

Episcopal Diocese of Olympia
Holy Land Pilgrimage
September 9 to 22, 2008

Jim and The Rev. Bonnie Campbell, Mary Venske, and Yoneimi Creamer joined 25 others from around the Diocese to make this wonderful trip to Israel. The pilgrimage covered all of the main religious (especially Christian) sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Galilee. We followed the narrative of Jesus' life laid out in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke from his birth to his resurrection.

We also met with members of our companion diocese, the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, including Bishop Suhail Dawani, and heard from speakers from Jewish and Palestinian perspectives.

Our guide and teacher was Mr. Iyad Qumri, an Anglican, a member of St. George's Anglican Cathedral, and a staff member of St. George's College. Iyad was taught by the Rev. Canon John Peterson who was dean of St. George's College for ten years before becoming Secretary General of the Anglican Communion.

We stayed at St. George's College Guest House in Jerusalem and the Convent of the Sisters of Nazareth in Nazareth.

Itinerary

Tuesday, **SEP 9, DAY 1: DEPARTED U.S.A.** from Seattle through Atlanta to Tel Aviv, Israel.

Wednesday, **SEP 10, DAY 2: ARRIVED TEL AVIV / TRANSFERRED TO JERUSALEM**
On arrival were met by our guide and proceeded to Saint George's College in Jerusalem.

Thursday, **SEP 11, DAY 3: OLD CITY / EL-AKSA MOSQUE / ST ANNE'S CHURCH/ SHRINE OF THE BOOK / SECOND TEMPLE MODEL / DEAD SEA SCROLLS / CHRISTIAN QTR / CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE**

(Morning) Guest Speaker: Contemporary Issues—A Palestinian Muslim Perspective (Dr. Ali Qleibo)

We began with a walking tour of the Old City of Jerusalem, passing by the Western Wall, on to the Temple Area of Mt. Moriah. We visited the El Aksa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock which is built on the ancient site of Solomon's Temple (Genesis 22:9-14) and over the Rock of Sacrifice where Abraham offered Isaac (Genesis 22). Then we visited St. Anne's Church and the Pools of Bethesda (John 5).

(Afternoon) Guest Speaker: Fr. Bob Edmund, Bishop's Chaplain and Canon Pastor for the English speaking congregation of the Cathedral.

We went to the Israeli Museum and the Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are housed, and where we reviewed a scale model of the Old City of Jerusalem, describing the city more as it would have been during Jesus' time. We then drove to the New Gate into the Christian Qtr of the old city and walked thru it to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Armenian excavations. (We had the unique opportunity to visit the Armenian Excavations of the 1st Century quarry behind the Church where Joseph of Aramathea had his tomb.) Then we walked back to St. George's thru the Armenian Qtr and the Damascus Gate.

The **Old City of Jerusalem** is a 0.9 square kilometre (0.35 square mile) area within the modern city of Jerusalem. Until the 1860s this area constituted the entire city of Jerusalem. The Old City is home to several sites of key religious importance: the Temple Mount and its Western Wall for Jews, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for Christians, and the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque for Muslims. Traditionally, the Old City has been divided into four quarters, although the current designations were introduced only in the 19th century. Today, the Old City is roughly divided into the Muslim Quarter, the Christian Quarter, the Jewish Quarter and the Armenian Quarter. Jordan proposed the Old City to be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List in 1980. It was added to the List in 1981. In 1982, Jordan requested that it be added to the List of World Heritage Sites in danger. According to the Bible, before King David's conquest of Jerusalem in the 11th century BCE the city was home to the Jebusites.

The Bible describes the city as heavily fortified with a strong city wall. The city ruled by King David, known as Ir David, or the City of David, is now believed to be southwest of the Old City walls, outside the Dung Gate. His son King Solomon extended the city walls and then, in about 440 BCE, in the Persian period, Nehemiah returned from Babylon and rebuilt them. In 41-44 CE, Agrippa, king of Judea, built a new city wall known as the "Third Wall." In 1219 the walls of the city were razed by Mu'azzim Sultan of Damascus; in 1229, by treaty with Egypt, Jerusalem came into the hands of Frederick II of Germany. In 1239 he began to rebuild the walls; but they were again demolished by Da'ud, the emir of Kerak. In 1243 Jerusalem came again under the control of the Christians, and the walls were repaired. The Kharezmian Tatars took the city in 1244 and Sultan Malik al-Muattam razed the city walls, rendering it again defenseless and dealing a heavy blow to the city's status. The current walls of the Old City were built in 1538 by Suleiman the Magnificent. The walls stretch for approximately 4.5 kilometres, (2.8 miles), and rise to a height of 5–15 metres, (16–49 feet), with a thickness of 3 metres, (10 ft). Altogether, the Old City walls contain 43 surveillance towers and 11 gates, seven of which are presently open.

The **Dome of the Rock** is an Islamic shrine and a major landmark located on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem. It was completed in 691, making it the oldest extant Islamic building in the world. The Dome of the Rock is located at the visual center of an ancient man-made platform known as the Temple Mount (Hebrew, Har haBayit; literally, the Mountain of the House) to the Jews and the Haram al-Sharif (Noble Sanctuary) to the Muslims. The platform, greatly enlarged under the rule of Herod the Great, is the site of the Second Jewish Temple which was destroyed during the Roman Siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD. In 637 AD, Jerusalem was conquered by the Rashidun Caliphate army during the Islamic invasion of the Byzantine Empire. The Dome of the Rock was erected between 685 and 691 AD.

Al-Aqsa Mosque, also known as **al-Aqsa**, is an Islamic holy place in Jerusalem. The mosque itself forms part of the *al-Haram ash-Sharif* or "Sacred Noble Sanctuary", a site also known as the Temple Mount and considered the holiest site in Judaism, since it is believed to be where the Temple in Jerusalem once stood. Widely considered, mainly by Sunni Islam, as the third holiest site in Islam, Muslims believe that prophet Muhammad was transported from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca to al-Aqsa Mosque during the Night Journey. Islamic tradition holds that Muhammad led prayers at this site before ascending to heaven. Erected in the late 7th and early 8th centuries, the mosque has been destroyed and damaged by earthquakes and rebuilt several times throughout its history. During the periodic renovations undertaken, the various ruling dynasties of the Islamic Caliphate constructed additions to the mosque and its precincts, such as its dome, facade, its *minbar*, minarets and the interior structure. Al-Aqsa Mosque was originally a small prayer house built by the Rashidun caliph Umar, but was rebuilt and expanded by the Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik and finished by his son al-Walid in 705 CE.^[5] After an earthquake in 746, the mosque was completely destroyed and rebuilt by the Abbasid caliph al-Mansur in 754, and again rebuilt by his successor al-Mahdi in 780. Another earthquake destroyed most of al-Aqsa in 1033, but two years later the Fatimid caliph Ali az-Zahir built another mosque which has stood to the present-day. When the Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099, they used the mosque as a palace and church, but its function as a mosque was restored after its recapture by Saladin. More renovations, repairs and additions were undertaken in the later centuries by the Ayyubids, Mamluks, Ottomans and Jordan. Today, the Old City of Jerusalem is under Israeli control, but the mosque remains under the autonomous administration of the Islamic *waqf*.

