

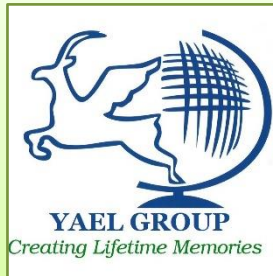
Sweetwater Baptist Association

2023 Holy Land Tour

January 23 – February 1, 2023

Israel 2023 Tour Itinerary

*subject to changes



Four-Star Hotel Accommodations

1 Night: Netanya/Mediterranean

2 Nights: Tiberias/Sea of Galilee

5 Nights: Jerusalem

Breakfast & Dinner Buffet Included

Day 1 – Mon, Jan 23 – Depart U.S.A.

Depart from the U.S. to Tel Aviv. Dinner and breakfast will be served during the flight.

Day 2 – Tues, Jan 24 – Arrive in Israel (Jaffa, Netanya)

Arrive in the Holy Land where we will be met in the airport by Yael representatives who will assist us through customs and take us to our tour guide and bus. On the Mediterranean coast we will visit **Jaffa**, an ancient port city famous for the biblical stories of Jonah, Solomon, and Saint Peter. Proceed to hotel in **Netanya** for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 3 – Wed, Jan 25 – Caesarea, Mt Carmel, Megiddo/Armageddon, Nazareth, Tiberias

Drive north to **Caesarea** to visit the Crusader Fortress built upon the ancient city of Caesarea, named after Augustus Caesar, who imposed the tax that brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. Here we will visit an ancient Roman Amphitheatre, where the group can experience the acoustics of a structure built in the days of Christ. Continue to **Mount Carmel** where Elijah issued his challenge to the False Prophets. Continue on to **Megiddo**, the site of Armageddon. Then to **Nazareth**, where Jesus spent the silent years of his life. Finish the day by traveling to **Tiberias** and the beautiful **Sea of Galilee**. Dinner and overnight stay in Tiberias.

Day 4 – Thur, Jan 26 – Sea of Galilee, Caesarea Philippi

On this day, we will sail on the **Sea of Galilee**, visit the museum of the ancient boat at Kibbutz Ginosar, then onto visit **Magdala**, with its first century synagogue, a complete first century city and remains of a once prosperous fish processing industry. Complete with shops, marketplace, residential areas, and wharf, this is a city where Jesus himself visited and taught. Visit **Capernaum**, the town of Jesus, visit the Church of Multiplication in **Tabgha** (where the Lord performed the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes), and visit the **Mount of Beatitudes** (where Jesus taught “The Sermon on the Mount”). We will continue to **Caesarea Philippi** where Peter confessed Christ: “You are the Christ, the son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:15-16). Return back to the hotel in **Tiberias** for dinner and overnight.

Day 5 – Fri, Jan 27 – Yardenit/Jordan River, Beit Shean, Gideon Spring, Jordan Valley, Jericho

Today we bid farewell to the Galilee. We will begin our day with a visit to **Yardenit**, the traditional baptismal site on the **Jordan River**, then drive south to the city of **Beit Shean** – one of the earliest and most important cities in Israel from the time of the Canaanites. It was here that the Philistines impaled King Saul’s body to the city wall – we view its magnificent excavations. Then on to **Gideon’s Spring**, where the Judge Gideon selected 300 warriors to go into the battle with him against the Midianites (Judge 7). We continue down the **Jordan Valley** past **Jericho**, the first city conquered by the Israelites in the Promised Land, to **Jerusalem**. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem.

Day 6 – Sat, Jan 28 – Jerusalem, Bethlehem

Our morning starts on the **Mount of Olives** with breathtaking panoramic view of Jerusalem. The day continues with visits to the sites that will help us understand the Lord's prophecy about Jerusalem: The Chapel of Dominius Flevit, where Christ Prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 18:41), The **Garden of Gethsemane** (Luke 22:39-53) and The Church of the Agony (Church of All Nations), the site where it is said that Judas betrayed Jesus. In the **Kidron Valley** we will visit the tombs of Absalom, Zachariah. We will proceed to visit the sites on **Mt. Zion**: the Gallicantu Church which was built over the ruins of the Palace of Caiaphas, the High Priest before whom Jesus was brought for trial (Mark 14: 53-65). We will visit the **Tomb of King David** and enter into the **Upper Room** – the site that commemorates Jesus' last meal with his disciples. We end by visiting the Church of Nativity in **Bethlehem**, the birthplace of Christ. Dinner and overnight stay in Jerusalem.

Day 7 – Sun, Jan 29 – Jerusalem

Our day will begin with an exciting tour to the site where much of the Bible was written, the **City of David**. Here archeologists found King Hezekiah's 2,700-year-old water tunnel, one of the wonders of early engineering, and the seal impression of Gemariah, son of Shaphan, possibly the scribe of King Zedekiah (Jeremiah 36:10). Continue to the **Pool of Siloam** where Christ healed the blind man by sending him to wash his eyes (John 9). In the Jewish Quarter, we will explore the Roman Cardo, the Madaba Map, the **Western Wall**, and the Davidson Center (with its amazing virtual model of the Second Temple). We will view the **Temple Mount**, and we will hear about the traders driven out of the Temple by Jesus (Luke 19:45-48). Continue to **Bethesda** where Christ healed the paralyzed man (John 5). Our journey through the **Via Dolorosa** (The Way of the Cross) stations will end by visiting the **Church of Holy Sepulchre**. We will walk through the old city market to the **Damascus Gate** and the **Garden Tomb** where we will have communion. Dinner and overnight stay in Jerusalem.

Day 8 – Mon, Jan 30 – Lazarus Tomb, Dead Sea, Masada

After learning the amazing story of Lazarus, whom the Lord raised from the dead, we will continue to the **Judean Desert**. Our first stop today will be next one of the St. George Monastery crosses, which offers an amazing view of the monastery. This stop is important for understanding the water system of the Judean Desert and monasteries. We will continue to **Qumran** to hear the amazing story of the **Dead Sea Scrolls** discovery. We will try to answer questions such as: Who wrote the scrolls? Who were the Essenes? How did they live and why there? Then to **Masada** to learn about the dramatic story of almost one thousand men, women and children who chose suicide rather than becoming Roman slaves. We will visit the archeological finds and enjoy the palaces, bathhouses, walls, and the remarkable view of the **Dead Sea**. We will proceed to bathe in the Dead Sea and to enjoy the sun and the famous mud. Afterwards proceed to hotel for dinner and overnight stay in Jerusalem.

Day 9 – Tue, Jan 31 – Shiloh, Jerusalem, Farewell Dinner

After breakfast we will depart the hotel, and drive to the ancient city of **Shiloh**. Shiloh was an ancient city in Samaria. It is located in the West Bank, south of ancient Lebonah and ten miles north of Beth El. Shiloh was a major Israelite worship center before the first Temple was built in Jerusalem. The tabernacle was located in Shiloh for over 350 years and its remains can still be seen. (Joshua 18:1). Proceed to **Israel Museum** to visit the miniature model of the city of Jerusalem as it appeared in the time of the Second Temple before the great rebellion and its subsequent destruction. Afterwards, we will get to see the Shrine of the Book, which houses the ancient Dead Sea Scrolls. We will enjoy shopping in the markets of **Jerusalem**. Our tour will conclude with the **Farewell Dinner**. Our last overnight stay in Jerusalem.

Day 10 – Wed, Feb 1 – Return to the U.S.A.

We return home full of rich and unforgettable memories.