ISRAEL – BIBLICAL REFERENCES & OTHER FACTS

THE COASTAL PLAIN

Caesarea Maritima -- Founded by Herod the Great in 22 BC and named for Augustus Caesar, Caesarea Maritima was the seat of Roman government in Palestine for over 500 years. A center of the early followers of Jesus, Phillip, one of the seven deacons from Jerusalem, was the first to preach here and later settled in Caesarea with his 4 prophesying daughters (Acts 8:40; 21:8-9). Here Cornelius became the first Gentile convert to the new faith (Acts 10) and the Apostle Paul was imprisoned before being taken to Rome to stand trial.

Cana -- The place of the first miracle performed by Jesus, where he turned the water into wine (John 2:1-11).

Nazareth -- A small village never mentioned in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), today Nazareth is the largest Arab city in Israel with a population of 70,000 – half Christians and half Muslims. Here, the Lord Jesus spent most of his life until his ministry began at age 30 (e.g., Luke 1:26-28, 2:1-7, 2:21-23, 2:41-52, 4:16-30; Mark 6:1-6).

K'far Kedem -- Restored, life-size model of a Galilee village. Spend a festive evening amidst the ancient atmosphere of the Galilee region; feast on local foods and wines; donkey rides; witness olive pressing, baking, and goat milking.

Mount Carmel -- This mountain range, 13 miles long, projects into the Mediterranean Sea at Haifa. In ancient times, Mt. Carmel served as a barrier to traffic along the coastal plain. 1,500 feet high, the limestone mountain kept merchants and armies from entering the Jezreel Valley. Located along the International Highway, three main passes became major routes of travel in the ancient world. From ancient times, pagan altars were erected on its heights, particularly those associated with the worship of Baal. Here, Elijah the prophet contested with the prophets of Baal. (1 Kings 18:19). Mt. Carmel is often used by the prophets as a symbol of beauty, fruitfulness, majesty and prosperity. (Isaiah 35:2, 33:9; Amos 1:2; Nahum 1:4; Jeremiah 46:18). Today, two Druze villages are located on Mt. Carmel.

Tel Megiddo/Valley of Armageddon -- Located in the Jezreel Valley which stretches to the north and east of Mt. Carmel. Once a swampy land, the Valley now is some of the most fertile farmland in Israel. The Valley is an important thoroughfare today as it was in ancient times as merchants use it to transport goods to the port in Haifa. Megiddo was quite large and functioned as the chariot center of King Solomon and King Ahab, as well as the site of numerous battles in Biblical history (Judges 1:27, 5:19-20; 1 Kings 4:12, 9:15, 10:26, 9:27; 2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chr. 35:20-24). This valley is thought by many to be the scene of the end-time battle of Armageddon. ("Har Megiddo", which means, "Mt. Megiddo" in Hebrew, was transliterated as "Armageddon.") (Revelation 16:16).

SAMARIA

Alon Moreh -- The traditional site from which God first promised the Land of Israel to Abraham (Gen 12:6; Deut 11:30; Judges 7:1).

Emmanuel/Contemporary Jewish settlement -- A modern Orthodox Jewish settlement in this politically sensitive area.

Mt. Gerizim (Mt. of the Blessings) -- At 9,514 meters above sea level, this mountain stands slightly lower than its counterpart to the north, Mt. Ebal. Both mountains tower over the city of Shechem (modern Arabic: Nablus). After Israel's victory at Ai, Joshua led the people of Israel here (and Mt. Ebal) to recite the blessings and curses of the Torah as God had commanded (Deut 11:29, 27:12-13; Josh 8:30-35). Here also the Samaritans erected a temple to rival the Jewish one. John Hyrcanus destroyed it in 129 BC, fueling the animosity between Jews and Samaritans. The "woman at the well" whom Jesus met in Samaria pointed to Mt. Gerizim when she said, "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain" (John 4:19-24).

