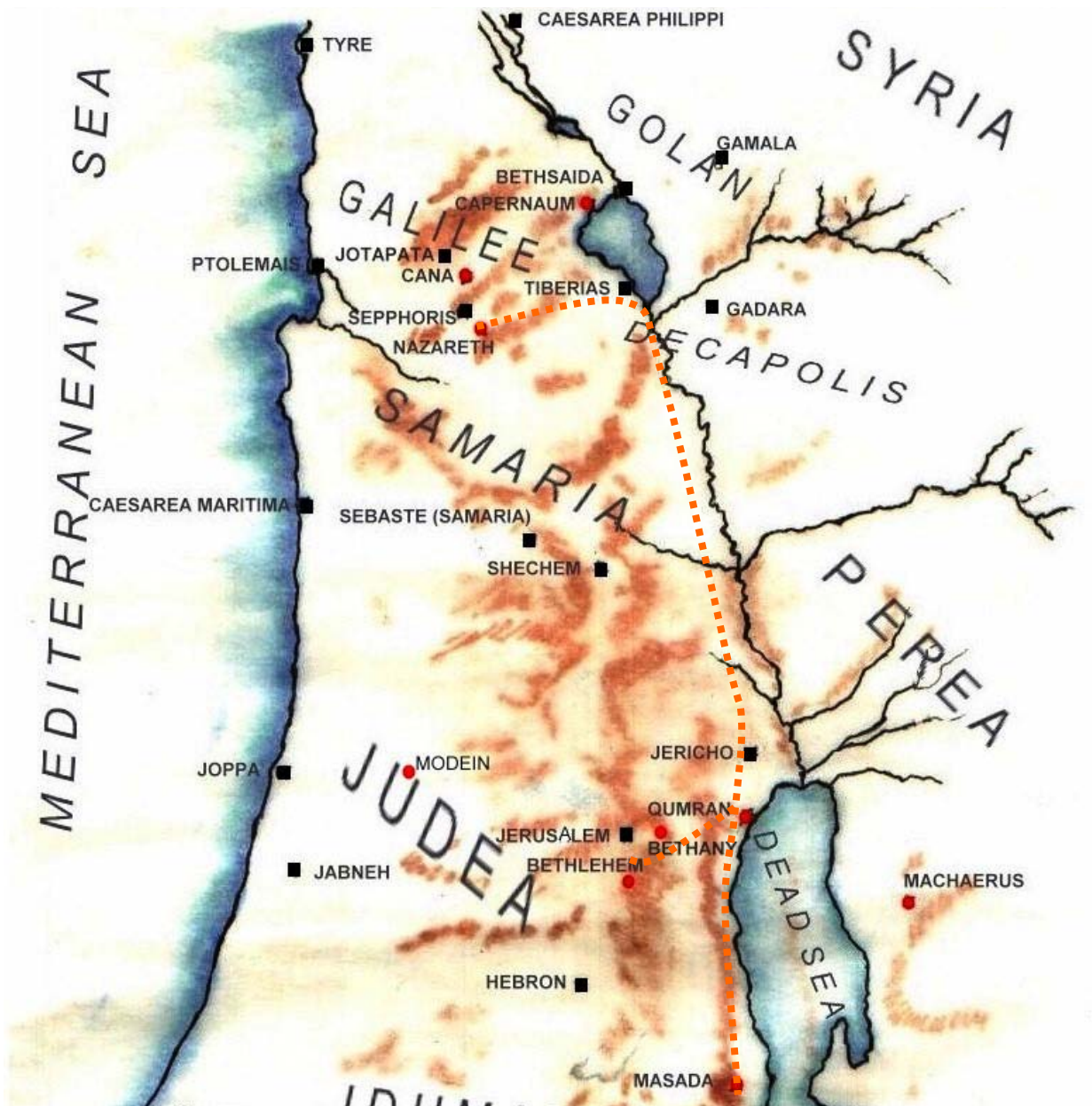
One way or the other, in the Roman-Byzantine period (1,000-2,000 years ago), there was a large Jewish community here, but apparently by the Mameluke period (about 800 years ago) most of the residents of Kafr Cana were Christian, although there was still a Jewish community here, too. Today most of the residents of Kafr Cana are Muslim.

In the center of the village are a few remains of ancient buildings and burial caves. The villagers have built new houses to the southeast and northeast of the ancient village. The most notable site in the village is the Catholic Church, built in 1879, on the traditional site of the miracle of the wine. Beside this church is the Greek Orthodox church of St. George, built in 1886, which houses two stone jars that Greek Orthodox followers believe are the jars in which Jesus performed the miracle of the wine.

There is also a church named after St. Bartholomew, built, according to tradition, on the site of the home of Nathaniel of Cana (Bartholomew), one of Jesus' disciples.

Some 200,000 tourists visit Kafr Cana annually. Inspired by the miracle of the wine, a tradition has developed of holding weddings here, as well as renewing wedding vows to strengthen a marriage, and visitors customarily buy wine here. The street of the churches, in the center of the village, has been renovated and a promenade has been built, connecting the religious centers. Small plazas have been built along the promenade, with rest spots, and the facades and courtyards of the buildings have been attractively refinished. Infrastructure has been laid alongside the promenade for commercial and hotel facilities, so that visitors will be able to enjoy the comforts of modern tourism.

Sunday, April 12, 2009



Beth She'an is a city in the northern district of Israel, located just west of the Jordan River, and south of the Sea of Galilee. Because of its strategic location, at the conjunction of the Jordan River valley and the Jezreel Valley, it has had a checkered history since the time of Joshua.



Located 17 miles (27 km) south of the Sea of Galilee, Beth She'an is situated at the strategic junction of the Harod and Jordan Valleys. The fertility of the land and the abundance of water led the Jewish sages to say, "If the Garden of Eden is in the land of Israel, then its gate is Beth Shean." It is no surprise then that the site has been almost continuously settled from the Chalcolithic period to the present.

Egyptian Residence

Beth Shean was the center of Egyptian rule in the northern part of Canaan during the Late Bronze Period. Monumental stelae with inscriptions from the reigns of Seti I and Ramses II were found and are now in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem. Also, a life-size statue of Ramses III as well as many other Egyptian inscriptions were found. Together these constitute the most significant assemblage of Egyptian objects in Canaan. The photo above reflects recent reconstruction of the mudbrick walls.



Assigned by lot to the tribe of Manasseh (Joshua 17:11 and 16) it was not completely conquered (Judges 1:27) until the time of David and Solomon.

It was here at Beth She'an where the Philistines displayed and desecrated the bodies of Saul and Jonathan (1 Samuel 31:10-12; 2 Samuel 21:12).

Under Solomon's reign, the city is listed as part of the fifth of the 12 administrative districts that existed at this high point in Israelite power (1 Kings 4:12). Later archeological evidence indicates its capture by Pharaoh Shishaq of Egypt in the ninth century BC, and by king Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria in the eighth century BC.



During the Hellenistic period the city was referred to as **Scythopolis** (“city of the Scythians;” cf. Col 3:11). Pompey and the Romans rebuilt it in 63 B.C. It became the capital city of the Decapolis and was the only one on the west side of the Jordan. The city continued to grow and prosper in the Roman and Byzantine periods until it was destroyed on January 18, 749 A.D. by an earthquake. Evidence of this earthquake includes dozens of massive columns that toppled over in the same direction

It later became part of the Byzantine empire.

In the mid-twentieth century, as the state of Israel was being born, there were Jewish-Bedouin clashes, but by the early twenty-first century its census indicates an almost entirely Jewish population. The name Beth-She’an is believed to mean ‘house of tranquility.’

Beth She’an Excavations

Excavations were conducted in 1921-33 by the University of Pennsylvania under C. S. Fisher, A. Rowe, and G. M. FitzGerald. At that time, almost the entire top five levels on the summit of the tell were cleared. Yadin and Geva conducted a short season in the 1980s, and Amihai Mazar led a Hebrew University excavation in 1989-96. The main finds on the tell include a series of temples from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.