The **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, also called the **Church of the Resurrection**, by Eastern Christians, is a Christian church within the walled Old City of Jerusalem. The site is venerated by most Christians as Golgotha (the Hill of Calvary), where the New Testament says that Jesus was crucified, and is said to also contain the place where Jesus was buried (the sepulchre). The church has been an

important pilgrimage destination since at least the 4th century, as the purported site of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus. Today it also serves as the headquarters of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Mount Moriah is the name of the elongated north-south stretch of land lying between Kidron Valley and "Hagai" Valley, between Mount Zion to the west and the Mount of Olives to the east. The best-known tradition related to Mount Moriah is the Binding of Isaac for sacrifice by his father Abraham, related in Genesis 22.

The **Church of St. Anne** is a beautiful 12th-century Crusader church, erected over the traditional site of the birthplace of Anne (Hannah), the mother of Mary. It is an excellent example of Romanesque architecture. St. Anne's Church was built between 1131 and 1138 to replace a previous Byzantine church. Shortly after its construction, it was enlarged by moving the facade forward by several meters. In 1192, Saladin turned the church into a Muslim theological school, which is commemorated in an inscription above the church's entrance. Eventually abandoned, the church fell into ruin until the Ottomans donated it to France in 1856. It was subsequently restored, but most of what remains today is original. The church is right next to the **Bethesda Pool**, believed to be the site where Jesus healed a paralytic (John 5:1-15). Here you can see ruins of a Roman temple to the god of medicine and remains of a Byzantine church built over the temple.

The **Shrine of the Book**, a wing of the Israel Museum near Givat Ram in western Jerusalem, houses the Dead Sea Scrolls—discovered 1947–56 in 11 caves in and around the Wadi Qumran. The shrine is built as a white dome, covering a structure placed two-thirds below the ground, that is reflected in a pool of water that surrounds it. Across from the white dome is a black basalt wall. The colors and shapes of the building are based on the imagery of the Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness, whereas the white dome symbolizes the Sons of Light and the black wall symbolizes the Sons of Darkness. The museum also holds other rare ancient manuscripts and displays The Aleppo Codex. Its dome, due to the quirky architecture, has been used as scenery for several science fiction movies.

The **Dead Sea Scrolls** consist of roughly 1,000 documents, including texts from the Hebrew Bible, discovered between 1947 and 1979 in eleven caves in and around the Wadi Qumran (near the ruins of the ancient settlement of Khirbet Qumran, on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea) in the West Bank. The texts are of great religious and historical significance, as they include practically the only known surviving copies of Biblical documents made before 100 AD, and preserve evidence of considerable diversity of belief and practice within late Second Temple Judaism. They are written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, mostly on parchment, but with some written on papyrus. Publication of the scrolls has taken many decades, and the delay has been a source of academic controversy. As of 2007 two volumes remain to be completed, with the whole series, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*, running to thirty nine volumes in total. Many of the scrolls are now housed in the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem.

The scrolls were found in 11 caves, ranging in distance of 125m (Cave 4) to about 1000m (Cave 1) from the settlement at Qumran, located 1km off the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. None of them were found at the actual settlement. It is generally accepted that a Bedouin goat- or sheep-herder by the name of Muhammed edh-Dhib made the first discovery toward the beginning of 1947. The significance of the scrolls relates in a large part to the field of textual criticism. Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the oldest Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible were Masoretic texts dating to 9th century. The biblical manuscripts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls push that date back to the 2nd century BC. Before this discovery, the earliest extant manuscripts of the Old Testament were in Greek in manuscripts such as Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus. Although a few of the biblical manuscripts found at

Qumran differ significantly from the Masoretic text, most do not. The scrolls thus provide new variants and the ability to be more confident of those readings where the Dead Sea manuscripts agree with the Masoretic Text or with the early Greek manuscripts. Further, the sectarian texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, most of which were previously unknown, offer new light on one form of Judaism practiced during the Second Temple period.

The **Second Temple Era model of Jerusalem** is a part of the Israel Museum near Givat Ram in western Jerusalem. One of the most recent and exciting additions to the Museum is the Second Temple Era model of Jerusalem. The model reconstructs the topography and architectural character of the city as it was prior to 66 CE, the year in which the Great Revolt against the Romans erupted, leading to the eventual destruction of the city and the Temple. Originally constructed on the grounds of Jerusalem's Holyland Hotel, the model is now a permanent feature of the Museum's twenty-acre campus, adjacent to the Shrine of the Book.

Friday, SEP 12, DAY 4: **EIN KEREM / SHEPHERD'S FIELD / BETHLEHEM**

(Morning) Went to Ein Kerem, St. John Ba Harim, the birthplace of John the Baptist. Then we visited a field near Bethlehem that could have represented a shepherd's field. 'And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night (Luke 2.8). Then we shopped at the Holy Land Cooperative Society at Bet Sahur. Then we visited the Shepherd's Field church, where possibly Joseph and Mary stayed for the birth of Jesus. (Afternoon) We went into Bethlehem to visit the Church of the Nativity. The Church of the Nativity is located in Manger Square. The Church contains a room where Jerome worked on the Latin Vulgate Bible.
Guest speaker: Contemporary Issues—Bishop Suhail Dawani

St. John Ba Harim, The Church of St. John the Baptist was built on the spot where, according to tradition, the house of Zachary and Elisabeth stood and where John was born. In the cave, the anticipated location of John's birth, the altar is located. Under the altar, on a marble star says "Here was born the Precursor Lord". In the yard of the monastery, opposite the church hang Evangelic texts written in many languages of the world and telling about John's destiny. Saint-John ba-Harim (St Jean du désert), a franciscan convent, was built in honor of Yohanan haMatbil (Jean-Baptiste). Israeli tourists and pilgrims consider Ein Karem as one the nicest place around Jerusalem. On Fridays and Shabbats, the restaurants of Ein Karem are full. There are also painters and other craftsmen's galleries and workshops to discover along the shady streets of the Ein Karem.