Mt. Ebal or (Mt. of the Curses) -- At 10,170 meters above sea level, Mt. Ebal sits at the Northern side of the Biblical city of Shechem (modern Arabic: Nablus). Tradition has it that when Israel recounted God's commandments here the blessings were read from Mt. Gerizim while the curses were read from Mt. Ebal (Deut 11:29, 27:1-8, 12-13). The "woman at the well" whom Jesus met in Samaria was from the village of Sycar located on the slopes of Mt. Ebal (John 4:4-6).

Shechem -- Nestled between Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal this city saw a parade of Biblical heroes pass through - from Abraham to Jacob to Joshua to Jesus. After the destruction of the temple in 70 AD a new city was established, "Neapolis," from which comes the present day Palestinian city of Nablus. This was both Abraham and Jacob's first stop in the Holy Land when they came from the East. For the many Biblical references, see: Gen 12:6, 33:18-19, 34:1-31; Deut 27:4-13; Josh 8:30-35, 17:7, 24:1-28, 24:32; Judges 9:1-57; Psalms 60:6, 108:7; 1 Kings 12:1-14, 12:25; 1 Chr 7:28, 6:67; 2 Chr 10:1-19; Jer 41:5; John 4:1-42

Shiloh -- The first religious center for the tribes of Israel after they entered the Land, thus it was the dwelling place of the
tabernacle before the temple was built in Jerusalem. This is also where Samuel the prophet started his ministry, as well as the site of many other events in Bible history (1 Samuel 1-2; Joshua 18:1, 8-10; 22:10-12; Judges 21:15-22).

**View over Tirza** -- View over the old capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Samaria

**GALILEE REGION**

**Capernaum** -- The center of His ministry, Capernaum was Jesus’ home for 2 years - the longest He spent in any place. Five of Jesus’ disciples called Capernaum home, including Peter whose mother-in-law was healed by Jesus here. The modern Octagon Church on site was built over the ruins of what is known as Peter’s house. Visitors can view the ruins on site or through the church’s glass floor. Underneath the visible synagogue, which dates to the 300s AD, ruins of a synagogue from the New Testament era lay.

**Chorazin** -- An unrepentant town referred to by Jesus in Matthew 11, Chorazin is now the site of an archaeological park. Excavations have unearthed a synagogue dating from the 2nd Century. The “Seat of Moses,” found in the 1920s, was located inside the Synagogue in ancient times. It is the seat of authority that Jesus references in Matthew 23. Other archaeological discoveries include an olive press, several houses and a ritual bath.

**Jordan River Baptismal Site** -- A once in a life time experience to be baptized in the waters of the Jordan River as Jesus himself did.

**Kursi in the land of the Gadarians** -- This is where Jesus cast out “Legion,” the multitude of demons possessing a man commanding them to enter the ill-fated flock of swine (Matt 8:23-34; Luke 8:26-39). It is also the site of the largest Byzantine monastery in Israel.

**Mount of the Beatitudes** -- Located between Capernaum and Tabgha and above the “Cove of the Sower,” this hill seems to be the likely location of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount ( Mt. 5-7). In 1939 the Franciscan Sisters build a Catholic chapel atop the hills side. The mount overlooks the Plain of Gennesaret which is known for its fertility. Visitors to this site are met with the quiet, reflective atmosphere of both the church and surrounding gardens. Here one is easily persuaded to take a walk and consider the words spoken so many years ago.

**Mount Arbel** -- A part of the “Jesus Trail” (a 65-kilometer hiking trail from Nazareth to the Galilee that connects important sites from the life of Jesus) Mt. Arbel, located on the western shore of the Galilee just north of Tiberias, provides a spectacular view of the whole Galilee area. From its peak one can see as far as the Golan Heights and Mount Hermon, Israel’s tallest peak. The Horns of Hattin, where Saladin defeated the Crusaders in 1187, are a popular attraction. Dug into the slopes of Mt Arbel are caves used by the Jewish people who fought against the Greeks and Romans. Visitors are able to view the ruins of an ancient synagogue which is the only synagogue in the world where the ark does not face Jerusalem.