Jericho

The “City of Palms” spreads out on the west side of the Jordan River at 825 feet below sea level.

The Old Testament site of Tell es-Sultan is the city Joshua destroyed. In Jesus’ day a new center had been constructed on the wadi banks by the Hasmonean rulers and Herod the Great.



Tell es-Sultan

After Jerusalem, Jericho is the most excavated site in Israel. Charles Warren in 1868 sank several shafts but concluded that nothing was to be found (he missed the Neolithic tower by a meter!). Germans Sellin and Watzinger excavated 1907-13, Garstang 1930-36 and Kathleen Kenyon 1952-58. An Italian-Palestinian team excavated for several years beginning in 1997.

Neolithic Tower

Discovered and excavated by Kathleen Kenyon in her Trench I, the Neolithic tower was built and destroyed in Pre-Pottery Neolithic A, which Kenyon dated to 8000-7000 B.C. The 8m diameter tower stands 8m tall and was connected on the inside of a 4m thick wall.

On the basis of this discovery, archaeologists have claimed that Jericho is the “oldest city in the world.” Clearly such monumental construction reflects social organization and central authority, but there are good reasons to question both its dating to the 8th millennium B.C. and its function as a defensive fortification.





Mud Brick Revetment Wall

From the excavations of Sellin and Watzinger, archaeologists have recognized the existence of a large revetment wall that supported the slope of the tell in the Middle Bronze Age.

This revetment wall was composed of large Cyclopean stones and supported a mud brick wall above it. This southern portion of the wall was exposed in 1997.

Sellin and Watzinger and later Kenyon found remains of a collapsed mud brick wall at the base of the stone revetment wall.

Bryant Wood points to the base of that mud brick wall. All agree that the wall fell down, but they differ on the date. Wood's conclusions are the most informed and they date the destruction of the wall to the time of Joshua (1400 B.C.)



Storejars of Grain

Both Garstang and Kenyon found dozens of storejars full of grain from the last Canaanite city of Jericho. The obvious conclusion: these were from the time of the harvest when the city was burned (not looted) by Joshua. As such, the archaeological record fits the biblical record at this point precisely.

The storejars pictured here still remain in one of Kenyon's balks at Jericho.

Qumran

Qumran, or Khirbet Qumran, is located about one mile in from the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, in the West Bank. It is most famous for the discovery of the **Dead Sea Scrolls**.

10 miles south of Jericho, Qumran was on a “dead-end street” and provided a perfect location for an isolationist sect to live.



A Jewish sect had apparently removed itself from the center of Jewish population around the second century BC, and established itself in this remote and cavernous location. It used to be accepted that it was the Essenes who inhabited Qumran, and that they had separated themselves from the Pharisees, whom they viewed as corrupt and compromised. This identification is now disputed, however, with some scholars claiming the Qumran community’s practices do not resemble what is known of those of the Essenes.

The site was excavated by Catholic priest Roland deVaux from 1953-56. More recent excavations of the site have taken place under the direction of Hanan Eshel.



Qumran Dam

Requiring vast amounts of water for their daily purification rites, the Essenes had to channel the water from the wadi during the infrequent winter storms.

This dam helped to divert the water into an aqueduct which led to the site which in turn had dozens of cisterns, mikvot and pools.

The Scriptorium

On the basis of inkwells and “writing benches” found in this room, archaeologists have suggested that the second story room of this building was the place where scrolls were copied.

No scrolls were found in this room or in the ruins of the site itself. But the same type of unique pottery was found both on site and in the caves with the scrolls, helping to connect the two.



The Dining Hall

This long room was used for communal meals. Three rows of tables were apparently in place where the Qumranites ate in silence.

In the next room over, more than 1000 complete vessels were found including 708 cups, 210 plates and 108 salad bowls. All of these were serving vessels as they were never fired.

Earthquake Crack

Numerous mikvot (ritual purity baths) were in use at the site for this community that practiced immersion twice daily.

This mikvah evidences the site's destruction by earthquake in 31 B.C. The crack shifted the left side of the mikvah by nearly 12 inches.





Qumran Cemetery

Of 1200 tombs found in the cemeteries of Qumran, nearly 50 have been excavated. The main cemetery has 1100 burials, the northern cemetery 30 and the southern cemetery 30.

The presence of female burials in what has been regarded as a celibate male community has been a mystery. Recently Joe Zias determined that the female burials were more recent interments of Bedouin.

The story of the scrolls begins in 1947 when a Bedouin boy, playing out in the desert, threw a stone into a cave and heard a breaking sound. Upon investigation, he found ancient clay jars containing linen-wrapped scrolls.

Despite the political instability, in time some 11 caves were found to contain about 900 scrolls, many of them biblical, but others containing rules and regulations of the community and the community folklore. The caves may have been in effect the library of the Qumran community.

Much political controversy and turmoil served to keep the scrolls hidden from public view and research till the 1990's, when the respected Israeli scholar Emanuel Tov breached the 'secrecy rule,' and published much of the contents of the scrolls.

The scrolls include every book of the Hebrew Scriptures except for the Book of Esther, as well as several apocryphal works such as 1 Enoch and Jubilees, and books devoted to community rules and regulations. Prior to the discovery of the scrolls, the earliest extant Hebrew texts (the Masoretic texts) had dated to the ninth century AD. The Dead Sea Scrolls are believed to be about seven centuries earlier, dating to the second century AD, and hence of great significance in authenticating the accepted text of the Old Testament. Despite some textual variants, the Dead Sea Scrolls are remarkably similar to the later Masoretic Text. If you have a good study Bible, you may identify the DSS variants in the footnotes or marginal notes; see, for example, Isaiah 15:9 and 19:18.

Qumran Caves

Cave 1

Allegedly discovered by a Bedouin shepherd chasing a stray, the initial Dead Sea Scrolls found here changed the study of the Old Testament.

The seven scrolls were the Manual of Discipline, War of Sons of Light, Thanksgiving Scroll, Isaiah A and B,



Genesis Apocryphon and Habakkuk Commentary.

Cave 3

The Copper Scroll was found in this cave in 1952. This was the only scroll photographed in situ.

The Copper Scroll is on display in the Amman Museum and lists 63 treasures hidden in the Judean wilderness and Jerusalem area.



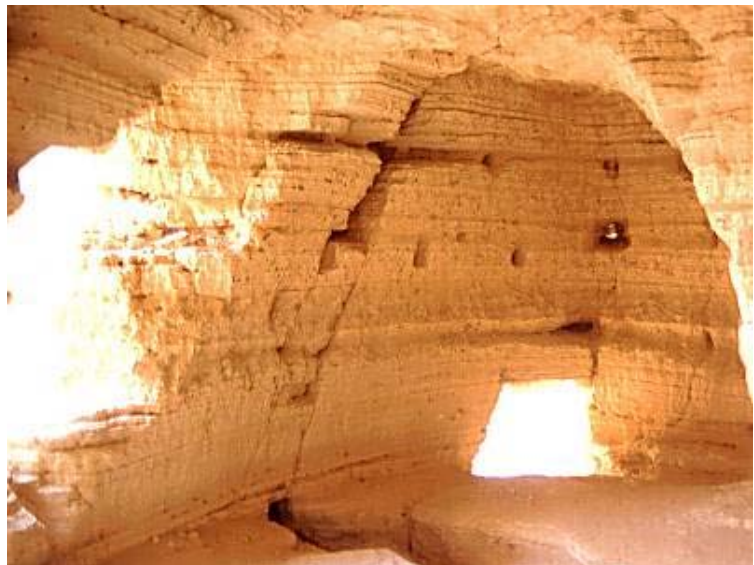
Cave 4

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

Cave 4 Interior

The scrolls found in this cave were poorly preserved because they were not stored in jars. The practice of paying “per piece” led to the creation of multiple fragments from single pieces by the Bedouin thieves.