Shepherds' Field, Bethlehem is approximately 2 km to the east of Bethlehem in the village of Beit Sahour, and is one of the most sacred places to Christians; it is identified as the scene where the Angel of the Lord visited the shepherds and informed them of Jesus' birth. The Roman Catholics and the Greek Orthodox each have their own Shepherds' Field. The Roman Catholic site features a Franciscan Chapel designed to resemble the shepherds' tent while the Greek Orthodox site features a 5th century church built over a cave. In the Orthodox Shepherd's Field, a site in a small valley with olive trees some of them dating back 2000 years, an underground Church is dedicated to Synaxis of the Mother of God (celebrated December 26th). On the night of Christ's Nativity, this underground church was the cave of the shepherds, who heard the angelic proclamation "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men" (Luke 2-14). This cave was one of the many churches built by Saint Helena in the year 325 AD. The cave functioned first as a shelter, then as a tomb of the shepherds, and has been treated as such by Christians since the 4th century.

On the basis of archaeological evidence, it has been proved that the church dated to early Byzantine period, and that it is the earliest Christian structure build on this site. Up to 1972, only the underground church was visible and in regular use, but almost none of the mosaics were visible. In that year the

spiritual father of the Monastery of Saint Savva, Archimadrite Seraphim, had taken control of this holy shrine, in order to build a new full-size church above the basement church. Excavating the foundations for the new church, there were remains of three different churches of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries found respectively.

Holy Land Handicraft Cooperative Society--From the birthplace of Jesus Christ, artisans from Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala, build their masterpieces. The Cooperative is owned by 36 local producers. They sell olivewood, mother-of-pearl, ceramics, blown glass and embroidery handicrafts produced by its members and other producers in the Bethlehem area. The main focus as a Cooperative is to help the local workshops sell their products and better the standard of living in Palestine. As a Fair Trade Organization and a member of IFAT (International Fair Trade Association), they sell most of their products to Fair Trade customers in Europe, Canada, the USA, and Australia. In addition to their export sales, they also operate a souvenir shop next to Shepherd's Field in Beit Sahour.

The **Church of the Nativity** in Bethlehem is one of the oldest continuously operating churches in the world. The structure is built over the cave that tradition marks as the birthplace of Christ, and it is considered sacred by followers of both Christianity and Islam. The first basilica on this site was begun by Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine I. Under the supervision of Bishop Makarios of Jerusalem, the construction was completed in 333. That structure was burnt down in the Samaritan Revolt of 529. The current basilica was rebuilt in its present form in 565 by the Emperor Justinian I. When the Persians under Chosroes II invaded in 614, they unexpectedly did not destroy the structure. According to legend, their commander Shahrbaraz was moved by the depiction inside the church of the Three Magi wearing Persian clothing, and commanded that the building be spared. The Crusaders made further repairs and additions to the building during the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem with permission and help given by the Byzantine Emperor, and the first King of Jerusalem was crowned in the church. Over the years, the compound has been expanded, and today it covers approximately 12,000 square meters. The church was one of the direct causes for French involvement in the Crimean War against Russia. The church is administered jointly by Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Armenian Apostolic authorities. All three traditions maintain monastic communities on the site.

The structure is actually a combination of two churches, with a crypt beneath—the Grotto of the Nativity—where Jesus is said to have been born: Interior of the Church of the Nativity

- The main **Basilica of the Nativity** is maintained by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. It is designed like a typical Roman basilica, with five aisles (formed by Corinthian columns) and an apse in the eastern end, where the sanctuary is.
- The adjoining **Church of St. Catherine**, the Roman Catholic church, was built in a more modern Gothic revival style, and has since been further modernized according to the liturgical trends which followed Vatican II. This is the church where the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem celebrates Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

The Altar of the Nativity, beneath which is the star marking the spot where tradition says the Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus.

- The **Grotto of the Nativity**, an underground cave located beneath the basilica, enshrines the site where Jesus is said to have been born. The exact spot is marked beneath an altar by a 14-pointed silver star set into the marble floor and surrounded by silver lamps. This altar is denominationally neutral, although it features primarily Armenian Apostolic influences.

Saturday, SEP 13, DAY 5: GETHSEMANE / MT. OF SCOPUS / MT. OF OLIVES / CITY OF DAVID / WESTERN WALL / ST. PETER IN GALLICANTU

(Morning) We began with the Cave of Gethsemane (where Jesus spent his last night of freedom), the Garden of Gethsemane with its ancient olive trees and the Church of all Nations. Then we saw a panoramic view from Mt. Scopus and the Mount of Olives, and we walked the Palm Sunday road down to the Mt. Of Olives to view the City of David, (Hezekiah had a tunnel built through solid rock to carry waters from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam. Jesus healed a blind man who was washed in this pool (John 9:7-11).) We drove around the old city of Jerusalem.

(Afternoon) We visited the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) where the faithful Jews cry their petitions to God, and then visited the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu. This church was built over the palace of the High Priest Caiaphas, where Peter denied Jesus three times.

Evening Speaker—Rev. Canon Hosam Naoum

The **Cave of Gethsemane**, where tradition stated Jesus hid with his disciples the night of his arrest. The building for this site is near the entrance to the cave. The cave's name is derived from the Aramaic phrase "Gath Semane", meaning "Oil Press". The cave is located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, next to the Tomb of the Virgin Mary and the Church of All Nations, which handles the cave's maintenance. The cave was already visited by early Christian pilgrims and was mentioned in 333 AD in the accounts of the Pilgrim of Bordeaux. The olive trees to the left of the Church of All Nations were some of the oldest on the Mt. of Olives. The area in the vicinity of the grotto was named the Garden of Gethsemane as a probable location for the Biblical text below. This church is about a stone's throw from the cave.

The **Church of All Nations**, also known as the **Church or Basilica of the Agony**, is a Roman Catholic church located on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, next to the Garden of Gethsemane. It enshrines a section of bedrock where Jesus is said to have prayed before his arrest, *Mark 14: 32-42*. The current church rests on the foundations of two earlier ones, that of a small 12th century Crusader chapel abandoned in 1345, and a 4th century Byzantine basilica, destroyed by an earthquake in 746. In 1920, during work on the foundations, a column was found two meters beneath the floor of the medieval crusader chapel. Fragments of a magnificent mosaic were also found. Following this discovery the architect immediately removed the new foundations and began excavations of the earlier church. After the remains of the Byzantine era church were fully excavated plans for the new church were altered and work continued on the current basilica from April 19, 1922 until June, 1924 when it was consecrated.

