



THE SIGNATRY ISRAEL OCTOBER- NOVEMBER 2022 With DALE BRANTNER

FRIDAY OCTOBER 28, 2022

Depart U.S.A.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 29, 2022

Upon arrival to Ben Gurion Airport, you will be met planeside and escorted through passport control and assisted in retrieving your luggage. You will then be escorted to your transfer to your hotel in Tel Aviv. After checking into the hotel, The Setai, you will have free time to relax until dinner. This evening our program officially begins with a group dinner. After dinner, you are free to retire to your rooms to rest and have a good night's sleep.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 30, 2022: Children of the Desert

Our morning begins at the ancient port of **Joppa**. Here Jonah sailed for Tarshish to avoid obeying the word of the Lord (Jonah). **Joppa** is also where Peter received his vision that led him to go to the Gentile Cornelius (Acts 10). Departing Tel Aviv, we drive to Israel's south, the biblical **Negev**, continuing to the ancient site of **Beersheva** (Tel Sheva). At **Beersheva**, Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech (Gen. 21:22-33). We visit the ancient Israelite site of **Beersheva** with its four-room houses, grain stores, and water system. We will see a replica of a four-horned altar discovered among the excavations of the site. From **Beersheva**, we visit concludes at the Israelite fortress of **Tel Arad**. The children of Israel first sought to enter the promised land by passing through **Arad**, but the king of Arad turned them away (Numbers 21:1; 33:40). Inside of the Israelite fortress was discovered a temple to the Lord, like the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Our hotel tonight is Beresheet, which overlooks the Ramon Crater, one of Israel's great natural wonders. After dinner at the hotel, we venture out into the desert on a night-time jeep tour through the Negev desert to view, like Abraham (Genesis 15), the stars in the heavens. Overnight at Beresheet.

MONDAY OCTOBER 31, 2022: The Desert God

Our touring day begins later this morning, giving you the opportunity to enjoy the hotel and the breathtaking desert views. We begin our touring day at **En Avdat** located in the biblical **Wilderness of Zin** (Numbers 20). While the children of Israel wandered in the Wilderness of Zin, Moses disobeyed God's command by striking the rock instead of speaking to it. From **En Avdat**, we explore the wilderness in jeeps discovering the nature of this region and its biblical significance. Our day concludes with camel rides and a Bedouin feast before returning to our hotel for overnight.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2022: In the Footsteps of Kings and Prophets

Our journey today takes us through the *Shephelah* (Deut. 1:7), an area of rolling hills between Israel's hill country and the Mediterranean coast. Our first stop is the *Elah Valley*, the site of the famous confrontation between David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17). We will experience this biblical landscape via ATVs. We next visit the ancient city of *Beth Shemesh*. After the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines, it returned to Israel in the area of *Beth Shemesh* (1 Sam. 6). Across the *Sorek Valley* from *Beth Shemesh* sits *Zorah*, the hometown of Samson (Judges 13). Our final stop of the day provides a unique experience learning about shepherds in the Bible at the biblical nature park, *Ne'ot Kedumim*. Here participants learn about ancient shepherds by shepherding sheep and goats. While at *Ne'ot Kedumim*, participants encounter the flora and fauna of biblical Israel and see how the land of the Bible played a dynamic role in communicating the message of the Scriptures. Dinner and overnight at our hotel, the Dan Acadia, along the Mediterranean coast.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2022: Kingdoms and Cultures in Conflict