This cave was among those looted by the Bedouin in the free afternoons of the days they were in the employ of the Qumran archaeologists.





Cave 5 (foreground)

This eroded cave was discovered by the archaeologists (Bedouin found caves 1, 2, 4, 6, 11). It is one of those in the marl terrace close to the site of Qumran (also caves 4, 7, 8, 9, 10). Archaeologists estimate that there were originally 30-40 caves in the marl terrace.

Cave 6

This cave was not used for inhabitation, but only for the deposit of scrolls.

This is the most accessible of the Dead Sea Scrolls to visitors today (follow the aqueduct from Qumran to the hills and it's on the left).



Cave 7 (right), 8 (left)

Everything found in Cave 7 was in Greek. The cave collapsed shortly after the scrolls were hidden.

In Cave 8 were discovered 8QMezuzah, Genesis, and a hundred squares of small leather with strips. The guy who lived here had the job of making these strips.

Cave 10 (right)

Only one ostrakon was found in Cave 10. Complete scrolls were found only in caves 1 and 11.

In all 11 caves, some biblical books were found in large numbers:

34 copies of Psalms
27 copies of Deuteronomy
24 copies of Isaiah
20 copies of Genesis



Cave 11

The last Dead Sea Scrolls found to date were found in this cave. Thirty scrolls were found including Leviticus and the Temple Scroll.

The Temple Scroll was held by the antiquities dealer Kando until 1967 when being put in jail by Yadin, he agreed to sell it “of his own free will” for \$110,000.

En Gedi

En Gedi is the largest oasis along the western shore of the Dead Sea. The springs here have allowed nearly continuous inhabitation of the site since the Chalcolithic period. The area was allotted to the tribe of Judah, and was famous in the time of Solomon (Josh 15:62). Today the Israeli kibbutz of En Gedi sits along the southern bank of the Nahal Arugot.



The abundant springs and year-round temperate climate provided the perfect conditions for agriculture in ancient times. Solomon compared his lover to “a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi,” an indication of the beauty and fertility of the site (Song 1:14). Evidence has been of workshops used in the perfume industry to distill products made from balsam. It has even been suggested that the perfume production at En Gedi was part of a royal estate.

Even though there are many springs around the Dead Sea, most of them have a high salt content. En Gedi is one of only two fresh water springs located on the western shore of the Dead Sea and, because of the greater availability of land for agriculture at En Gedi, it is the best spring by which to settle.

Josephus praised En Gedi for its palm trees and balsam, and the writer of Ecclesiasticus spoke of wisdom that was exalted like a palm tree in En Gedi” (24:14). One day, the prophet Ezekiel predicted, fishermen would line the shores of the Dead Sea by En Gedi (47:10).



Around 1000 B.C., En Gedi served as one of the main places of refuge for David as he fled from Saul. David “dwelt in strongholds at En Gedi” (1 Sam. 23:29). En Gedi means literally “the spring of the kid (goat).” Evidence exists that young ibex have always lived near the springs of En Gedi. One time when David was fleeing from King Saul, the pursuers searched the “Crag of the Ibex” in the vicinity of En Gedi. In a cave near here, David cut off the corner of Saul’s robe (1 Sam 24).

Masada

Masada is an ancient fortress town in the southern district of Israel overlooking the south-west corner of the Dead Sea. It is located atop an isolated rock plateau, and became the scene of a famous Jewish-Roman conflict in the 70's AD, just after the First Roman War.

The summit of Masada sits 190 feet (59 m) above sea level and about 1500 feet (470 m) above the level of the Dead Sea. The mountain itself is 1950 feet (610 m) long, 650 feet (200 m) wide, 4250 feet (1330 m) in circumference, and encompasses 23 acres. The "Snake Path" climbs 900 feet (280 m) in elevation. From the west, the difference in height is 225 feet (70 m).



According to the Jewish-Roman historian Josephus, a group of Sicarii (a splinter group of the Jewish Zealots, who fomented resistance to Roman rule), led by Eleazar Ben Ya'ir, overcame the Roman garrison at Masada in 66 AD. The Romans, under the leadership of Iudaea Lucius Flavius Silva, laid siege to the fortress beginning in 72 AD, but repeatedly failed to breach the wall, till the spring of 73 AD., when they finally entered Masada to find 936 dead bodies. The inhabitants had committed suicide *en masse* rather than capitulate to Roman slavery, execution or torture.

Despite what some feel is the legendary nature of at least part of the story, this history of Masada fuels the commitment of modern Israeli soldiers, whose swearing-in ceremony is held on top of Masada, and ends with the declaration "Masada shall not fall again."



Masada Storehouses

Fifteen long storerooms kept essential provisions for time of siege.

Herod filled them with food and weapons.

Each storeroom held a different commodity. This was attested by different storage jars and inscriptions on jars in rooms. Wine bottles sent to Herod from Italy were found.

1st Century Synagogue

This synagogue was found in the first season of Yadin's excavations. No Second Temple period synagogues were known at the time.

Many coins from the Jewish Revolt were found here. An ostrakon was found on the floor with inscription, "priestly tithe."

The back room served as a genizah.



Herod's Bathhouse

Herod had several private bathhouses built at Masada. The caldarium depicted here had a heavy floor suspended on 200 pillars.

Outside the room a furnace would send hot air under the floor. When water was placed on the floor, steam was created. Pipes were built into the walls to help to heat the room.

Siege Ramp

Investigation of tamarisk branches in the Roman siege ramp result in the conclusion that fifty percent more rain flowed through the wadis into the Dead Sea when Flavius Silva built the siege ramp.

A recent article suggests that this ramp was mostly natural and only the top 26 feet was added by the Romans.





Siege Camp

A solid wall was built surrounding Masada and connected the 8 Roman camps. It was 6 feet thick and 7 miles long and built to prevent escaping.

An estimated 9000 soldiers plus support personnel and slaves conducted the siege.

Szoltan discovered the first Roman siege camps in 1932.

Dead Sea



Known in the Bible as the “Salt Sea” or the “Sea of the Arabah,” this inland body of water is appropriately named because its high mineral content allows nothing to live in its waters. Other post-biblical names for the Dead Sea include the “Sea of Sodom,” the “Sea of Lot,” the “Sea of Asphalt” and the “Stinking Sea.” In the Crusader period, it was sometimes called the “Devil’s Sea.” All of these names reflect something of the nature of this lake.

Biblical Period

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

The Dead Sea is located in the Syro-African Rift, a 4000-mile fault line in the earth’s crust. The lowest point of dry land on earth is the shoreline of the Dead Sea at 1300 feet below sea level. That the lake is at the lowest point means that water does not drain from this lake. Daily 7 million tons of water evaporate but the minerals remain, causing the salt content to increase. Figures for the Dead Sea’s salinity today range from 26-35%.





Mineral-Rich

Nearly ten times as salty as the world's oceans and twice as saline as the Great Salt Lake in Utah, the Dead Sea is rich with minerals. The Dead Sea Works company on the southwest side of the lake employs 1600 people around the clock to harvest the valuable minerals from the water. Potash is the most valuable of those extracted today and is used in the manufacture of fertilizer. The best article on the minerals in the Dead Sea is in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

The unique concentration of the Dead Sea waters has long been known to have medicinal value. Aristotle, Queen of Sheba, King Solomon and Cleopatra were all familiar with this and modern doctors as well often prescribe patients with skin ailments to soak in the waters of the Dead Sea. Because of the dropping level of the Dead Sea, the southern end is no longer under water, except for that which is channeled by aqueducts for the purpose of extracting minerals.





Jericho – Jerusalem Road

It takes travelers today 6-8 hours to hike the 15 miles (24 km) between Jericho and Jerusalem following the path that would have been the main road in the first century. The elevation increase is about 3400 feet (1060 m).