The **Mount of Olives** (also **Mount Olivet**) is a mountain ridge in east Jerusalem with three peaks running from north to south. The highest, at-Tur, rises to 818 meters (2,683ft). It is named for the olive groves that once covered its slopes. The Mount of Olives is associated with Jewish and Christian traditions. The Mount of Olives is first mentioned in connection with David's flight from Absalom (II Samuel 15:30). The ascent was probably east of the City of David, near the village of Silwan. The sacred character of the mount is alluded to in Ezekiel (11:23). Solomon built altars to the gods of his wives on the southern peak (I Kings 11:7-8). During the reign of King Josiah, the mount was called the Mount of Corruption (II Kings 23:13). According to the Book of Zechariah, the dead will be resurrected on the Mount of Olives in the days of the Messiah. The Mount of Olives is frequently mentioned in the New Testament (Matthew 21:1;26:30, etc.) as the route from Jerusalem to Bethany and the place where Jesus stood as when he wept over Jerusalem. Jesus is said to have spent time on the mount, teaching and prophesying to his disciples (Matthew 24-25), including the Olivet discourse, returning after each day to rest (Luke 21:37), and also coming there on the night of his betrayal (Matthew 26:39). At the foot of the Mount of Olives lies the Garden of Gethsemane.

Mount Scopus (meaning Lit. Mount "Look Out") is a mountain (elevation: 834 meters above sea level) in northeast Jerusalem, Israel. Overlooking Jerusalem, Mount Scopus has been strategically important as a base from which to attack the city since antiquity. A Roman Legion camped there in 66 CE. Again in

70 CE Mount Scopus was used as a base to carry out a siege of the city by the 12th, 15th and 5th Legions (the 10th legions position being on the Mount of Olives). The Crusaders used it as a base in 1099. As a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, parts of Mount Scopus became an UN protected Jewish property exclave within Jordanian-occupied territory until the Six-Day War in 1967. Today, Mount Scopus lies within the municipal boundaries of the city of Jerusalem.

The **City of David**, also known as the **Ophel** (perhaps meaning "fortified hill") is the name of the narrow promontory beyond the southern edge of Jerusalem's Temple Mount and Old City, with the Tyropoeon Valley (*valley of the cheesemakers*) on its west, the Hinnom valley to the south, and the Kidron Valley on the east. The previously deep valley (the Tyropoeon) separating the Ophel from what is now referred to as the *Old City* of Jerusalem currently lies hidden beneath the debris of centuries. Despite the name, the *Old City* of Jerusalem dates from a much later time than the settlement in the City of David, which is generally considered to have been the original Jerusalem. Traditionally, the name **City of David**, applied to the area inside the ancient fortifications, while the name **Ophel**, applied to the area between the end of the city wall and the Temple Mount.

The **Western Wall**, or simply the **Kotel**, is a Jewish religious site located in the Old City of Jerusalem. The wall itself dates from the end of the Second Temple period, being constructed around 19 BCE. It is often referred to as the **Wailing Wall**, in connection with Jewish practice of coming to the site to mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple. The Western Wall commonly refers to an 187 feet (57 m) exposed section of ancient wall situated on the western flank of the Temple Mount. This section faces a large plaza and is set aside for prayer. In its entirety however, the above ground portion of the Western Wall stretches for 1,600 feet (488 m), most of which is hidden behind residential structures built along its length. Other revealed sections include the southern part of the Wall which measures approximately 80 metres and another much shorter section known as the Little Western Wall which is located close to the Iron Gate. The wall functions as a retaining wall, built to support the extensive renovations that Herod the Great carried out around 19 BCE. Herod expanded the small quasi-natural plateau on which the First and Second Temples stood into the wide expanse of the Temple Mount visible today.

At the Western Wall Plaza, the total height of the Wall from its foundation is estimated at 105 feet (32 m), with the exposed section standing approximately 62 feet (19 m) high. The Wall consists of 45 stone courses, 28 of them above ground and 17 underground. The first seven visible layers are from the Herodian period. This section of wall is built from enormous stones, most of them weighing between two and eight tons each. Others weigh even more, with one extraordinary stone located in the northern section of Wilson's Arch measuring 13 metres and weighing approximately 570 tons. Each of these stones is surrounded by fine-chiseled borders. The margins themselves measure between five and twenty centimetres wide, with their depth measuring 1½ centimetres. In the Herodian period, the upper ten metres of wall were one meter thick and served as the other wall of the double colonnade of the plateau. This upper section was decorated with pilasters, the remainder of which were destroyed at the beginning of the seventh century when the Byzantines reconquered Jerusalem from the Persians and their Jewish allies in 628.

The next four layers were added by Umayyads in the seventh century. The next fourteen layers are from the Ottoman period and their addition is attributed to Sir Moses Montefiore who in 1866 arranged that further layers be added "for shade and protection from the rain for all who come to pray by the holy remnant of our Temple". The top three layers were placed by the Mufti of Jerusalem before 1967. A large plaza was created which stretched from the Wall to the Jewish Quarter. The section of the Wall dedicated to prayers was extended southwards to double its original length from 30 to 60 metres, while

the 4 metre space facing the Wall grew to 40 metres. Thus the small pre-1967 120 square metre area in front of the wall became the vast Western Wall Plaza, covering 20,000 square metres.

The **Church of Saint Peter in Gallicantu** was built in 1931 on the eastern slopes of Mount Zion to commemorate Peter's triple rejection of Jesus and his subsequent remorse. Beneath the church are a series of carved-out chambers from the Second Temple period. Since Catholic tradition positions the palace of Caiaphas on this very site, it is believed that Jesus may have been imprisoned in one of these underground crypts. A Byzantine shrine dedicated to Peter's repentance was erected on this spot in the middle of the fifth century and was later destroyed by Muslim invaders. The chapel was rebuilt by the Crusaders and given a new name: St. Peter's in Gallicantu. Galli-cantu means cock-crow in Latin and today a golden rooster protrudes prominently from the sanctuary roof.

Sunday, SEP 14, DAY 6: CAESERIA / MT. CARMEL / CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

(Morning) Departed Jerusalem for Caesaria Maritima, a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea, this was built by Herod the Great as his summer palace.

(Afternoon) Departed to Muhraqa on Mt Carmel near the Carmelite Monastery of St. Elijah which marks the site of this holy prophet's triumph over the false prophets of Ba'al (1 Kings 18). Drove to Nazareth to the Church of the Annunciation, the traditional site of the Angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary, telling her she would conceive Jesus, the Emmanuel.

Stayed at Sisters of Nazareth

Caesarea Maritima, called Caesarea Palaestina from 133 CE onwards, was a city and harbor built by Herod the Great about 25–13 BC. Today, its ruins lie on the Mediterranean coast of Israel about halfway between the cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa, on the site of Pyrgos Stratonos ("Strato" or "Straton's Tower", in Latin *Turris Stratonis*). Caesarea Maritima should not be confused with other cities named to flatter the Caesar: Caesarea Philippi in the Golan Heights or Caesarea Mazaca in Anatolian Cappadocia. The city was described in detail by the 1st century Roman Jewish historian Josephus.