**Sea of Galilee** -- At nearly 700 feet below sea level, this sea is the lowest freshwater lake in the world. A focal point of the life and ministry of Jesus, this lake supports Israel’s life and agriculture today just as it did in Jesus’ day. During the period of Roman occupation, the lake witnessed the naval battle between the Romans and the Jews. The Roman forces killed every Jewish fighter leaving the bodies and boats on the lake. Despite all the activity around the lake over the years, no ancient boats had been discovered until January 24, 1986.

**1st Century Boat** -- Thirty feet long by eight feet wide and four feet deep, this 2,000 year old boat is quite an artifact. During a drought season in 1986, two fisherman brothers from Kibbutz Ginosar discovered the ancient boat. 11 days later archeologist crew extracted what is known today as “The Jesus Boat.” While experts speculate as to the actual use of this boat in history, there is no denying that the discovery was anything less than miraculous. Had it been found a mere 30 years earlier, the knowledge needed to rescue and preserve this boat would not have existed.

**Sea of Galilee Boat Ride** -- The wooden, first-century style boat takes visitors across the area where most of the Gospel stories took place. See the same waters upon which Jesus walked (Mark 5).

**Tabgha** -- The site of numerous springs on the northwest shore of the Galilee. The springs provide plenty of warm water, even in winter, making it a major site for fishing on the sea. It is the traditional site of the feeding of the multitude although many scholars believe that this actually took place somewhere on the east coast of the Galilee (Luke 9:10; John 6:1). This is probably the place where Jesus met with his disciples while they were fishing and where Jesus first called his disciples charging them to be "fishers of men" (Matt 4:18-24; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11; John 21:1-24).
THE NORTHERN BORDER REGION

Banias/Caesarea Philippi -- Jesus and His disciples were here when Peter made his remarkable confession that Jesus was the Messiah (Matthew 16:13-20). In ancient times, this city was a place of pagan worship. In the Old Testament, Baal was worshiped here. When the Greeks occupied the area, the goddess Pan became the center of worship. Today, visitors can see the hollowed out niches in the cave face where the pagan idols once stood as well as one of the largest springs that feeds the Jordan River.

Gamla -- A town which was the seat of Jewish resistance under the Romans and where the "Zealots" planned much of their activity. A precursor to events at Masada as the Jews of this fortified town chose mass suicide instead of submitting to Roman capture. Today this area is a beautiful nature reserve with the highest waterfall in Israel (51 meters).

Golan Heights -- Part of the very fertile plateau of Bashan between Mt. Hermon and the Wadi el-Yarmuk east of the Jordan River. The northern security-belt of Israel the Golan was won from Syria during the Six Day War in 1967.

Katzrin -- A reconstructed model village from Second Temple/Talmudic times; see how people lived, worked, and ate in ancient Israel.

Nimrod Castle -- 12th century castle overlooking the Hula Valley. Originally built by Muslims atop a precipice, to protect the road from Tyre to Damascus; it changed hands many times in the battles with the Crusaders.

Tel Dan -- Dan was the northernmost city of ancient Israel thus when Scripture speaks of all of the Land, from North to South, it often says, "from Dan to Beersheva" (Judges 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 10:4, 17:11, 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25). Abraham traveled from Hebron to Dan to rescue his nephew Lot from Kedorlaomer. The tribe of Dan was not satisfied with its inheritance near Judah, so it settled here and set up idolatrous worship that plagued Israel throughout its history. This was especially so in the time of Jeroboam, son of Solomon and first king of the divided Northern Kingdom, who set up golden calves in Dan and Bethel to keep people from going to Jerusalem to worship (Judges 18; 1 Kings 12:26-33).