Three primary roads ran north and south through Palestine. One ran along the seacoast, the Via Maris, one ran down the ridge of mountains on which Jerusalem sat, and one ran through the Jordan valley.

Each one connected to various trade routes. The Jericho to Jerusalem road was the main route between the Jordan valley and Jerusalem, and was used by many of the pilgrims making the annual holy day pilgrimages from Galilee to Jerusalem.

Roman road from Jerusalem to Jericho

Jesus traveled this route many times. In fact, every time that he came to Jerusalem from Galilee, he would have traveled up the same Ascent of Adumim (unless permitted to travel through Samaria. Scriptures record at least one trip of Jesus through Samaria and two trips by way of Jericho. He probably traveled this way dozens of times in his life.

Parts of the Roman road are still visible in places, and the way today is safe and pleasant. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, (Luke 10:25-37), it was on this road that the traveler was attacked and robbed and left for dead, and where the Levite and the priest, on their way to Jerusalem, passed by on the opposite side. We will pass the Inn of the Good Samaritan, built over 1500 years later, on the way to Jerusalem.



Monday, April 13, 2009



A City Rich in History, Traditions and Cultures

Jerusalem is a religious center sacred to all three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Religious pilgrims from all nations continue to congregate in the Holy City and millions of people flow through the gates of Jerusalem each year.

Ceramic evidence indicates the occupation of Ophel, within present-day Jerusalem, as far back as the Copper Age, c. 4th millennium BCE, with evidence of a permanent settlement during the early Bronze Age, c. 3000-2800 BCE. The Execration Texts (c.19th century BCE), which refer to a city called *Roshlamem* or *Rosh-ramen* and the Amarna letters (c.14th century BCE) may be the earliest mention of the city. Some archaeologists, including Kathleen Kenyon, believe Jerusalem as a city was founded by West Semitic people with organized settlements from around 2600 BCE.

The Scriptural history of Jerusalem begins when Abraham meets “Melchizedek” (King of Justice) about 2000 BC. Through the ages it has been called by many names: Urusalim, Salem, Mount Moriah, Adonai Urah, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion, the City of David, Ariel (Lion of God)...

Later, in the time of Joshua, Jerusalem was in territory allocated to the tribe of Benjamin (Joshua 18:28) but it continued to be under the independent control of the Jebusites until it was conquered by David and made into the capital of the united Kingdom of Israel (c.1000s BCE). Recent excavations of a large stone structure are interpreted by some archaeologists as lending credence to the biblical narrative.

After David’s death, Solomon (in 1015 BC/BCE) began to “build a house for the Name of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 2:1). It took seven years and 183,300 men to build it (1 Kings 5:13-16; 6:38). It measured nearly 90 feet in length, 30 feet in width and 45 feet in height (1 Kings 6:2). The Holy Of Holies occupied one-third of the interior space, and the Holy Place, two-thirds. The complete details are described in 1 Kings 6 & 7. When it was completed, the Glory of God filled the temple (Chronicles 2 7:1).

Israel was divided after Solomon’s death (979 BCE). The kingdom of Israel was in the north, while Judah was in the south. Jerusalem was the capital of Judah (the Southern Kingdom). It was ruled by a succession of twenty kings from 979 BCE to 586 BCE. Their reigns lasted from as short as three months (Jehoahaz and Jehoiahim) to as long as fifty-five years (Manasseh).

When the Assyrians conquered the Kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE, Jerusalem was strengthened by a great influx of refugees from the northern kingdom. The First Temple period ended around 586 BCE, as the Babylonians conquered Judah and Jerusalem, and laid waste to Solomon’s Temple. The city and the Holy Temple were completely demolished and the articles of the Temple and its treasures were carried off to Babylon.

The inhabitants that were not killed were also taken to Babylon. Jerusalem was to lie desolate for seventy years in order that the land might enjoy its Sabbaths (2 Chronicles 36:17-21/Leviticus 26:34).

In 538 BCE, after fifty years of Babylonian captivity, Persian King Cyrus the Great invited the Jews to return to Judah to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. A total of 42,360 people returned to Jerusalem and Judah to help rebuild the Temple, (not including male and female servants and the musicians). In the first year, Joshua and Zerubbabel led a group to build the altar in order to offer sacrifices in accordance with Torah.

Construction of the Second Temple was completed in 516 BCE, during the reign of Darius the Great, seventy years after the destruction of the First Temple. Jerusalem resumed its role as capital of Judah and center of Jewish worship. When Macedonian ruler Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire, Jerusalem and Judea fell under Macedonian control, eventually falling to the Ptolemaic dynasty under Ptolemy I. In 198 BCE, Ptolemy V lost Jerusalem and Judea to the Seleucids under Antiochus III. The Seleucid attempt to recast Jerusalem as a Hellenized polis came to a head in 168 BCE with the successful Maccabean revolt of Mattathias the High Priest and his five sons against Antiochus Epiphanes, and their establishment of the Hasmonean Kingdom in 152 BCE with Jerusalem again as its capital.

As Rome became stronger it installed Herod as a Jewish client king. Herod the Great, as he was known, devoted himself to developing and beautifying the city. He built walls, towers and palaces, and expanded the Temple Mount, buttressing the courtyard with blocks of stone weighing up to 100 tons. Under Herod, the area of the Temple Mount doubled in size. In 6 CE, the city, as well as much of the surrounding area, came under direct Roman rule as the Iudaea Province and Herod's descendants through Agrippa II remained client kings of Judea until 96 CE. Roman rule over Jerusalem and the region began to be challenged with the first Jewish-Roman war, the Great Jewish Revolt, which resulted in the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. Jerusalem reached a peak in size and population at the end of the Second Temple Period: The city covered two square kilometers (0.8 sq mi.) and had a population of 200,000.

In 130 CE Hadrian Romanized the city, and renamed it Aelia Capitolina. Jerusalem once again served as the capital of Judea during the three-year rebellion known as the Bar Kochba revolt, beginning in 132 CE. The Romans succeeded in recapturing the city in 135 CE and as a punitive measure Hadrian banned the Jews from entering it. Hadrian renamed the entire Iudaea Province *Syria Palaestina* after the biblical Philistines in an attempt to de-Judaize the country. Enforcement of the ban on Jews entering Aelia Capitolina continued until the 4th century CE.

In the five centuries following the Bar Kokhba revolt, the city remained under Roman then Byzantine rule. During the 4th century, the Roman Emperor Constantine I constructed Christian sites in Jerusalem such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. From the days of Constantine until the 7th century, Jews were banned from Jerusalem. Within the span of a few decades, Jerusalem shifted from Roman to Persian rule and returned to Roman dominion once more.

Jerusalem is considered Islam's third holiest city after Mecca and Medina. Among Muslims of an earlier era, it was referred to as *al-Bayt al-Muqaddas*; later, it became known as *al-Quds al-Sharif*. In 638, the Islamic Caliphate extended its dominion to Jerusalem. With the Arab conquest, Jews were allowed back into the city. The caliph, Omar, signed a treaty with Christian Patriarch Sophronius, assuring him that Jerusalem's Christian holy places and population would be protected under Muslim rule. Omar was led to the Foundation Stone on the Temple Mount, which he cleared of refuse in preparation for building a mosque. The Mosque of Omar was a

rectangular wooden structure built over ruins which could accommodate 3,000 worshippers. The Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik commissioned the construction of the Dome of the Rock in the late 7th century. The 10th century historian al-Muqaddasi writes that Abd al-Malik built the shrine in order to compete in grandeur of Jerusalem's monumental churches. Over the next four hundred years, Jerusalem's prominence diminished as Arab powers in the region jockeyed for control.

