The Roots of Faith

A Shoresh Study Tours Itinerary

In the steps of the ancient people of Israel and Jesus the Messiah, we'll travel from the Sinai wanderings, through the heartland of Israel, and up north to the source of the Jordan River. The whole of the Land will become our spiritual classroom as we seek to understand God's message to His people, both in those ancient days and our own.

Day 1
ARRIVAL IN THE LAND OF PROMISE
We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport near **Tel Aviv**, where we will be met by our guide and bus driver for the trip. Depending on flight arrival time, there are several options for this day:

Morning Arrival – Option A: THE HOPE OF RESTORATION
On our first day, we focus on the miraculous restoration of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. We begin our day at **Beit Immanuel**, where we will hear about CMJ's ministry to the Jewish people over the past 160 years. Our next stop will be in Tel Aviv at **Independence Hall** where we will learn of the growth and struggles of this tiny country immediately prior to and since her independence. Time permitting, we may also visit the ancient port of **Jaffa**, the point from which Jonah tried to escape his calling to warn the people of Nineveh and location of Simon the Tanner's house. From here we will travel to our hotel on the **Mediterranean Coast** or **Judean Hills** for dinner, followed by a brief meeting for introductions, some orientation, and prayer.
Overnight: Mediterranean Coast or Judean Hills

Morning Arrival – Option B: NATURE IMAGERY IN SCRIPTURE
Today we will visit the Biblical landscape reserve of **Neot Kedumim** in the Judean lowlands. Walking on the beautiful hillsides, we will discover some of the rich symbolism of the cedar, hyssop, olive and other trees and plants, as well as trying our hand at herding sheep and goats. From here we will travel to our hotel on the **Mediterranean Coast** or **Judean Hills**, with a possible opportunity to stroll on the beach or swim before dinner. After dinner we will have a brief meeting for introductions, some orientation, and prayer.
Overnight: Mediterranean Coast or Judean Hills

Afternoon or Evening Arrival: DINNER & REST
From the airport we will travel to our hotel on the **Mediterranean Coast** or **Judean Hills**. Time permitting, we may have an opportunity to stroll on the beach or swim before dinner. Later we will have a brief meeting for introductions, some orientation, and prayer.
Overnight: Mediterranean Coast or Judean Hills

Day 2
IN THE DESERT WITH THE PATRIARCHS
We shall spend our first part of the morning at the **Biblical gardens of Yad HaShmona** where we shall study the imagery Jesus used in parables. From here we will travel to the **Valley of Elah**, the location of the battle between David and Goliath. We continue our journey in the steps of the Patriarchs to the southern desert region called the **Negev** in the Bible (a name it still carries today). Here we visit **Tel Beersheva**, one of the most impressive and ancient fortified cities of the Kingdom of Judah. Our next stop is a **Bedouin museum** where we examine their nomadic culture in order to shed light on the lives of Abraham and the Patriarchs. We conclude our day traveling through the **Wilderness of Paran** to a spectacular view over the **Ramon Crater** where we discuss the importance of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt in Jewish religious thinking and its influence on Jesus and the Gospels.
Overnight: Mitzpe Ramon, Central Negev

Day 3
OUT OF EGYPT INTO THE WILDERNESS
We begin today looking over the beautiful **Ramon Crater**. Here we consider the true location of Mount Sinai and study the geology of the area. This morning we will be traveling through the **Wilderness of Zin** where Moses struck the rock in disobedience. We will visit the ancient caravan city of **Avdat** to discover how the ancient Nabateans made the desert bloom. We will take a short hike to a beautiful oasis in the **Zin Canyon**. We will then visit the **home of David Ben Gurion**, founder of Israel, at **Kibbutz Sde Boker**. As Ben Gurion is often called a prophet, we will take time to discuss the nature of biblical prophecy and the role of a prophet in the biblical period and today. Our last stop of the day is **Tel Arad**, a pre-Abrahamic major city and later an Israelite fortress. Time permitting, we will have a short **camel ride** before dinner at our accommodation in Bedouin-style tents, or relax in the spa at our **Dead Sea** hotel.
Overnight: Dead Sea *(Accommodation options include: a Spa Hotel or Bedouin Tent Experience.)*

Day 4
THE JUDEAN DESERT - Seeking Refuge in the Wilderness
Our theme today is the wilderness and what it signified to the ancient Israelites. We begin our day at **Masada**, Herod the Great's magnificent fortress palace in the desert, and the last stand of the Zealots, a Jewish revolutionary group at the time of Jesus. From Masada we drive north to the beautiful subtropical oasis of **Ein Gedi**, where David hid from Saul. Depending on conditions, we can walk into the nature reserve and possibly to the waterfalls. We may see some wildlife, including the furry rock badger and the graceful ibex. We will also discuss the temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness. Our last site will be **Qumran**, likely the home of the Essenes, a First Century Jewish sect which may have influenced early Christianity, and the site of the most exciting archaeological discovery ever made in Israel – the Dead Sea Scrolls. Overnight: Dead Sea