JORDAN RIFT VALLEY

Beit-Shean/Scythopolis -- The most magnificent archeological site in Israel, located at the strategic juncture of the Jezreel and Jordan valleys. Like Jericho, it has been almost continuously occupied throughout history. After defeating Saul and his sons on Mt. Gilboa, the Philistines hanged their bodies on the walls of Beit-Shean (1 Sam 31:10-12). During the intertestamental period, the city was renamed the "Scythopolis". Archaeologists have uncovered a huge number of ruins of the Roman/Byzantine Scythopolis. During the time of Jesus, Scythopolis was one of the chief cities of the Decapolis—a league of ten cities sharing Greek culture and government. (Other Biblical references include: Josh 17:11, 16; Judges 1:27; 1 Kings 4:12)

Gideon Springs -- Here Gideon, one of many "deliverers" in the Book of Judges, prepared for the battle against the Midianites by reducing his army from thirty-three thousand to ultimately only three hundred—so that God could demonstrate his greatness in granting them ultimate victory (Judges 7:2-8).

Jericho -- (aka "City of Palms") Excavations have demonstrated Jericho to be one of the world's oldest cities, if not the oldest. It was, and still is, an important site because of its warm climate, abundant springs of water and strategic location astride a point where caravans could travel east to west along the Jordan Valley. It is the site of the famous, miraculous conquest under Joshua (Joshua 2, 6). (Other Biblical references include: Judges 3:12-30; 2 Sam 10:4-5; 1 Kings 16:34; 2 Kings 2:4-22)

Jordan River/Valley -- ("Go down") This river flows from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea. Although there are only 70 miles between the two bodies of water, with all of its twists and turns the Jordan is about 110 miles long. The most notable settlements along its ancient shores were Beit Shean and Jericho. Most of its banks were too densely covered with vegetation to be habitable and instead served as a haven for wild animals (See Jer 12:5, 49:19, 50:44). Today, the Jordan is actually a small stream as most of its waters are used for irrigation. God identified the Jordan as the eastern border of the Promised Land and it is here John the Baptist baptized many including Jesus himself (Num 34:10-12). Other Biblical references: Gen 13:10-11; Num 22:1; Joshua 3:1-4:18; Judges 3:28-30, 7:24-25, 12:1-7; 1 Sam 31:7-10; 2 Sam 17:15-22; Jer 12:5; Ezek 47:18; Zech 11:3; Matt 3:56; 3:13-17; Mark 1:5, 1:9; John 1:28, 10:40-42).

Sachne Hot Spring -- A fine place for swimming and winter Baptisms.

DEAD SEA AREA

Ein-Gedi -- ("Spring of the Goat") Ein Gedi is an oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea. Because of its warm climate and abundant supply of water the site developed a reputation for its fragrant plants and date palm groves. This is where King David
hid from Saul and where God defeated the enemies of the Israelites by praise and worship led by King Jehoshaphat (1 Sam 23:29; 24; Song of Songs 1:14).

Masada -- (aka "The stronghold") This spectacular mountaintop fortress on the western shore of the Dead Sea was built by Herod and is famous as the last stronghold of the Jewish rebellion against the Romans. Some Old Testament scholars identify Masada with the stronghold of David as the location where he fled from Saul (1 Sam 22:3-5, 24:22; 1 Chr 12:1-16).

Dead Sea -- The lowest place on the surface of earth (4,429 meters below sea level, 45 miles long, 11 wide) and one of the world's richest sources of minerals, the Dead Sea is a very "salty" sea in which one cannot swim but only float. It is referred to as the "Salt Sea" (Num 34:3, 12), "The Sea" (Ezek. 47:8) and "The Eastern Sea" (Joel 2:20) in the Bible. During Jesus' time, it was also called "Lake Asphaltitus." Sodom, Gomorrah and "the cities of the plain" were located in and around the southern portion of the Dead Sea. Today, the Dead Sea is famous for its rich mineral content, and its waters are renowned for their healing properties, especially for skin problems. (Other Biblical references include: Gen 14:3; Gen 18-19; Jer 17:6)

Qumran -- Located near the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, Qumran is the site of a small settlement that existed during New Testament times and is famous for the discovery of the so-called "Dead Sea Scrolls" in 1947. Most scholars believe that Qumran was inhabited by the Jewish sect of the Essenes, a radical monastic sect who lived in austerity. They left behind the oldest existing copies of many parts of Scripture. The Essenes most likely perished along with the anti-Roman zealots at Masada in 73 AD.