Herod built his palace on a promontory jutting out into the sea, with a decorative pool surrounded by stoas. In 13 BCE, Caesarea became the civilian and military capital of Judaea, and the official residence of the Roman procurators and governors, Pontius Pilatus, praefectus and Antonius Felix. Remains of the principal buildings erected by Herod and the medieval town are still visible today, including the city walls, the castle and a Crusader cathedral and church. Archaeological excavations in the 1950s and 1960s uncovered remains from many periods, in particular, a complex of Crusader fortifications and a Roman theatre. Other buildings include a temple dedicated to Caesar; a hippodrome rebuilt in the 2nd century as a more conventional amphitheater; the Tiberieum, which has a limestone block with a dedicatory inscription ^[2]that is the only secular record of Pontius Pilate; a double aqueduct that brought water from springs at the foot of Mount Carmel; a boundary wall; and a 200 ft (60 m) wide moat protecting the harbour to the south and west. The harbor was the largest on the eastern Mediterranean coast. Caesarea grew rapidly, becoming the largest city in Judea, with an estimated population of 125,000 over an urban area of 3.7 square kilometers.

In 66 CE, a massacre of Jews here and the desecration of the local synagogue led to the disastrous Jewish revolt. Vespasian declared it a colony and renamed it Colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Caesarea. Early Christian mentions of Caesarea in the apostolic period follow the acts of Peter who established the church there when he baptized Cornelius the Centurion (Acts, 10, 11). The Apostle Paul often sojourned there (9:30; 18:22; 21:8), and was imprisoned at Caesarea for two years before being taken to Rome (23:23, 25:1-13).

The Harbor at Caesarea was built by King Herod between 22 BCE and 9 BCE. It was one of the greatest engineering wonders of its time. It was the first major construction project to use concrete that would set under water. The length of the southern break water is 500 metres (1,600 ft). The length of the northern break water is 200 metres (660 ft). The largest stone block measures 5.5 metres (18 ft) by 1.25 metres (4.1 ft) by 1.25 metres (over 20 short tons (18 t)). The largest concrete block measures 11.5 metres by 15 metres (49 ft) by 2.4 metres (7.9 ft). The concrete blocks were created by floating a form on the water and filling it with concrete, as it filled up it would sink into place and the concrete would set under water.

Mount Carmel is a coastal mountain range in northern Israel and the West Bank, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea towards the southeast. Its name literally means plantation of high quality trees, roughly equivalent to the garden, in reference to the richly fertile character of the hillside. The range was traditionally known as the vineyards of God, and archaeologists have discovered ancient wine and oil presses at various locations within it. The range is a UNESCO biosphere reserve and a number of towns are located upon it, most notably the city of Haifa which is Israel's third largest city and is located on the hillside's northern slopes.

In mainstream Jewish, Christian, and Islamic thought, it is Elijah that is indelibly associated with the mountain, and he is regarded as having sometimes resided in a grotto on the mountain. In the Books of Kings, Elijah is described as challenging 450 prophets of a particular *Baal* to a contest at the altar on Mount Carmel to determine whose deity was genuinely in control of the Kingdom of Israel; since the narrative is set during the rule of Ahab and his association with the Phoenicians, biblical scholars suspect that the *Baal* in question was probably Melqart. Though there is no biblical reason to assume that the account of Elijah's victory refers to any particular part of Mount Carmel, Islamic tradition places it at a point known as *El-Maharrakah*, meaning *the burning*. In 1958, archaeologists discovered something on the mountain range that resembled an altar, which they assumed must have been Elijah's altar.

The **Church of the Annunciation**, sometimes also referred to as the **Basilica of the Annunciation** is a church in Nazareth, in modern-day northern Israel. The church was established at the site where, according to Roman Catholic tradition, the Annunciation took place. In other words, it is believed to be the location where Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a virgin, was visited by the Archangel Gabriel and told that she had been selected to be the mother of Jesus. Greek Orthodox tradition holds that this event occurred while Mary was drawing water from a local spring in Nazareth, and St. Gabriel's Church was erected at that alternate site. The current church is a two-story building constructed in 1967 over the site of an earlier Byzantine-era and then Crusader-era church. Inside, the lower level contains the Grotto of the Annunciation, believed by many Christians to be the remains of the original childhood home of Mary. Under Roman Catholic canon law, the church enjoys the status of a minor basilica. A historically significant site, considered sacred within some circles of Christianity, particularly Catholicism, the basilica attracts many Catholic, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox Christian visitors every year.

Sisters of Nazareth Convent, close by the Basilica of the Church of the Annunciation, the convent contains a picturesque cloister and an interesting Gothic-Style church. The Sisters of Nazareth site has been known since the 1880s and subject to a series of unscientific excavations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, the archaeological value of the site has remained unrealized, perhaps because it has never been published nor studied in detail by a professional archaeologist. Work in 2006-7 has shown that the convent cellars contain well-preserved Roman-period, Byzantine and Crusader evidence, including a first-century domestic structure, early Roman-period Jewish burials and, perhaps, a Byzantine cave church. Above these – and adjacent to the Basilica of the Annunciation – once stood a

large, but previously unrecognized, Byzantine and Crusader church. Excavations have revealed a first century AD Herodian tomb, columns, streets and a complex of cave-homes. A small museum exhibits coins and pottery found at the site.

Monday, SEP 15, DAY 7: ANCIENT BOAT / BOAT RIDE / JORDAN RIVER / MT. OF BEATITUDES / CAPERNAUM / TABGHA-HEPTAPEGON / PETER'S CHURCH

(Morning) Drove up to the Sea of Galilee to see the Ancient Boat at Kibbutz Ginnossar, then took a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee—Lake Kinneret. We then visited the Jordan River where it enters the Sea of Galilee. “In those days Jesus came down from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John at the Jordan (Mark 1.9). Then we visited the Mount of Beatitudes, where we read and meditate on the Sermon on the Mount. (Matthew 5).

(Afternoon) We visited Capernaum, where Jesus lived during his Galilean ministry. [Matt. 4:13]. This was also where Simon Peter was supposed to have lived. Then we visited the church at Tabgha/Heptapegon (seven springs), where the miracle of the loaves and fishes took place. Then we had the Beatitudes read from a high cave above this place to show how Jesus could have spoke to several thousand people when he preached. Finally we had Eucharist at a church site where Peter had served after Jesus' time (Primacy of Peter).