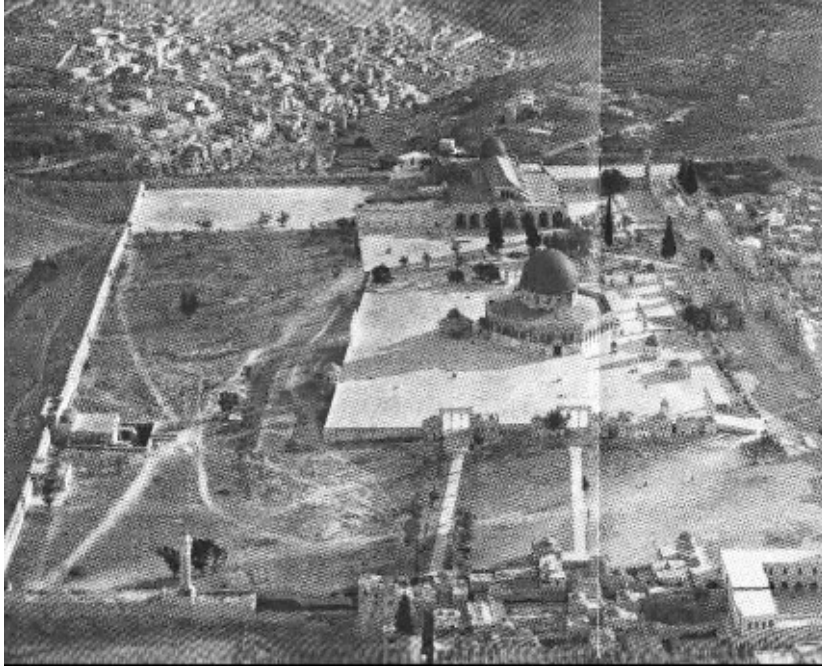
Crusaders, Saladin and the Mamluks

In 1099, Jerusalem was conquered by the Crusaders, who massacred most of its Muslim inhabitants and the remnants of the Jewish inhabitants; the Crusaders later expelled the native Christian population and created the Kingdom of Jerusalem. By early June 1099 Jerusalem's population had declined from 70,000 to less than 30,000. According to Benjamin of Tudela, Two hundred Jews were in the city in 1173. In 1187, the city was wrested from the Crusaders by Saladin who permitted Jews and Muslims to return and settle in the city. In 1244, Jerusalem was sacked by the Khwarezmian Tartars, who decimated the city's Christian population and drove out the Jews. The Khwarezmian Tartars were driven out by the Egyptians in 1247. From 1250-1517, Jerusalem was ruled by the Mamluks, during this period of time many clashes occurred between the Mamluks on one side and the crusaders and the Mongols on the other side. The area also suffered from many earthquakes and black plague.

In 1517, Jerusalem and environs fell to the Ottoman Turks, who generally remained in control until 1917. Jerusalem enjoyed a period of renewal and peace under Suleiman the Magnificent - including the rebuilding of magnificent walls around the Old City. Throughout much of Ottoman rule, Jerusalem remained a provincial, if religiously important center, and did not straddle the main trade route between Damascus and Cairo. However, the Muslim Turks brought many innovations: modern postal systems run by the various consulates; the use of the wheel for modes of transportation; stagecoach and carriage, the wheelbarrow and the cart; and the oil-lantern, among the first signs of modernization in the city. In the mid 19th century, the Ottomans constructed the first paved road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and by 1892 the railroad had reached the city.

With the annexation of Jerusalem by Muhammad Ali of Egypt in 1831, foreign missions and consulates began to establish a foothold in the city. In 1836, Ibrahim Pasha allowed Jerusalem's Jewish residents to restore four major synagogues, among them the Hurva.





Turkish rule was reinstated in 1840, but many Egyptian Muslims remained in Jerusalem. Jews from Algiers and North Africa began to settle in the city in growing numbers. In the 1840s and 1850s, the international powers began a tug-of-war in Palestine as they sought to extend their protection over the country's religious minorities, a struggle carried out mainly through consular representatives in Jerusalem. According to the Prussian consul, the population in 1845 was 16,410, with 7,120 Jews, 5,000 Muslims, 3,390

Christians, 800 Turkish soldiers and 100 Europeans. The volume of Christian pilgrims increased under the Ottomans, doubling the city's population around Easter time.

In the 1860s, new neighborhoods began to go up outside the Old City walls to house pilgrims and relieve the intense overcrowding and poor sanitation inside the city.

General Edmund Allenby enters the Jaffa Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem on December 11, 1917

In 1917 after the Battle of Jerusalem, the British Army, led by General Edmund Allenby, captured the city, and in 1922, the League of Nations at the Conference of Lausanne entrusted the United Kingdom to administer the Mandate for Palestine.



From 1922 to 1948 the total population of the city rose from 52,000 to 165,000 with two thirds of Jews and one-third of Arabs (Muslims and Christians). The situation between Arabs and Jews in Palestine was not quiet. At Jerusalem, in particular riots occurred in 1920 and in 1929. Under the British, new garden suburbs were built in the western and northern parts of the city and institutions of higher learning such as the Hebrew University were founded.

As the British Mandate for Palestine was expiring, the 1948 war erupted, the British withdrew from Palestine and Israel declared its independence.

The war led to displacement of Arab and Jewish populations in the city. The 1,500 residents of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City were expelled and a few hundred taken prisoner when the Arab Legion captured the quarter on 28 May. Residents of many Arab villages and neighborhoods west of the Old City left with the approach of the war.

The war ended with Jerusalem divided between Israel and Jordan (then Transjordan). The 1949 Armistice Agreements established a ceasefire line that cut through the center of the city and left Mount Scopus as an Israeli exclave. Barbed wire and concrete barriers separated east and west Jerusalem, and military skirmishes frequently threatened the ceasefire. After the establishment of the State of Israel, Jerusalem was declared its capital. Jordan formally annexed East Jerusalem in 1950, subjecting it to Jordanian law. Only the United Kingdom and Pakistan formally recognized such annexation, which, as regards Jerusalem, was on a *de facto* basis. Jordan assumed control of the holy places in the Old City. Contrary to the terms of the agreement, Israelis were denied access to Jewish holy sites, many of which were desecrated, and only allowed very limited access to Christian holy sites. During this period, the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque underwent major renovations.

During the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel captured East Jerusalem and asserted sovereignty over the entire city. Jewish access to holy sites was restored, while the Temple Mount remained under the jurisdiction of an Islamic *waqf*. The Moroccan Quarter, which was located adjacent to the Western Wall, was vacated and razed to make way for a plaza for those visiting the wall. Since the war, Israel has expanded the city's boundaries and established a ring of Jewish neighborhoods on vacant land east of the Green Line.

The status of the city, and especially its holy places, remains a core issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Palestinian Arabs envision East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state, and the city's borders have been the subject of bilateral talks.

In the course of its history, Jerusalem has been destroyed twice, besieged 23 times, attacked 52 times, and captured and recaptured 44 times.

Temple Mount



Excavations

These excavations begun by Benjamin Mazar in 1968 were the largest earth-moving archaeological projects in Israel. Work continued until 1978 but has since resumed in the 1990s under the direction of Ronny Reich. These excavations are the most important for understanding the Temple Mount because of the impossibility of excavating on the mount itself.

First Century Street

This street was fully uncovered in the mid-1990s and dates to the decades before the city's destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D.

The street is 10 meters wide and was paved with large slabs up to a foot thick. The street was covered with massive stones pushed down by the Romans; only part of the street has been cleared by the excavators.





Trumpeting Stone

The top stone on the southwest corner of the Temple Mount bore an inscription which read in part, “to the place of trumpeting.” The priests would signal the start of Shabbat and festival days by blowing the shofar from this point. The inscription was apparently only a notice to the construction workers as to the final destination of this specially-cut stone.