Wadi Qelt -- The magnificent ravine, with a Roman period water-aqueduct, where Elijah the prophet was fed by the raven. It is a favorite site among locals for hiking.

JERUSALEM: MT OF OLIVES AND THE OLD CITY

Ecce Homo -- (Latin: "Behold, the man!") A station of the cross on the Via Dolorosa commemorated by an arch. The phrase "Ecce Homo" refers to Pilate's words when he brought Jesus out to the crowd for judgment (John 19:5).

Garden Tomb -- This is a tranquil setting where pilgrims come to reflect and meditate on the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Discovered in 1867, the tomb did not gain recognition as a potential burial place of Jesus until 1882. The tombs in the garden have been dated to the 7th-9th centuries BC. Further excavations have led to the belief that the area was a garden in Jesus' time. From the Garden Tomb can be seen what some believe to be the "Place of the Skull" or "Gordon's Calvary." In 1842 a German scholar, Otto Thenius, suggested that the skull of a German scholar, Otto Thenius, suggested that the skull of a German scholar, Otto Thenius, suggested that the skull faced cliff was the place of Jesus' crucifixion. Thousands of pilgrims visit each year to pay homage to their Savior.

Garden of Gethsemane -- Jesus and his disciples left the Upper Room (Last Supper) and came here to this tranquil spot on the Mt. of Olives to pray. Here Jesus prayed for God's will to be done before he was arrested and taken away (Matt.26:36-56; Mark 14:32-52; Luke 22:39-53; John 18:1-11).

Jewish Quarter -- The 2nd smallest quarter in the Old City, the Jewish Quarter is simultaneously the oldest and newest quarter. In the 1948 Independence War, the quarter was destroyed and its inhabitants expelled. In 1967, the Israelis recaptured the Old City and the quarter underwent intense excavations before its reconstruction. Excavated sites open to the public include the Cardo, Burnt House, Broad Wall (Isaiah 22; Nehemiah 3) and Israelite Tower.

Mount of Olives -- Rising almost 8,202 meters east of Jerusalem this hill has been central to the Biblical and modern history of Israel. While it was once covered with many olive trees, this space is mostly occupied by Christian shrines, Jewish graves and Arab villages. The Biblical references are many in both Testaments. From here Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding the back of a donkey and spent His last days before betrayal, arrest and crucifixion. From here He ascended after His resurrection and to here many believe the Messiah will return (Biblical references include: 2 Sam 15:30-37; 1 Kings 11:7-8; Ezek 11:22-23; 43:1-5 Zechariah 14:3-5; Matt 21:1-11; 24-25, 26:36-56; Mark 11:1-10, 13:1-37, 14:32-52; Luke 19:28-40, 19:41-44, 21:5-36, 22:39-53, 24:50-53; John 18:1-11; Acts 1:9-12).

Mount Zion -- Often identified with the "City of David," it was after Solomon that the city grew farther to the north and to the west on the hill today identified as Mount Zion. This hill is protected on the south and west by the Valley of Hinnom. This identification of Mount Zion, which in 2 Sam. 5:7 is applied to David's city, derives from the Jewish historian Josephus, who identified all of the Jerusalem of his day (the first century AD) with the city of David. You can visit the "Upper Room" (Mark 14:12-26) and the House of the High Priest Caiaphas (Mt.26:57).

Palm Sunday Road -- Follow the path of Jesus and his disciples from the Mt. of Olives to Jerusalem when he was hailed as king in the "Triumphal Entry" (Matt 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-16).