The Sea of Galilee Boat or The Jesus Boat was an ancient fishing boat from the 1st century AD/CE (the time of Jesus), which was discovered in 1986 on the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee in Israel. The remains of the boat, which are 27 feet (8.27 meters) long and 7.5 feet (2.3 meters) wide and with a maximum preserved height of 4.3 feet (1.3 meters), first appeared during a drought, when the waters of the Sea (actually a great fresh-water lake) receded. The remains of the boat were found by two fishermen brothers, Moshe and Yuval Lufan, from Kibbutz Ginnosar. When the drought reduced the water-level of the lake the two brothers examined the newly exposed beach and stumbled across the remains of the boat buried in the shore. The Sea of Galilee Boat is historically important to Jews as an example of the type of boat used by their ancestors in the 1st century for both fishing and transportation across the lake. The boat is also important to Christians because this was the sort of boat used by Jesus and his disciples, several of whom were fishermen. Boats such as this played a large role in Jesus' life and ministry, and are mentioned 50 times in the Gospels. There is no evidence connecting the Sea of Galilee Boat to Jesus or his disciples.

The **Sea of Galilee**, also **Sea of Genneseret**, **Lake Kinneret** or **Lake Tiberias**, is Israel's largest freshwater lake, being approximately 53 km (33 miles) in circumference, about 21 km (13 miles) long, and 13 km (8 miles) wide. The lake has a total area of 166 km², and a maximum depth of approximately 43 m. At 209 meters below sea level, it is the lowest freshwater lake on Earth and the second-lowest lake in the world after the Dead Sea, a saltwater lake. The Kinneret is situated deep in the Jordan Great Rift Valley, the valley caused by the separation of the African and Arabian Plates and is fed partly by underground springs although its main source is the Jordan River which flows through it from north to south. Consequently the area is subject to earthquakes and, in the past, volcanic activity. This is evidenced by the abundant basalt and other igneous rocks that define the geology of the Galilee region.

The Sea of Galilee lies on the ancient Via Maris which linked Egypt with the northern empires. The Greeks, Hasmoneans, and Romans founded flourishing towns and settlements on the lake including Gadara, Hippos and Tiberias. The first-century historian Flavius Josephus was so impressed by the area that he wrote, "One may call this place the ambition of Nature." Josephus also reported a thriving fishing industry at this time, with 230 boats regularly working in the lake. Much of the ministry of Jesus occurred on the shores of Lake Galilee. In those days, there was a continuous ribbon development of settlements and villages around the lake and plenty of trade and ferrying by boat. The Synoptic gospels of Mark (1:14-20), Matthew (4:18-22), and Luke (5:1-11) describe how Jesus recruited four of his apostles from the shores of Lake Galilee: the fishermen Simon and his brother Andrew and the brothers

John and James. One of Jesus' famous teaching episodes, the Sermon on the Mount, was given on a hill overlooking the lake while many of his miracles were also recorded to occur here including his walking on water, calming a storm, and his feeding five thousand people (in Tabgha).

The **Mount of Beatitudes** refers to the hill in northern Israel where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. The traditional location for the Mount of Beatitudes is on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, between Capernaum and Gennesaret (Ginosar). The actual location of the Sermon on the Mount is not certain, but the present site (also known as Mount Eremos) has been commemorated for more than 1600 years. The site is very near Tabgha. Other suggested locations have included the nearby Mount Arbel, or even the Horns of Hattin. A Byzantine church was erected near the current site in the 4th century, and it was used until the 7th century. Remains of a cistern and a monastery are still visible. The current Roman Catholic Franciscan chapel was built in 1938.

The **Jordan River** is a river in Southwest Asia which flows into the Dead Sea. Historically and religiously, it is considered to be one of the world's most sacred rivers. It is 251 kilometers (156 miles) long. The river drops rapidly in a 75 kilometer run to swampy Lake Hula, which is slightly below sea level in the Galilee sea. Exiting the lake, it drops much more in about 25 kilometers to the Sea of Galilee. The last section has less gradient, and the river begins to meander before it enters the Dead Sea, which is about 400 meters below sea level and has no outlet. Two major tributaries enter from the east during this last phase: the Yarmouk River and Jabbok River. Its section north of the Sea of Galilee is within the boundaries of Israel, and forms the western boundary of the Golan Heights. South of the lake, it forms the border between the Kingdom of Jordan (to the east) and Israel and the West Bank (to the west). In modern times, the waters are 70% to 90% used for human purposes and the flow is much reduced. Because of this and the high evaporation rate of the Dead Sea, the sea is shrinking. All the shallow waters of the southern end of the sea have been drained in modern times and are now salt flats.

Capernaum (*Kefar Nachum*, "Nahum's hamlet") was a settlement on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The site is a ruin today, but was inhabited from 150 BC to about AD 750. The town is mentioned in the New Testament: in the Gospel of Luke it was reported to have been the home of the apostles Peter, Andrew, James and John, as well as the tax collector Matthew. In Matthew 4:13 the town was reported to have been the home of Jesus himself. According to Luke 4:31-44, Jesus taught in the synagogue in Capernaum on the sabbath days. In Capernaum also, Jesus allegedly healed a man who had the spirit of an unclean devil and healed a fever in Simon Peter's mother-in-law. According to Matthew 8:5-13, it is also the place where a Roman Centurion asked Jesus to heal his servant. A building which may have been a synagogue of that period has been found beneath the remains of a later synagogue. According to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus selected this town as the center of his public ministry in Galilee after he left the small mountainous hamlet of Nazareth (Matthew 4:12-17). Capernaum has no obvious advantages over any other city in the area, so he probably chose it because it was the home of his first disciples, Simon (Peter) and Andrew. The Gospel of John suggests that Jesus' ministry was centered in a village called Cana.

The most important excavations began in 1905 under the direction of the Germans Heinrich Kohl and Carl Watzinger. They were continued by the Franciscans Fathers Vendelin von Benden (1905-1915) and Gaudenzio Orfali (1921-1926). The excavations resulted in the discovery of two public buildings, the synagogue (which was partially restored by Fr Orfali), and an octagonal church. Later, in 1968, excavation of the western portion of the site -- the portion owned by the Franciscans -- was restarted by Corbo and Stanislao Loffreda, with the financial assistance of the Italian government. During this phase, the major discovery was of a house which is claimed to be Saint Peter's house, in a neighborhood of the town from the First Century AD. The excavations revealed that the site was established at the beginning

of the Hasmonean Dynasty, roughly in the second century BC, and was abandoned in the eleventh century AD. The eastern half of the site -- the portion owned by an Orthodox monastery -- has also been surveyed and partially excavated under the direction of Vasilios Tzaferis. This section has uncovered the village from the Byzantine and Arab periods. Features include a pool apparently used for the processing of fish and a hoard of gold coins.