Southern Steps

The western flight of stairs leading to the main entrances of the Temple Mount was 200 feet wide. Excavators uncovered the easternmost part of this staircase with its alternating long and short steps. Some suggest that the fifteen long steps may have been one of the locations where pilgrims sang the fifteen Psalms of Ascent (120-34) as they went up to worship.





Double Gate

The Double Gates and Triple Gates provided access to the Temple Mount through subterranean passageways. Half of the lintel stone and relieving arch of this Herodian gateway is visible above the later protruding arch. Above and to the right is a stone with an inscription mentioning Hadrian's son (138 A.D.). Its position upside down clearly indicates that it is in secondary use.

Mikveh

A series of public ritual bathing installations were found on the south side of the Temple Mount. Because of the demanding laws regarding purity before entering holy places, demand for mikvot was high and many have been discovered from first century Jerusalem. Larger mikvot have separate entrances and exits; this one would facilitate only one person at a time.



Cardo



Medeba Map

A 6th c. church floor in Medeba, Jordan has a mosaic map of the land of Israel with numerous place names in Greek.

The center of the map is an open-faced depiction of Jerusalem with the city walls, gates, churches (with red roofs), and the Cardo. This main street of the city is depicted with two rows of colonnades running the length of the city from north to south.

Excavations

Uncovered by Nahman Avigad's team in the 1970s, the Cardo in the Jewish Quarter was excavated for about 200 meters. This portion dates to the time of Emperor Justinian in the first half of the 6th c. A.D. An earlier portion of the Cardo was constructed in the Roman period beginning at the modern Damascus Gate in the north, but it didn't stretch this far south until centuries later.



The Main Street

The central street of the Cardo is 40 feet (12 m) wide and is lined on both sides with columns. The total width of the street and shopping areas on either side is 70 feet (22 m), the equivalent of a 4-lane highway today. This street was the main thoroughfare of Byzantine Jerusalem and served both residents and pilgrims. Large churches flanked the Cardo in several places.



The columns supported a wooden (no longer preserved) roof that covered the shopping area and protected the patrons from the sun and rain. Today the Byzantine street is about 6 meters below the present street level, indicating the level of accumulation in the last 1400 years.

Modern Shops

A portion of the Cardo has been rebuilt as a modern shopping lane. Jewish storekeepers sell fancy souvenirs and keepsakes to tourists “for a good price.” This street continues north to Damascus Gate; as it leaves the Jewish Quarter it becomes the division between the Christian and Muslim Quarters. As in ancient times, this street is still the main one in the Old City, but today it is much narrower than it once was.



Yad Vashem

“And to them will I give in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name (a ‘yad vashem’)... that shall not be cut off.” (Isaiah 56:5)



Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, was established in 1953 by an act of the Israeli Knesset. Since its inception, Yad Vashem has been entrusted with documenting the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust period, preserving the memory and story of each of the six million victims, and imparting the legacy of the Holocaust for generations to come through its archives, library, school, museums and recognition of the Righteous Among the Nations.

Located on Har Hazikaron, the Mount of Remembrance, in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem is a vast, sprawling complex of tree-studded walkways leading to museums, exhibits, archives, monuments, sculptures, and memorials.

Museums

The new *Holocaust History Museum* occupies over 4,200 square meters, mainly underground. Both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, it presents the story of the Shoah from a unique Jewish perspective, emphasizing the experiences of the individual victims through original artifacts, survivor testimonies and personal possessions.

The *Art Museum* is a testimony to the strength of the human spirit and holds the world's largest and most important collection of Holocaust art. It includes works of art that were created under the inconceivably adverse conditions of the Holocaust and a selection of works done after the war by Holocaust survivors and by other artists.

Unique Memorial Sites

The *Hall of Remembrance* is a solemn tent-like structure which allows visitors to pay their respects to the memories of the martyred dead. On the floor are the names of the six death camps and some of the concentration camps and killing sites throughout Europe. In front of the memorial flame lies a crypt containing ashes of victims. Memorial ceremonies for official visitors are held here.





The *Children's Memorial* is hollowed out from an underground cavern, where memorial candles, a customary Jewish tradition to remember the dead, are reflected infinitely in a dark and somber space. This memorial is a tribute to the approximately one and a half million Jewish children who perished during the Holocaust.

The *Valley of the Communities* is a 2.5 acre monument that was dug out from the natural bedrock. Engraved on the massive stone walls

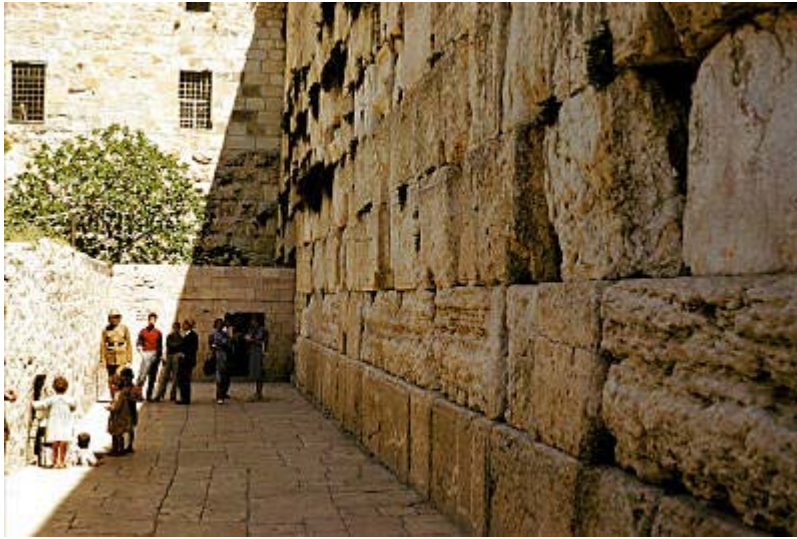
of the memorial are the names of over five thousand Jewish communities that were destroyed and of the few that suffered but survived in the shadow of the Holocaust.

The *Avenue and Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations* honor the non-Jews who acted according to the most noble principles of humanity and risked their lives to help Jews during the Holocaust. 2000 trees, symbolic of the renewal of life, have been planted in and around the avenue. Plaques adjacent to each tree give the names of those being honored along with their country of residence during the war. A further 19,000 names of non-Jews recognized to date by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, are engraved on walls according to country, in the Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations.



The *Memorial to the Deportees* is an original cattle-car which was used to transport thousands of Jews to the death camps. Perched on the edge of an abyss facing the Jerusalem forest, the monument symbolizes both the impending horror, and the rebirth which followed the Holocaust.

Western Wall



Western Wall - 1961

Under 19 years of Jordanian control, no Jews were permitted to have access to the Western Wall. Arabs promised Jews the right to visit their most holy place in the world, yet Israeli Jews were banned from the Western Wall without exception through this time. “Among the articles of the armistice agreement was one, Article VIII, under which Jordan guaranteed Israeli Jews free access to the

Wailing Wall. In fact, during the nineteen years of Jordanian rule in East Jerusalem, no Israelis were allowed to visit this site which was most holy to them.”

Western Wall – 1966

Wailing Wall or Western Wall?

The English term “Wailing Wall” or its equivalent in other languages dates from much later. In fact despite its hoary sound, “Wailing Wall” is a strictly 20th-century English usage introduced by the British after their conquest of Jerusalem from the Turks in 1917.

In the 19th century, when

European travelers first began visiting Palestine in sufficient numbers to notice the Jews there at all, the Western Wall was commonly referred to as “the Wailing Place.”



The “Wailing-place” was a translation of El-Mabka, or “the Place of Weeping,” the traditional Arabic term for the wall. Within a short time after the commencement of the British Mandate, however, “Wailing Wall” became the standard English term, nor did Jews have any compunctions about using it. Only after the Six-Day War in 1967 did it become *de rigueur* in Jewish circles to say “Western Wall” – a reflection of the feeling, first expressed by official Israeli usage and then spreading to the Diaspora, that, with the reunification of Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, there was no longer anything to wail about. Henceforward, the wall should be a place of celebration.