Pools of Bethesda -- Meaning "house of grace," the Pools of Bethesda are believed to be the site where Jesus healed the
paralytic in John 5. Built in the time of King Solomon, the two pools connected by a trench are larger than a football field and about 45 feet deep. Ruins of a statue of the Greek god of healing and medicine, Asclepius, can also be seen by the pools. The waters themselves were believed to have miraculous healing powers. Jesus performed a great miracle here on a man who had been lame for 38 years. As it was done on the Sabbath, this led to controversy with certain Jewish leaders of the time (John 5:1-16).

**Rabbi's Tunnel/Western Wall Tunnel** -- In 1867, archeologist Charles Wilson began excavations that led to the present day Rabbi's Tunnels. In 1967, after the Six Day War, the Ministry of Religious Affairs began the project of exposing the tunnels. A project of the Orthodox Rabbi's, the tunnels quickly adopted the nickname of “Rabbi's Tunnels”.

Through tedious excavations over the next 20 years, archeologists unearthed a part of ancient Jerusalem. A Herodian road, ancient cisterns, aqueducts and massive stones used in building were some of the ruins uncovered during the excavations. The largest stone exposed in the tunnel weighs 570 tons; the largest stone of The Great Pyramid is only 11 tons.

The 500 meter long tunnel was opened to the public in 1996 and is visited by appointment. The tunnel route begins at the north side of the Western Wall prayer area and ends near the first station on the Via Dolorosa.

**Jerusalem Archeological Park** -- This southern side of The Temple was the main entrance for the common folk, whereas the Priests and Levites had their own entrance from the higher eastern side. Parts of the giant stairs, which led to the Temple Mount from the courtyard, have been unearthed. It is in this courtyard that Jesus likely drove out the vendors and money exchangers who were exploiting the people (Matt 21:12-17; Mk 11:15-17; Luke19:45-46). Gamliel is believed to have taught at the Temple steps. Mikvahs (ritual baths) have been unearthed at the site making it possible that this is where Peter gave his sermon and baptized 3,000 in Acts 2.

**Temple Mount** -- The place where God chose to "put His name" and where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice (Mt. Moriah, Gen 22). This is the site of both the First and Second Temples found in the Bible. Today it is occupied by the Dome of The Rock Mosque.

**Via Dolorosa** -- (Latin: 'way of pain'), the traditional pilgrimage route in Jerusalem commemorating Jesus' journey to the cross (Mark 15:20-23). The traditional route is not likely to have been historical, since Pilate probably condemned Jesus at the Herodian palace on the opposite side of the city (Matt. 27:19; Luke 23:4; John 18:28). A route from there through the city to Golgotha would have led east on David Street and then west on Triple Suk to Golgotha. The present route consists of two devotional stops near the Ecce Homo arch, seven outside leading to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and five inside the church itself. Though Byzantine pilgrims followed approximately the present route from Gethsemane to Calvary on Holy Thursday, they made no devotional stops. Numerous routes developed during the Middle Ages. The devotional practice of representing the gospel story in churches around fourteen stations led to the development of the present route. The route itself was fixed in the eighteenth century and all of the stations established in the nineteenth (Matt.26).

**Western Wall** -- (aka "Wailing Wall") - Built by King Herod in 20BC as part of his expansion of the Temple enclosure, it is considered the holiest of Jewish sites as it is the closest a Jewish person can get to the Holy of Holies. According to Josephus, construction of the walls took 11 years. The Temple was destroyed, along with Jerusalem, by the Romans in 70AD. For centuries after, the Western Wall was an alley only 12 feet wide. In 1967 after the Six Day War, Israelis leveled the neighboring district creating the Western Wall Plaza. During this renovation, the wall was made about 6.5 feet higher by digging down exposing two more tiers of the squared stones from Herod's time. In the past the Western Wall has been referred to as the Wailing Wall as many Jews have gathered here over the centuries to lament the destruction of the Temple and pray for the day when it would be rebuilt. Today, the Wall is home to many events including weddings, bar mitzvahs and swearing in for the Israeli armed forces but it is still a primary place of prayer for all people - especially the Jewish people.