Heptapegon (today the name has been corrupted to **Tabgha**) is the traditional location for several episodes in Jesus' ministry. Two miles west of Capernaum is what Josephus referred to as the "well of Capernaum." It was undoubtedly a popular fishing spot of the locals because of its famous "seven springs. The seven springs that emerged at Tabgha (today only six have been discovered) produced water warmer than that of the Sea of Galilee. This warmer water helped the production of algae, which in turn attracted the fish. Fishermen thus have frequented this area for thousands of years. Tabgha is the traditional location for the calling of the disciples. It is believed that here Jesus walked along the shore and called out to Simon Peter and Andrew who were casting their nets into the lake. Walking along, Jesus saw two other brothers, James and John who were preparing their nets with their father Zebedee. Jesus called all of these men to follow him.

Tabgha is the traditional site of the Miracle of the Multiplication of the Loaves and the Fishes. (Matt. 14: 13-21) It is situated in a narrow, fertile valley on the northern shore of the lake, watered by several springs. The earliest building at Tabgha was a small chapel (18 x 9.6 m) from the 4th century CE; only a part of its foundations was uncovered. This was probably the shrine described by the pilgrim Egeria at the end of the 4th century: During the fifth century, a large monastery and a church decorated with exquisite mosaic floors was built on the site. The complex covered an area of 56 x 33 m. and included courtyards and many rooms used as workshops for a variety of crafts as well as for lodging for the monks and the many pilgrims who came to visit. The monastery and church at Tabgha were destroyed in the 7th century, probably during the Arab conquest of the country, and buried beneath a thick layer of silt and stones. In the 1980s, after excavation, the church was restored to its Byzantine form, incorporating portions of the original mosaics. The serene "Church of the Multiplication" was reconstructed over the Byzantine sanctuary on the site, with part of the ancient mosaic floor on display. Nearby, on the beach, stands a Chapel of St. Peter's Primacy, recalling the events of John 2:1.

Tuesday, SEP 16, DAY 8: ST.PAUL'S CHURCH / SHEFA-AMR / SEPHORIS (ZIPPORI) / SISTERS OF NAZARETH SITE

(Morning) Traveled to Shefar-Amr to St. Paul's Church and met with Fr. Fuad Dagher. We then had ice cream at a wonderful store there.

(Afternoon) Explored the excavated site of Sephoris and its beautifully preserved mosaics, once the center of Roman administration and Jewish scholarship in the 1st century A.D. On returning to Nazareth visited the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation.

(Evening) Discussed the excavations of the Sisters of Nazareth, where the Holy Family may have lived and been buried.

Shefa-'Amr, also **Shfar'am** is a city in the North District in Israel. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), at the end of 2006 the city had a population of 33,500. Shefa-'Amr is an ancient city located in the North District in Israel at the entrance to Galilee. It is located 13 kilometres (8.1 mi) from the Mediterranean Sea and 20 kilometres (12 mi) from each of three cities, Haifa, Acre and Nazareth, which gives its inhabitants ample opportunity for employment. The city is located on seven hills, which gives it the name "Little Rome".

The elevation of the city and its strategic location as the connection between the valleys and mountains of Galilee made it more than once the center of its district, especially in the period of Otman the son of Daher el Omar, who built his castle in it, and towers around it. In the Roman Era, the town was known as "Shofar Am", Hebrew for "horn of a nation". It is thought that this name is derived from that of the Jewish Sanhedrin, which for a time was located in the city and was considered the nation's horn. Alternatively, the name could be based on the literary Hebrew word *shefer*, meaning "beauty" or "goodness", i.e. "the beauty of the people".

The Arabic story for the name that is widespread among the people of the city is different. It is said that Amr Ibn Al-Aas, an Arab military commander, was sick when he came to the area, and when he drank of its water he was healed, so his soldiers started saying in Arabic "Shofiya Amr" (Amr was healed), and that was the source of the name. The spring which Omar drank from is still standing today southeast of the city. Others think that the name "Shfar-am" was changed to an Arabic form "Shefa-'Amr" in the Ottoman period.

By looking at the archaeological findings in Shefa-'Amr it seems that the history of this city goes back centuries BCE. Lots of historians tried to find who were the original inhabitants of Shefa-'Amr but no one came out with a clear answer. It is believed that these inhabitants were Canaanites who lived in the area in antiquity. Shefa-'Amr is also known to have had Jewish inhabitants even before the Christian era; it is mentioned in the Talmud as one of the cities that contained the seat of the Jewish Sanhedrin - the highest halachic legal authority during the Second Temple Period and for several centuries thereafter - after the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 CE. Shfar'am was mentioned in connection with Jewish revolts against the Romans, and Jewish graves and remains in caves dating to Roman times have been found there.

Sepphoris has been rightly called "The Forgotten City." Although commentaries and geography texts give attention to nearby Nazareth and Cana, Sepphoris has been virtually ignored. Like Gamala, it is one of those cities in Galilee which, although not mentioned in Scripture, was very influential in configuring the political, social and economic context in which Jesus lived and ministered. Recent excavations (the site is now a National Park) have revealed a cosmopolitan city of great wealth and beauty, the largest and most important city in all Galilee. Even after Herod built Tiberias and moved his capital and residence there, Sepphoris continued to be a prominent and influential city.

Sepphoris was "perched like a bird" on a four hundred-foot hill overlooking the Bet Netofa Valley. Its Hebrew name, Zippori, "bird," reflects its lofty location. The city commanded a panoramic view of Lower Galilee, including the towns of Cana, five miles across the Bet Netofa Valley on the northeast and Nazareth, four miles to the south. The historian Josephus called it "the ornament of Galilee." Sepphoris was located about midway between the Mediterranean coast and the Sea of Galilee. It was situated on the well-traveled highway that connected the port of Ptolemais, seventeen miles to the northwest, and the Sea of Galilee. This road ran past Sepphoris, through the Turan Valley to Tiberias.

Sepphoris boasted a 4,000-seat amphitheater, built into the eastern side of the hill, probably while Jesus was a teenager. Its stage was 156 feet wide and 27 feet from front to back. Herod's rebuilt city included his palace, an upper city and a lower city, a new city wall, a large market place, synagogues, a colonnaded street, and a residential area. Several large cisterns, one holding a thousand gallons, supplied water for the city.

The importance of this city for our study of the Gospels lies in the fact that it was located only four miles from Nazareth. During Jesus' early years, Herod Antipas was restoring, developing and fortifying Sepphoris. It served as his principle residence and the administrative center of Galilee, until he built

Tiberias in A.D. 18-20. Jesus and His legal father, Joseph, were identified by the word *tekton*, "builder" (inaccurately translated "carpenter" (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3). This would mean that they were construction craftsmen, skilled in wood and stone work. Since it was the practice of a father to teach his son his trade or skill, we can assume that Joseph trained Jesus for this vocation. With extensive building in progress an hour's walk away, it is likely that on some occasions, Joseph and Jesus would have been employed in Sepphoris. According to tradition, Sepphoris was the home of Joachim and Anna, the parents of Mary, the mother of Jesus. If true, this would mean that Jesus' one set of true grandparents lived in this cosmopolitan city, and this would have been the place where His mother grew up. It could also mean that Joseph, a craftsman from Nazareth, perhaps while working on a building in Sepphoris, met the mid-teenager Mary and took her back to Nazareth as his bride.