Day 5
THE JORDAN VALLEY – "In the World But Not of It"
Today we leave the desert and journey north up the spectacular **Syrian African Rift Valley** to the Sea of Galilee. We will study the cultural tensions that existed at the time of Jesus, both between Greco-Roman culture and Jewish culture (and later the early church), and also between the Jewish religious establishment of the day and various spiritual reformers. Passing by the region of **Jericho –** the oldest and lowest city on earth, we come to the **Jordan River**, where we will discuss the ministry of John the Baptist and his relationship with Jesus. *If the tour leader wants to do baptisms, the group can visit a baptismal site on the Jordan River.* Conditions permitting, we will have dip in the beautiful spring fed pools at **Sachne**, near the base of **Mt. Gilboa**. Our final stop of the day will be the Biblical city of **Beit Shean** to examine the visually impressive excavations of its Roman-Byzantine period when it was one the ten Hellenistic cities of the Decapolis. From here we continue to our hotel near the **Sea of Galilee.** Overnight: Sea of Galilee

Day 6

AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE – Daily Life and Religion in the Time of Jesus

Our day will be spent visiting various sites around the Sea of Galilee as we try to picture daily life and religion in the First Century, and seek to better understand the miracles and teachings of Jesus in His original Jewish context. We will start the day at **Chorazin**, the well-preserved ruins of a typical Galilean village, where we study village life, Jewish religion, and the Pharisees. Our next stop will be the **Mount of Beatitudes**, traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, where we will consider the Kingdom of God in Jesus' teachings. After a short walk or drive down the hill we will arrive at **Capernaum**, the town where Jesus lived during the majority of His ministry. At lovely **Tabgha**, which commemorates the multiplication of loaves and fish, and where Jesus met the disciples after the resurrection, we will enjoy a contemplative time on the shore of the Lake. Later in the afternoon we will visit Kibbutz Ginosar to see the **"Jesus Boat"**, a Galilean fishing boat from the First Century. From here we will set sail for a **boat ride on the Lake** to enjoy the views and some worship, prayer and reflective time. After dinner we will meet with a local believer.
Overnight: Sea of Galilee

Day 7

NORTHERN ISRAEL – "Who Do Men Say That I Am?"

Today we explore Northern Israel, one of the most beautiful regions of the country. We will seek to understand what the Jewish people of 2,000 years ago expected of the Messiah, and how that was fulfilled in Jesus. We begin by climbing up to the magnificent **Golan Heights**. We will visit a reconstructed Talmudic village at **Katzrin,** where we will take another close look at life in New Testament times and the use of everyday imagery in Scripture. Next we will travel along the lower slopes of **Mount Hermon** – Israel's highest mountain, and the most likely site of the Transfiguration. Our next stop is **Caesarea Philippi**, in the region where Peter made his famous confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Along the way we will pass **Druze Villages** before coming to **Mt. Bental**, a lookout spot near the border with Syria and the area of the **road to Damascus** where the Apostle Paul met the Lord. Our final stop is the **Dan Nature Reserve**, where we see the incredible archaeological remains of the **OT city of Dan**, including the city gate from the time of Abraham, and consider ancient Israel's apostasy. We will also enjoy a pleasant walk by a stream and discuss the meaning of "living water" in the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' teaching. Overnight: Sea of Galilee