**THE NEW CITY OF JERUSALEM AND BETHLEHEM**

**Bethlehem/Shepherd's Field** -- Originally a small village on the road from Jerusalem to Hevron, it marks the place of the great biblical accounts of Ruth and Boaz and the birthplace of David. The tomb of Rachel is also found here (Genesis 35:19). A pinnacle of New Testament biblical history, Bethlehem is also the birthplace of Jesus (Luke 2:1-7). Many believe the site of the Shepherd's Field to be the place where the angels announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds (Luke 2:8-20). Other references - Gen 35:16-20, 48:7; Ruth 1; Sam 16:1-12, 17:12; Micah 5:2; Matt 2:1-18.

**Israel Museum/Model of 2nd Temple Jerusalem** -- Here the visitor can find a full scale model of the Jerusalem of Jesus' time. The model is a great aid in visualizing the geography of New Testament Jerusalem.

**Israel Museum/Shrine of the Book** -- Israel's finest and most comprehensive museum it contains artifacts and documents from
pre-historical to Biblical to Byzantine, Turkish and modern times. Also, some of the Dead Sea Scrolls (including the famous Isaiah text) and many artifacts relating to the Qumran community can be found in the separate Shrine of the Book building, whose famous roof is shaped like the ceramic jar covers in which the scrolls were first found.

The Knesset -- home of the Israeli Parliament.

Solomon's Quarry -- A quarry located north of the Temple Mount near the present-day Damascus Gate, now called Solomon's Quarry or Zedekiah's Cave. This quarry was used through the Roman period (63 BC-324 AD), and possibly also by Hezekiah for his building projects.

Yad V'Shem -- As the WWII generation closes there remain few survivors of the Holocaust. Yad Vashem is the Jewish people's living memorial to this tragic time in history. Within the halls, the victims of the Holocaust speak of the horrors they experienced. Original artifacts, survivor testimonies and personal possessions are all displayed. The Hall of Names testifies to the millions who perished.

Outside lies the Avenue of the Righteous where trees have been planted in honor of non-Jews who risked their lives saving Jews during the Holocaust. Among those who have plaques commemorating their efforts are Oskar Schindler, Miep & Jan Gies (the couple who hid the Frank family and saved the Diaries of Anne Frank) and Corrie Ten Boom.

The Children's Memorial is a particularly somber part of this hallowed ground. This underground cavern is the memorial to the 1.5 million children who perished in the Holocaust. As visitors walk through, the names of the children, their ages and countries of origin are spoken aloud.

An original German cattle-car is on display as a memorial to millions of Jewish people who were transported this way across Europe, many to their deaths. The testimony of a survivor is on the wall adjacent to the memorial.

The Memorial Flame is a tent like structure with the names of the 22 Nazi extermination, concentration and transit camps that existed throughout Europe. A memorial flame burns continually next to a crypt containing ashes of victims from these camps.

JERUSALEM: FAMOUS SITES SURROUNDING THE HOLY CITY

Ayalon Valley -- The main valley leading from the coast to Jerusalem. The site of many famous battles during Joshua's campaigns against the Canaanites, during the Maccabean Revolt, the Roman period and in modern times including the War of Independence in 1948.

Bet Shemesh -- A town west of Jerusalem on the way to the coastal plain. It was in this vicinity that most of the Samson stories took place (Judges 13-16). It is now a thriving suburb of modern Jerusalem and a center for industry, with a population of over 25,000.

Caves of Bet Guvrin -- A prominent city in the period of the Second Temple, located in the southern Shephelah (hilly region to the west of Jerusalem). Today it is a small kibbutz of a few hundred people and is famous for its numerous and cavernous caves.