Our morning begins at the port-city of *Caesarea* built by Herod the Great (Matt. 2). This was the second largest harbor in the Roman Empire during the first century. At *Caesarea*, Peter visited the gentile centurion Cornelius (Acts 10), and he and his household became the first gentile followers of Jesus. The Apostle Paul remained under house arrest in *Caesarea* for two and a half years. Here he stood before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa II (Acts 23-25). From the harbor of *Caesarea*, Paul sailed to Rome leaving Israel for the last time. While at the site, we will visit the ancient theater with its magnificent view overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. We will see Herod the Great's palace that served as the residence of the Roman officials in the land, like Pontius Pilate. We will remember Pilate's governorship of Judaea by looking at a replica of a stone inscription mentioning Pilate dedicating a temple to the Roman Emperor Tiberius. Our visit takes us through the ancient stadium and harbor and ends looking at the ancient aqueduct of Caesarea that supplied the city with its water. After departing *Caesarea*, we travel to *Mount Carmel* where Elijah challenged the prophets of Ba'al (1 Kings 18). We drive from *Mount Carmel* to *Megiddo*. At *Megiddo*, we will view an important, ancient site, 21 layers of settlement superimposed one on the other including remains from Solomon's days (1 Kings 9). This site guarded one of the most important highways of the ancient world that connected Egypt with Damascus and Mesopotamia. Our day concludes driving through the *Valley of Jezreel*, to the ancient site of *Jezreel*, the winter palace of Ahab and Jezebel. Dinner and overnight at the Setai hotel on the Sea of Galilee.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2022: "Who do men say that I am?"

Today we travel into the Golan Heights and the upper Jordan Valley. Our day begins at the nature reserve of *Dan*. The ancient city of *Dan*, which formed the northern boundary of biblical Israel, sits on the Dan Spring, one of the three tributaries of the *Jordan River*. In addition to walking through the beautiful nature reserve, we will visit the ancient site of Dan seeing its high place (1 Kings 12:29), Israelite gate, and the Middle Bronze Age gate from the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:14). Next, we travel to *Banias*, ancient *Caesarea Philippi* (Matt. 16:13; Mark 8:27). In the vicinity of *Caesarea Philippi*, Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do men say

that I am?" From **Banias**, we drive up into the foothills of **Mount Hermon** (Ps. 133) and into the **Golan Heights**. At a high overlook on the Israel-Syrian border, we look into Syria towards Damascus. Dinner and overnight at the Setai on the Sea of Galilee.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4, 2022: The Faith of Jesus

Our journey today focuses upon the ministry of Jesus around the Sea of Galilee. Our morning begins at the archaeological excavation of **el-Araj/Beitsaida**, situated in the **Beitsaida Valley** where the **Jordan River** flows into the Sea of Galilee, and where Jesus fed the 5,000 (Luke 9:10-17). Our journey takes us to the **Mount of Beatitudes**. Our journey continues with an opportunity for people to be baptized in the **Jordan River**. From the baptismal, we visit the ancient town of **Capernaum** where Jesus made his home around the lake (Matt. 4:13). Here he healed the centurion's servant (Matt. 8:5). In our visit, we will see the modern church built over an ancient church, which was built over a first century home, identified as the home of Peter. The magnificent limestone synagogue of the fourth century AD has been partly reconstructed and looms over the site. From **Capernaum**, we travel to the small museum at **Kibbutz Ginnosar** that houses an ancient boat discovered in the 1980s in the Sea of Galilee. This boat dates to the first century and was a boat used by fisherman on the lake. Our touring day concludes with a visit to one of the most exciting and important ongoing archaeological excavations in Israel, **Magdala**. Here we will visit one of the few, excavated, first century synagogues in the land of Israel. Its date coincides with the time of Jesus ministry in the area. We will also see wealthy homes from the village, as well as the first century harbor. Our day concludes with an evening boat-ride on the **Sea of Galilee**. The ancient fishermen fished the lake at night. Riding on the waters of the lake in the evening offers a unique opportunity to connect with Jesus and his disciples on the lake. Dinner and overnight at the Setai on the Sea of Galilee.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5, 2022: Desert Refuge