Day 8

LIGHT TO THE NATIONS – Jews, Gentiles, and the Messiah

Today we travel west and then down the coast, visiting a number of Biblical sites that testify to God's faithfulness to His word, past, present, and future. Our first visit of the day will be ancient **Nazareth,** Jesus' boyhood home and place of His early ministry. We continue along the route of the ancient **Via Maris** to **Megiddo**, one of King Solomon's cities, and according the Book of Revelation possibly the assembly point for the armies marching to the battle of Armageddon. We then travel to **Mount Carmel**, with a spectacular view over the North of Israel, near the spot where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. We complete our day at the fabulous ruins of the Herodian city of **Caesarea Maritima**, the site of the conversion of Cornelius and the location from which Paul left the shores of Israel and set sail on his journey to Rome. At the end of the day we will make the final ascent to **Jerusalem** – the City of the Great King. After dinner we will be treated to a short stroll for a **rooftop panorama of the Old City** and talk with the Director of Shoresh Study Tours. Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 9
JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF JESUS – The Temple at the Center
Today will be devoted to learning about Jerusalem in Jesus' day, when the Temple in Jerusalem was the center of Jewish life. We will study how worship was performed in the temple, the Sadducees and Jesus' attitude towards them, and generally enrich our insight into many important events in the gospels and book of Acts. An early start will take us up to the **Temple Mount** (conditions permitting), where we'll consider some of Jesus' activities there, as well as the claims of Islam. After a visit to the **Western Wall** place of prayer, Judaism's most holy site, we will take a trip to the subterranean **Western Wall Tunnels** to walk at what was street level in the time of Jesus. We then make our way through the **Jewish Quarter** of the Old City to see the **Herodian Villas,** the palatial mansions that were the home to the Sadducees, the ruling priesthood at the time of Jesus. We complete our day at the excavations near the base of the Temple Mount and discuss Pentecost on the **Southern Steps** where Jesus walked. Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 10
FREE DAY IN JERUSALEM
Today is free for rest, reflection, shopping, or for the energetic, perhaps a walk on the walls of the Old City. *Shoresh will provide a list of interesting options for those who want to explore on their own.* Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 11
THE RESTORATION OF HOPE – A Garland Instead of Ashes
Today we study both great tragedy and the wonder of the Lord's redemptive power. We will examine the systematic annihilation of six million Jews in the Nazi genocide, God coming to earth in the form of a man to save His people from their sins, and the loving witness of Christians committed to the Biblically prophesied physical restoration and spiritual rebirth of the Jewish people. After breakfast, we will enjoy a tour of the **Christ Church Heritage Centre** to learn about CMJ's 200-year history of ministry to the Jewish people. Next we travel to **Yad VaShem**, the Israel Memorial Museum to the Holocaust. Here we examine the spiritual and theological roots of the most notorious genocide in history and the connection between the Church, Jesus and the Jewish people. From here we take the short drive to **Bethlehem**, where we will visit the **Church of the Nativity**, which marks the probable site of the birth of Jesus, and the **"Shepherd's Fields"** where the angels heralded the advent of Messiah. At the end of the day, This evening we will expand our understanding of the role of the Lamb of God by celebrating a **Jewish Passover Seder meal** together, making Biblical connections to the "last supper" that Jesus shared with his disciples. Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 12
IN THE STEPS OF JESUS – Crucifixion, Death, Burial and Resurrection
Today we focus on sites related to the Biblical passages concerning Jesus' last week in Jerusalem. Our goal is to understand why He was crucified, how He was buried, and what it meant to the Jewish people of the First Century that He was raised from the dead. We begin our day with a panoramic overlook of Jerusalem from the **Mount of Olives**, the site of Jesus' ascension to heaven and His future second coming. After viewing a **tomb from the time of Jesus**, we will walk down the Mount of Olives to **Gethsemane**. Next we cross the **Kidron Valley** and enter the Old City through **Stephen's Gate**, stopping to examine the remains of the **Pool of Bethesda.** From here we walk to the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, the most likely site of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. We end our tour with a reflective time at a site that wonderfully illustrates Jesus' burial and resurrection, the peaceful **Garden Tomb**.
Overnight: Jerusalem *(For those groups with a late night flight, rooms will be held until departure for the airport.)*

Day 13
TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH
Depending on flight departure time, there are several options for this day.

Early Morning Departure: Straight Home
We say farewell to Jerusalem and descend through the mountains of Judea to the airport on the coastal plain to catch the flight home.

Afternoon Departure – Option A: THE HOPE OF RESTORATION
This morning, we focus on the miraculous restoration of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. We begin our day at **Beit Immanuel**, the CMJ ministry center in Jaffa. Here we will learn of CMJ's ministry to the Jewish people over the past 160 years. Time permitting, we may also visit the ancient port of **Jaffa**, the point from which Jonah tried to escape his calling to warn the people of Nineveh and the location of Simon the Tanner's house. From here we go the airport. *If your group has already done these sites as part of a morning arrival on Day 1, we can visit other interesting site(s) along the coast, Sharon Plain, or Judean Hills.*

Afternoon Departure – Option B: NATURE IMAGERY IN SCRIPTURE
This morning we will visit the Biblical landscape reserve of **Neot Kedumim** in the Judean lowlands. Walking on the beautiful hillsides, we will discover some of the rich symbolism of the cedar, hyssop, olive and other trees and plants, as well as trying our hand at herding sheep and goats. We will drive across the Sharon Plain to the airport in plenty of time to catch the flight home. *If your group has already done these sites as part of a morning arrival on Day 1, we can visit other interesting site(s) along the coast, Sharon Plain, or Judean Hills.*