Tel Maresha - Next door to Bet Guvrin is yet another remarkable archaeological site. This area was the most important agricultural center in the Jerusalem area. Sites to see include the caves where they raised doves both for fertilizer (from their dung) as well as for offerings at the Temple, olive presses, wineries and other artifacts.

Tomb of Samuel -- The traditional site of the tomb of this great Israelite judge and prophet who lived in the 11th Century BC. Standing at the close of one era and the beginning of another, Samuel was instrumental in the painful but necessary transition from a loose confederation of Hebrew tribes to a centralized monarchy. He played a part in events which eventually saw his people completely freed from subjection to the Philistines and from the threat of the utter loss of national life. The site is in Neve-Samuel, the highest hill overlooking Jerusalem, and many Jews used to come here to pray on the anniversary of his death (1 Sam 1-25).

ISRAEL'S DEEP SOUTH AND THE NEGEV

Bedouin Camp and Camel Ride -- Spend an evening in an authentic Bedouin (nomadic herdsmen) camp. Enjoy their food, their tent-based lifestyle and a camel ride!

Eilat -- Israel's southern most city and the country's world famous winter sun resort center on the Red Sea. Eilat is an international city featuring hotels in every price category, a wide range of water sports and other active holiday activities. The
city's Coral World Underwater Observatory is a must see.

**Mitzpe Ramon Crater** -- Halfway to Eilat lays this giant crater that is a favorite site for hikers and campers. It is famous for its beautiful sunrises.

**Valley of Arava** -- A picturesque valley which runs from the Dead Sea all the way to Eilat.

**Sede Boker/Ben Gurion's Home** – ("Morning Field") This is the town made famous by David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister and one its founding heroes. It was Ben Gurion's vision that Israel must learn to exploit the vast desert lands of the Negev if she were to survive and be able to absorb the millions of Jews yet to return here. You can visit his home as well as his grave.

**EGYPT**

**Cairo** -- The capital of this modern Arab republic.

**Giza** -- Home of the world famous pyramids.

**Mount Sinai** -- The site of God's revelation to Israel through Moses (Exodus 19-20, 24:13-18).

**Santa Catharina's Monastery** -- At the foot of Mt. Sinai, where some of the oldest extant NT texts found.

**JORDAN**

**Amman** -- Modern capital of this country, the so-called "Hashemite Kingdom." Also the most important city in ancient Ammon, center of the Ammonites, offspring of Lot, Abraham's nephew.

**Jerash/Gerasa** -- The modern city of Jerash in Jordan preserves the name of the ancient city of Gerasa, one the most important cities in the region of the Decapolis. It is located 25 miles north of Amman and 40 miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Here can be found some of the best preserved Roman ruins in all of the Middle East.

**Madaba** -- Site of a 6th Byzantine church with a famous tile mosaic of the entire holy land. It is the oldest existing map of Jerusalem was used by pilgrims of old en route to visit the Holy City.

**Mount Nebo** -- Also identified with Pisgah, located northeast of the Dead Sea overlooking the Jordan Valley opposite Jericho. The king of Moab took Balaam the prophet to "the top of Pisgah" in an effort to get him to curse Israel (Num 23:13-14). From here, God allowed Moses to view the Promised Land before he died (Deut 32:49, 34:1).

**Petra** -- ("Rock") This Edomite city was once the capital of the Nabateans; located in a semi-landlocked valley on the eastern side of the Aravah Valley, about 50 miles south of the Dead Sea. The normal entrance into the city of Petra is through the "Siq" (cleft), a winding fissure in the eastern ridge. At the end of the Siq, the path opens up to a spectacular canyon, with a view of a temple carved into the face of the rock. Some Bible teachers believe that the Jews will flee here during the End-Times battle that will precede the return of Jesus. Sometimes also called "Sela." (Isaiah 34:4-6, 63:1; Matt 24:15-16; Rev 12:6)