Today we drive from the Sea of Galilee, the lowest fresh-water lake in the world, through the Jordan River Valley, to the Dead Sea, the lowest place on earth. Our first stop is the desert palace-fortress built by Herod the Great, **Masada**. During the First Jewish Revolt (AD 66-73), Jewish rebels lived on **Masada** until they were surrounded by the Tenth Roman Legion. According to the first century Jewish historian Josephus, the rebels chose to commit suicide instead of slavery and death at the hands of the Romans. While visiting the site, we will see the palaces of Herod the Great, his bath houses and store-rooms. We will also see buildings converted by the Jewish rebels for their use, like the synagogue. Evidence of the Roman siege can be seen in the siege ramp and Roman camps that surround **Masada**. After **Masada**, participants will have an opportunity to float in the **Dead Sea** and eat lunch. After lunch, we drive past the site of **Qumran**. In caves around the site, the world-famous Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. **Qumran** was the settlement of the community that produced many of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Our day ends with an overlook of the **Wadi Qilt**, the ancient road between Jerusalem and Jericho. This was the setting for Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). On Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, he used this road as he came from Jericho to Jerusalem (Luke 19:1-11). Dinner at Angelica. Overnight at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2022: Jerusalem

Our morning in **Jerusalem** begins with a visit to the **Israel Museum**. Here we will see a scale-model of Jerusalem on the eve of its destruction in AD 70. We will visit the Shrine of the Book, which houses some of the Dead Sea Scrolls, including some of the oldest copies of the Old Testament. Our tour of the museum concludes with a walk through the archeological wing to visit the two galleries dedicated to Israel in the Old and New Testament periods. We will see original artifacts found in sites we visited, as well as other artifacts that make the Bible come alive. We next travel to David's hometown, **Bethlehem**. In **Bethlehem**, we remember the birth of Jesus and visit the **Church of Nativity**, the oldest church in the Holy Land, built over the traditional site of Jesus' birth. From **Bethlehem**, we return to **Jerusalem** for free time. Dinner at Adom. Overnight at the King David in Jerusalem.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2022: Biblical Jerusalem

Our morning begins at the **City of David**, the oldest part of Jerusalem, the city David conquered and made his capital. Our lunch today is a tasting tour of the **Mahaneh Yehudah** market of Jerusalem where we will have opportunity to sample many cuisines. From **Mahaneh Yehudah**, we travel to the **Temple Mount Sifting Project** where we will wet sift remains from Jerusalem's Temple Mount. This experience provides an opportunity to touch Jerusalem's biblical past. Our day concludes with a walking tour of the **Old City** of Jerusalem and free time. Dinner at Eucalyptus. Overnight at the King David, Jerusalem.

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2022: Jesus' Jerusalem

Our morning begins with a beautiful view of the city of Jerusalem from the **Mount of Olives**. We walk down the mountain following the modern path used by pilgrims on Palm Sunday visiting the church of **Dominus Flevit**, which remembers Jesus' weeping over the city as he rode into it, and the traditional location of the **Garden of Gethsemane**. We cross the **Kidron Valley** into the Old City and visit **St. Anne's Church** built over top of the Pools of Bethesda (John 5) where Jesus healed the lame man. We will take the opportunity to sing in the beautiful Crusader church on the site. Our journey continues at **Jaffa Gate** where in the first century Herod's palace stood. Here the story of Jesus begins (Matt. 2) with the visit of the wisemen to Herod, and here his story ended because at Herod's palace Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate (Mark 15:16). From **Jaffa Gate**, we walk into the Jewish Quarter and visit the **Herodian Quarter**, a series of priestly homes from the first century. We then walk along the Byzantine Cardo and see the walls of Jerusalem from the eighth century BC and the first century BC. Passing the **Gennath Gate**, we follow the historic route Jesus traveled from Pilate to his place of execution at the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher**. Our day ends along the southern wall of the **Temple Mount**. On the first century street, we see the shops and markets around the Temple, a possible location for the money changers (Luke 19:45-48). We then proceed to the southern entrances of the Temple where we walk the steps ancient pilgrims took to ascend to the Temple. After a farewell dinner at Satya, we depart Jerusalem for Ben Gurion Airport where you will return to your home country refreshed, challenged, and renewed in your faith.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2022

Arrive U.S.A.