PLEASE NOTE:
- *Itinerary and accommodation subject to change if conditions necessitate.*
- *Some days involve a significant amount of walking and/or steep climbing. Every effort will be made to enable all tour members to fully participate at every site, but in some cases that may not be possible.*

ADDITIONAL TOURING DAYS
For groups wishing to spend more time in Israel, we can arrange additional days of touring on a variety of themes. These can include activities such as: outdoor adventures (hiking, camel treks, swimming, etc.), wine tasting, visits to see Israeli agricultural innovations, service and outreach projects, visits to local ministries, retreats, prayer experiences, as well as Biblical and historical teaching at more sites throughout the country.

Here are just a few examples of the many options for additional touring in Jerusalem:

INTRODUCTION TO JERUSALEM (Full day)
After breakfast we will head to the **Citadel ("Tower of David") Museum** where we will enjoy breathtaking views overlooking Jerusalem and have an introduction to the fascinating historical geography of the Old City. We will continue to the **Museum of the First Temple** in order to better understand not only the story of Solomon building the Temple, but how the Temple priesthood and sacrificial system foreshadowed the ministry of Jesus the Messiah. After this overview, we will spend the rest of the morning at the place where it all began – the **City of David**. Here we will earn about King David's conquest of the Jebusite city, and walk through **Hezekiah's Tunnel** to the **Pool of Siloam**.

THE HEART OF THE NEW CITY (Half day)
Most of the Biblical sites in Jerusalem are inside or nearby the Old City. But most of the population of modern Jerusalem lives outside the Old City walls, in the bustling and vibrant **New City**. For a glimpse of modern Israeli society, we will follow pedestrian streets: along **Jaffa Road** to **Zion Square**, then up **Ben Yehuda Street** to the colorful **Mahane Yehuda** open-air market, where Jerusalemites shop for some of the best and freshest foods in Israel and sit in cozy cafes. The whole walk is filled with interesting history, as well as great people watching, photographic and eating opportunities.

JUDEA & SAMARIA (Full day each)
Judea and Samaria, the areas to the north and south of Jerusalem respectively, together make up the Biblical heartland of Israel. They compromise what is often referred to as the "West Bank". Both are packed with amazing Old Testament sites, as well as some from the time of Jesus and of course the history of modern Israel. In Judea, prominent sites include: Hebron (tomb of the Patriarchs); The "Way of the Fathers" the ancient route travelled by the Patriarchs; Herodian (King Herod's desert fortress and tomb), In Samaria, we like to visit: Mt. Gerazim (the "Mount of Blessing" from Joshua's time); Mt. Kebir and Alon More (scenic overlook and one of Abraham's campsites); Jacob's Well; Shiloh (long-time location of the Tabernacle and the ark of the covenant). In both areas one also finds freshwater springs for refreshing dips, as well as modern settlements, boutique dairies and wineries, cafes, etc.

WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH or a MESSIANIC CONGREGATION (Half day)
Depending on tour dates, on a Saturday it may be possible to join a worship service at a local Messianic congregation, or on a Sunday to participate in the morning worship service at Christ Church or another local congregation.

ITINERARY OPTIONS
For groups returning to Israel who would like to see some new sites, here are some of the many options available for the itinerary:

Day 5
- You might enjoy stopping at **Kibbutz Alfa** to examine a beautiful mosaic of a very early synagogue floor, where we can study the reasons of the separation of Jewish believers in Jesus from what had become a mostly non-Jewish church in the early centuries.
- We can walk a gentle trail from **Tel Jezreel**, Ahab's winter capital, and visit **Ein Harod** known as **"Gideon's Spring"**.

Day 6
- During the longer days of the year, time might allow for a visit to "the other side" of the Sea to briefly consider Jesus relationship to the non-Jewish world during the time of His ministry, including the site of **Kursi**.
- A special visit is tranquil **Beit Bracha**, CMJ's prayer retreat center in Migdal, to hear about the work of the ministry.

Day 7
- One interesting option is **Kibbutz El Rom**, with a documentary on Israel's miraculous survival in the 1973 "Yom Kippur" War.
- We may also visit the ruins of ancient **Gamla**, the "Masada of the North" where a great battle was fought. Today the area is home to Israel's largest birds.

Day 8

- An alternative to Megiddo or Nazareth is **Mt. Arbel**, where an easy stroll brings us to panoramic views over the Sea of Galilee, giving an excellent review of our studies in the area.
- An alternative to Megiddo is ancient **Sepphoris**, where we can examine Jesus' relationship to Elijah, as well as His first miracle.