This happened so quickly that it is difficult to find a Jewish book written after 1967 in which the term “Wailing Wall” occurs. Gradually, the non-Jewish world began to fall in line, so that “Western Wall” predominates in contemporary non-Jewish usage too, though “Wailing Wall” can still be found there.



Western Wall Plaza

The Western Wall is the most holy place accessible to the Jewish people because of Muslim control of the Temple Mount. Known in recent centuries as the “Wailing Wall,” this was built by Herod the Great as the retaining wall of the Temple Mount complex. The plaza was created as an area for prayer when Israel captured the Old City in 1967. At times tens of thousands of people gather here for prayer.

Barclay’s Gate

The massive lintel of this gate is preserved to the right of the bush and above the small fillstones behind the staircase. Once erroneously identified with Kipunus’ Gate (mentioned in the Mishnah), today it is known for the 19th c. explorer who discovered it. The original L-shaped passageway inside the gate is still preserved but not accessible.



Prayers

The most holy place in the world accessible to Jewish people, prayers are offered up at this wall built by King Herod in the first century B.C. Three times a day the Jewish people pray (morning, afternoon, evening) and they do so with phylacteries tied around their forehead and wrist and with the white and blue prayer shawls.

It is considered very disrespectful to touch the papers left in the cracks of the wall.

Wilson's Arch

The men's prayer area continues from the outdoor section through a passageway to the north. Within this area is a massive arch originally constructed by Herod and now known after a British explorer in the 1860s.

Though only 25 feet high now, the arch originally was 75 feet high when the Central Valley was much deeper.



Largest Stone

An especially large course of stones is visible on the southern and western walls today. On the west the "Master Course" consists of four stones, the largest of which weighs 570 tons and is 44 feet long, 10 feet high and 12-16 feet deep. The next largest stone in the wall is a mere 40 feet long. The largest stone in the Great Pyramid weighs 11 tons.

Tuesday, April 14, 2009



Mount of Olives

Separated from the Eastern Hill (the Temple Mount and the City of David) by the Kidron Valley, the Mt. of Olives has always been an important feature in Jerusalem's landscape. From the 3rd millennium B.C. until the present, this 2900-foot hill has served as one of the main burial grounds for the city. The two-mile long ridge has three summits each of which has a tower built on it.



Garden of Gethsemane

Early Christian pilgrims located the Garden of Gethsemane at the bottom of the slope of the Mt. of Olives opposite the Temple Mount. Byzantine, Crusader and a modern church were built successively on the site where it is believed that Jesus prayed to the Father hours before his crucifixion. The modern Church of All Nations has a beautiful mosaic on its facade.

Adjacent to the Church of All Nations is an ancient olive

garden. Olive trees do not have rings and so their age can not be precisely determined, but scholars estimate their age to anywhere between one and two thousand years old. It is unlikely that these trees were here in the time of Christ because of the report that the Romans cut down all the trees in the area in their siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Gordon's Calvary (Garden Tomb)

Rocky Escarpment

In Jerusalem for a visit in 1884, General Charles Gordon spied a prominent rocky crag which looked to him like it could be the “place of the skull” mentioned in the Bible as where Jesus was crucified.

Around the corner Gordon identified an ancient tomb and putting the two together he located the hill of crucifixion and the nearby burial place.



The Hill of the Skull

The slope has eroded badly in the last hundred years, but some maintain they can still see the eye sockets and the nose bridge. Regardless, it must be noted that while the Bible locates the crucifixion at the “place of the skull,” it never says that it was on a hill, nor that this place bore the resemblance of a skull. It also could be asked if this hill which resembles a skull looked the same 2000 years ago.

The Garden Tomb

While officially the Garden Tomb Association only maintains this as a possible site for Christ's burial, some tour guides of the site are convinced of the authenticity. They note the large cistern nearby, which proves the area must have been a garden in Jesus' day. They maintain that there are marks of Christian veneration at the tomb which also prove its sanctity throughout the ages.



The Resting Place

This is the place believed by many to be the resting place of Jesus. Some archaeologists question the authenticity of this tomb because typological features suggest that it is a tomb originally hewn in the time of the Old Testament and not a "new tomb" as specifically stated in Scripture.

Shrine of the Book

The Building and the Shrine Complex

The Hebrew Bible is the cornerstone of the Jewish people. Virtually all Jewish creativity refers to this fundamental text, and it has also left its imprint on Christianity and Islam.

The exhibition at the Shrine of the Book Complex represents a journey through time, which, adopting a scholarly-historical approach, traces the evolution of the Book of Books. The upper galleries take the visitor from the oldest extant biblical manuscripts, which were discovered in the Judean Desert, through the story of the sectarians living at Qumran, who attempted to translate the biblical ideals embodied in these texts into a way of life. The lower galleries tell the remarkable tale of the Aleppo Codex – the most accurate manuscript of the Masoretic text and the closest to the text of the printed Hebrew Bibles used today.



Generations of scribes and scholars dedicated themselves to copying the Bible, passing on the traditions related to its reading and cantillation [mode of intonation used in public recital of prayers and Holy Scripture], and interpreting its meaning. Those who cherished it did anything in their power to protect it from harm, at times even enduring martyrdom for its sake. Though the motivation for this esteem, which continues until the present day, may take different forms – belief in the divine origins of the biblical text, admiration for the profundity of its ideas, or acknowledgement of its historical cultural importance – one thing remains clear: as long as people continue to inquire about the nature of life and the world in which we live, the Bible will continue to inspire creativity, comfort the troubled, and provide hope for individuals wherever they may be.

The Shrine of the Book was built as a repository for the first seven scrolls discovered at Qumran in 1947. This symbolic building, a kind of sanctuary intended to express profound spiritual meaning, is considered an international landmark of modern architecture. Designed by American Jewish architects Armand P. Bartos and Frederic J. Kiesler, it was dedicated in an impressive ceremony on April 20, 1965. Its location next to official institutions of the State of Israel – the Knesset (Israeli Parliament), key government offices, and the Jewish National and University Library – attests to the degree of national importance that has been accorded the ancient texts and the building that preserves them.



The white dome symbolizes the lids of the jars in which the first scrolls were found; the contrast between the white dome and the black wall alongside it alludes to the tension evident in the scrolls between the spiritual world of the “Sons of Light” (as the Judean Desert sectarians called themselves) and the “Sons of Darkness” (the sect’s enemies). The corridor leading into the Shrine resembles a cave, recalling the site where the ancient manuscripts were discovered.

Old City Model



The Model of Second Temple

The Model of Second Temple Jerusalem, one of the capital's best-loved visitor sites, first opened in 1966 on the grounds of the Holy Land Hotel. It was built at the behest of the hotel's owner, Hans Kroch, in memory of his son Jacob who fell in Israel's War of Independence. But when

construction activities around the hotel necessitated the model's move, the Israel Museum welcomed it, and it was reopened in 2006. The 1:50 model now occupies 21,500 square feet next to the landmark Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea Scrolls, the earliest copies of the Hebrew Bible ever found, are displayed.



Ancient Jerusalem's palaces, homes, courtyards, gardens, theater and markets are all there in intricate detail, crowned by the Temple, the spiritual center of the Jewish People and the largest building project in the world of its day.

A short film, screened in the new auditorium of the museum's Dorot Foundation Information and Study Center, highlights the complexities of life in those days and is a companion piece to the Shrine of the Book and the model. The plot follows two fictional friends: one an acolyte of the sect that lived at Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, the other a young Jerusalem priest, as each seeks his spiritual path in troubled times.



The model's new setting allows visitors both to circumnavigate it and to view it from above, getting a glimmer of the grandeur of this city, about which the sages said "ten measures of beauty were given to the world; nine were taken by Jerusalem."

