

### Day 1 – Chicago

We depart O’Hare International for Tel Aviv, Israel, and a life-changing adventure. Dress comfortably for travel – and catch a nap if you are able. We will “hit the ground running.”



### Day 2 – Beersheva, Negev, Sde Boker, Makhtesh Ramon

We head south from Tel Aviv’s Ben Gurion Airport and travel past Abraham’s Well and through the modern city of Beersheva, once the southern-most border of the Israelite kingdom. We’ll drive into the Negev Desert, where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob tended their flocks. At Sde Boker we visit the desert home and gravesite of David Ben Gurion (the first Prime Minister of Israel). Enjoy the incredible view as we descend into Makhtesh Ramon (Israel’s Grand Canyon), then continue on toward modern Israel’s southern-most city, Eilat (Solomon’s port of Ezion Geber). After settling into our hotel, we’ll enjoy dinner with area believers.

### Day 3 – Tabernacle in the Wilderness, Eilat, Shelter Bible Study

After breakfast we visit the “Tabernacle in the Wilderness” and have free time to explore on our own or to swim or snorkel in the Red Sea. After dinner in our hotel we attend an evening international Bible study at The Shelter (a Christian youth hostel with a wonderful ministry to international visitors).

### Day 4 – Eilat Congregation and Dead Sea

This morning we attend a local congregation and worship with fellow believers. Departing Eilat, we travel through the Rift Valley and descend to the Dead Sea, earth’s lowest point (-1,385’). Enjoy the opportunity to float in the Dead Sea and settle into our hotel before enjoying dinner with area believers in Arad.

### Day 5 – Masada and Ein Gedi

A cable car takes us to the mountaintop fortress of Masada with its panoramic view and amazing excavations. Masada was one of King Herod’s magnificent palace fortresses. Here 960 heroic Jewish zealots made their last stand against the Roman siege in 70 CE, choosing to take their own lives rather than become slaves. We proceed to Ein Gedi Nature Reserve, the beautiful oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea where David hid in caves from the wrath of King Saul. We continue north past Qumran Caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. We turn up the “Jericho Road” toward Jerusalem by way of Bethany where Jesus frequented the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. The Mount of Olives provides a breathtaking view of Jerusalem. We visit the Garden of Gethsemane where Messiah prayed in agony and where ancient olive trees still stand. We stay for three nights in Israel’s capital city.

### Day 6 – Modern Jerusalem

A full day of touring Jerusalem awaits us as we drive by the Knesset (Israel’s Parliament) prior to visiting Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Memorial), the Shrine of the Book (Dead Sea Scrolls) and the Jerusalem model. In the tranquil setting of the Garden Tomb, with its empty sepulcher, we enjoy communion together.



### Day 7 – Old City Jerusalem

Today we walk up the Southern Steps Jesus used when He entered the Temple. We continue on to the Temple Mount and the Western (Wailing) Wall, the most sacred site in the Jewish world. We take a few minutes to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” then enter the Western Wall tunnel. We then visit the Temple Mount Institute, where the “Temple Mount Faithful” have been rebuilding the Temple, piece by piece. Within the Old City Walls are the Jewish Quarter, the Roman Cardo, and David’s Citadel as well as the Via Dolorosa, “The Way of Suffering” marking the events of the Savior’s Passion. We end our day with a rampart walking tour atop the Old City walls.

### Day 8 – Beth Shean, Nazareth, Jezreel Valley

We depart Jerusalem this morning for the Jordan Valley, one of Israel’s most fertile regions. We travel north past Jericho and then on to the ancient ruins at Beth Shean, one of the Ten Roman Cities (Decapolis) where Jesus taught, and on the walls of which were hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan. We drive through the area of Cana to Nazareth, the boyhood home of Jesus. Here we visit the Nazareth Village – a wonderful recreation of biblical times. We also view Mt. Tabor and work up an appetite walking to the top of Arbel to view the cliffs before arriving at our hotel. We enjoy our dinner with a local pastor.

### Day 9 – Galilee area

We head to Capernaum, where Jesus lived and taught for much of his three years of ministry, with its ruins of an ancient synagogue and “Peter’s home.” Then to Tabgha, where Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes, and the Mount of the Beatitudes. We visit Bethsaida, the third most mentioned place in the Gospels, where Jesus healed the blind man. Our afternoon will include a visit to Chorazin, remembered as one of the three key cities in which Jesus spent much of his ministry. Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida form the “Evangelical Triangle,” the small area where most of Jesus’ miracles were displayed (Matt. 11:20). We visit the Baniyas Nature Preserve (Caesarea Philippi, the site of Peter’s confession and the headwaters of the Jordan River), and Tel Dan, site of a gate dating back to 1750 BCE and an ancient altar. From here we also have a wonderful view of Mt. Hermon,



Israel’s highest peak (9,232 ft.). After stopping by the “Jesus Boat” museum at Kibbutz Ginosar where a 1<sup>st</sup> Century boat was recovered from the Sea of Galilee and is on display, we watch the sunset on the Sea of Galilee before returning to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

### Day 10 – Caesarea by the Sea, Carmel, Haifa, Megiddo

After breakfast we visit Megiddo, where archaeologists have unearthed 20 levels of civilization and which overlook the prophesied Armageddon battlefield. Heading toward the Mediterranean Sea and Haifa, we stop by Mt. Carmel, where Elijah challenged King Ahab and the prophets of Baal. Next to Caesarea, where Gentiles first heard the Good News from Peter and were baptized. We see the Roman Amphitheatre and aqueduct. We spend the night in Tel Aviv.

### Day 11 – Tel Aviv congregation and departure for home

This morning, depending on our departure time, we attend a Shabbat service with fellow believers. Afterward we spend some time helping a local ministry serve food to homeless people. We travel to Ben Gurion airport for our departure to Chicago, arriving home Saturday evening or Sunday morning depending on our departure time.

*\*Itinerary subject to change*