This afternoon we will visit the **City of David**, also known as the **Ophel**. This ancient city is located beyond the southern edge of the Temple Mount and the “Old City” (which in fact is not as old as the City of David). To its west is the Tyropoeon Valley, the Hinnom Valley is to the south, and the Kidron Valley lies to the east.

David and Solomon ruled in the tenth and ninth centuries BC, the height of Israelite domination of the Ancient Near East. Much information about the City of David is available on-line; a recommended site is www.cityofdavid.org.il, with its excellent aerial shots, photos of the walls, and of Hezekiah’s tunnel, as well as archeological and tourist information.

City of David

The city of Jerusalem was originally built around the Gihon Spring, on the southeastern hill to the south (left) of the Temple Mount, which is today crowned with the gold-domed Dome of the Rock. Jerusalem has been continuously inhabited since at least 3000 B.C., but it was only in the time of Solomon that the city limits expanded beyond the southeastern spur, known today as the “City of David.”

Kidron Valley

The City of David was very about 80-100m wide. The a steep slope of about 60 Though smaller, steeper and difficult for construction than Hill, the City of David was because of its water source, Spring. The Kidron Valley city on its east side.



narrow;
east side has
degrees.
more
the Western
chosen
the Gihon
borders the



Stepped Stone Structure

Revealed in the excavations of Duncan and Macalister, Kenyon and Shiloh, this is one of the largest Iron Age structures in Israel. The structure has been revealed to a height of 60 feet (18 meters), and it is dated to the end of the Jebusite city (12th century B.C.). The structure probably supported a royal building, such as the king’s palace. Archaeologists now believe that they have uncovered part of that palace.

House of Ahiel

This is a typical Israelite four-room house. The outside stairway presumably led to the flat roof. The outside of Ahiel's house (east) was poorly preserved, but the western side on the hill was well preserved. Inside the house were found cosmetics and housewares all from the ruins of 586 B.C.



Lower Wall

Recent excavations by Reich and Shukrun revealed a lower city wall from the late Iron Age (time of Hezekiah?) which ran along the eastern slope of the City of David near the bottom of the Kidron Valley. The modern structure above the wall is the new visitor's center under construction to allow tourists to view the Siloam Channel.

Hezekiah's Tunnel



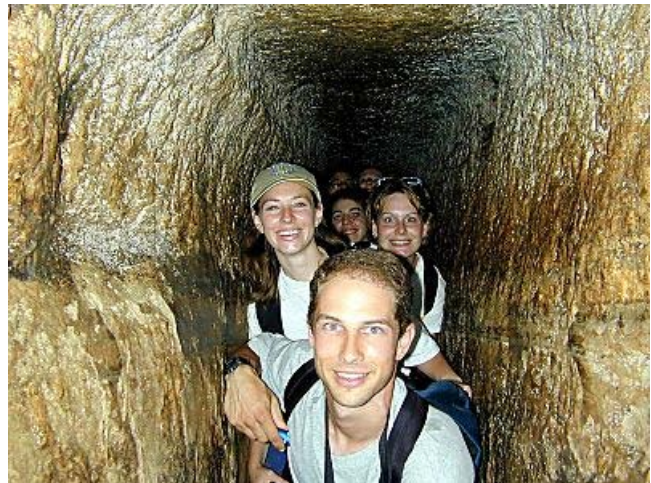
The Tunnel

A 1750-foot (530m) tunnel carved during the reign of Hezekiah to bring water from one side of the city to the other, Hezekiah's Tunnel together with the 6th c. tunnel of Eupalios in Greece are considered the greatest works of water engineering technology in the pre-Classical period. Had it followed a straight line, the length would have been 1070 ft (335m) or 40% shorter.

The Construction

2 Kings 20:20 “As for the other events of Hezekiah's reign, all his achievements and how he made the pool and the tunnel by which he brought water into the city...”

2 Chron. 32:30 “It was Hezekiah who blocked the upper outlet of the Gihon spring and channeled the water down to the west side of the City of David.”



The Meeting Point

Why is the tunnel S-shaped?

R. A. S. Macalister said the tunnel was a “pathetically helpless piece of engineering.” Henry Sulley in 1929 first suggested that Hezekiah's tunnel followed a natural crack in the rock.

Dan Gill argues that the two crews of diggers followed a natural karstic dissolution channel.

The Siloam Inscription

“[...when] (the tunnel) was driven through. And this was the way in which it was cut through: While [...] (were) still [...] axe(s), each man toward his fellow, and while there were still three cubits to be cut through, [there was heard] the voice of a man calling to his fellows, for there was an overlap in the rock on the right [and on the left]. And when the tunnel was driven through, the quarrymen hewed (the rock), each man toward his fellow, axe against axe; and the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1200 cubits, and the height of the rock above the head(s) of the quarrymen was 100 cubits.”

*The Pool of Siloam Revealed*

Archaeologists working in the City of David have uncovered the edge of what they believe is the Pool of Siloam from the time of Jesus (cf. John 9). The photo at left shows the city of Jerusalem with the Temple Mount and the City of David. The excavations are on the west side of the City of David. Letter “A” is located where the traditional “Pool of Siloam” is and Letter “B” shows the area of the present excavations.

The photograph at right was taken in the early 1900s and shows the Pool of Siloam before later Muslim construction above it. An early description of the pool reads, “There is nothing picturesque about it, certainly. The crumbling walls, and fallen columns in and around it, give it an air of neglect.” It is a parallelogram about fifty-three feet long and eighteen feet wide... Dr. Thomson says he has seen this pool nearly full, but that now the water merely passes through it. “The intermittent flow is supposed to be due to a natural siphon, but the natives’ explanation is that a dragon lives below and swallows the water when he is awake, but that when he sleeps it wells up freely.” – Major Conder.





The Pool of Siloam Today

This is the pool that you'll see today whether you walk through Hezekiah's Tunnel and emerge here or walk above through the City of David. There are clear remains around this pool from the Byzantine church built by Empress Eudocia. This is the pool that has long been visited as the pool of Jesus' miracle.

In the summer of 2004, work along a drainage pipe revealed some large stone steps. Archaeologists Eli Shukrun and Ronny Reich quickly revealed a series of steps leading down into the adjacent garden. In this photo you can see the grates of the drainage channel which will prove to be an obstacle for future excavation.



After some months of work, a large section of these steps were revealed, but work was hindered on one side by the drainage channel (visible as the concrete section on the left side of the photo) and on the other by property owned by the Greek Orthodox Church. At the far end, the corner of the steps is visible, but at this point, no other corners had been revealed.

At this point, more of the pool has been revealed than ever before, including the northern corner of the steps at the far end of the photo. Pottery indicates that this pool was in use in the 1st century. The blind man washed the mud off of his eyes in this pool and received his sight (see John 9).



Where Does It Go?

This view is from across the valley (looking east) and shows the steps that have been excavated (as above). It also gives a perspective of how the rest of the pool is buried underneath the garden. Hopes are high that an agreement will be reached to allow the excavation of the rest of the pool.

Excavations continue to reveal more sections of the pool on the northern and southern ends. Several shafts at the northern end of the pool have revealed large paving stones. On the southern end, excavations have uncovered a large wall and a section of the pool from the Old Testament period. These are in the pit below the wall in the foreground of the photo. Altogether about 20 steps (4 sets of 5 each) have been excavated leading from street level into the pool.



Wednesday, April 15, 2009

<i>AM Service</i>	
<i>Time:</i>	10:30 AM
<i>Song Leader:</i>	Mark Robertson
<i>1st Split Sermon:</i>	Mike Machin
<i>2nd Split Sermon”</i>	Ralph Levy
Lunch	
<i>PM Service</i>	
<i>Time:</i>	3:00 PM
<i>Song Leader:</i>	Frank Fish
<i>Sermonette:</i>	Richard Kennebeck
<i>Sermon:</i>	David Johnson