WED, SEP 17, DAY 9: NAIN / MT. TABOR / JERICHO

(Morning) We left Nazareth to travel south back to Jerusalem and St. George's. We stopped at Nain for several readings about healings at a church (with no congregation and no priest anymore) owned by and run by a Muslim family. Then we visited Mt. Tabor and the Basilica of the Transfiguration: 'And he was transfigured before them and his garments became glistering ...' (Mark 9.2)

(Afternoon) The bus broke down, so we went to lunch in Jericho, then went to Iyad's house to wait for the bus to be fixed. We arrived back at St. George's at 5:30pm.

Nain is a small town located on the northern slope of the Hill of Moreh, facing the northern arm of the Plain of Jezreel. From Nazareth, Nain was plainly visible some nine miles below to the southeast. The name Nain is probably a corruption of the Hebrew word for "pleasant" (*na'im*). It is located in territory that was allotted to and settled by the Tribe of Issachar [Joshua 19:17-22.]. Nain is the place where Jesus resurrected a young man, as mentioned in the Gospel of Luke 7:11-17. Soon after healing the centurion's servant in Capernaum, Jesus and His disciples traveled the twenty miles to Nain to perform this first recorded miracle of raising from the dead in Jesus' ministry. Today, the rarely mentioned, yet important city of Nain is called Naim. All that remains of the biblical city are the ruins of an old church and some tombs.

Mount Tabor is located in Lower Galilee, at the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley, 17 kilometres (11 mi) west of the Sea of Galilee. Its elevation at the summit is 575 metres (1,843 ft) above sea level. It is believed by many to be the site of the Transfiguration of Christ and site for the battle between Barak and the army of Jabin, commanded by Sisera. It is also known as Har Tavor, Itabyrium, Jebel et-Tur, and the Mount of Transfiguration. Two Arab towns are located at its base: Shibli-Umm al-Ghanam (east) and Daburiyya (west) as well as a Jewish community called Kfar Tavor.

Due to the importance of Mount Tabor in the Christian tradition, it became the focus of pilgrimage which began during the 4th century. According to descriptions of the pilgrims, during the 6th century there were three churches on the top of the mountain, and during the 8th century there were four churches and a monastery. During the Arab period, in 947, a battle occurred on Mount Tabor between different streams on the control of the land of Israel on behalf of the Abbasid Caliphate. During the period of the Crusades, the mountain changed hands many times between Muslims and Christians. In 1099 the crusaders fortified the area of the church and the monastery which was on the peak of the mountain, in order to protect the pilgrims from the Muslims attacks. In 1212 the mountain was occupied by the Ayyubid Sultan Al-Adil I which established on it a larger fortress but in 1229 it was occupied again by the Christians. In 1263 the Mamluk ruler Baibars occupied the fortress and ruined the buildings on the mountain.

According to Christian tradition, Mount Tabor is the site of the Transfiguration of Christ, during which Jesus began to radiate light and was seen conversing with Moses and Elijah. The scene is in the Synoptic Gospels, as well as alluded to in 2 Peter, but neither account identifies the "high mountain" of the scene

by name. The earliest identification of the Mount of Transfiguration as Tabor is by Origen in the 3rd century. It is also mentioned by St. Cyril of Jerusalem and St. Jerome in the 4th century. In 1101, when Crusaders controlled the area, the Benedictine monks rebuilt a ruined basilica and erected a fortified abbey.

Currently, on the mountaintop there are two Christian monasteries. In 1924, an impressive Roman Catholic church of the Franciscan order was built on the peak of Mount Tabor, Church of the Transfiguration. The church was built upon the ruins of a Byzantine church from the fifth or sixth century and a Crusader church from the 12th century. The monastery's friars have lived near the church since the Ottoman control in 1873. The Greek Orthodox church, sacred to the Transfiguration of Christ, is located nearby. An All-Night Vigil is held there every year on the Orthodox Feast of the Transfiguration (August 19, which is August 6 according to the Julian Calendar).

Jericho is a town in the West Bank of the Palestinian territories, located within the Jericho Governorate, near the Jordan River. Its name may be derived from the word meaning "moon" in Hebrew and Canaanite, as the city was an early center of worship for lunar deities. Despite the city's long history, Jericho was first mentioned in the Book of Numbers. Jericho is believed to be the oldest continuously-inhabited city of the world, and archaeologists have unearthed the remains of over 20 successive settlements there, dating back to 11,000 years ago (9000 BCE). Three separate settlements have existed at or near the current location for more than 11,000 years. The position is on an east-west route north of the Dead Sea.

Jericho has been described as a "city of Palm trees" where the copious springs of both tepid and cold waters gave rise to orchards of Lemons, Oranges, Bananas, Caster Oil plants and where melons, figs and grapes were grown. The cultivation of sugar cane was introduced by the crusaders. The Christian Bible states that Jesus passed through Jericho where he cured two blind men and converted a local tax collector named Zacchaeus. Christianity took hold in the city during the Byzantine era and a domed church dedicated to Saint Eliseus was erected there.

Hebron Handicrafts (Hanafi Khatib and Fawwaz Hasasneh)

Hebron Glass and Pottery, All Kinds of Souvenirs, Dead Sea Products

Jerusalem St., Jericho

Thursday, SEP 18, DAY 10: [RAMALLAH / TAYBEH](#)

(Morning) We traveled to Ramallah to visit St. Andrew's Church, Arab Evangelical school, vocational school, and housing project. We met with Rev. Nael Abu-Rahmoun. Then we traveled back thru Ramallah by the memorial for Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Govt building. We went to Taybeh for lunch (Kan Zaman Restaurant).

(Afternoon) In Taybeh we visited the ceramic factory that makes the Peace doves, and the Taybeh Palestinian Brewery (only microbrewery in the Middle East).

Guest Speaker: Daniel Rossing, Director JCJCR (Jewish perspective)

Ramallah (lit: "Height of God") is a Palestinian city in the central West Bank adjacent to al-Bireh with a population 118,000. Ramallah is located 10 kilometers (6 miles) north of Jerusalem and currently serves as the unofficial capital of the Palestinian National Authority.

In 2002, Ramallah was reoccupied by Israel in an IDF operation codenamed Operation Defensive Shield, which resulted in curfews, electricity cuts, school closures and disruptions of commercial life. Many Ramallah institutions, including government ministries, were vandalized, and equipment was destroyed or stolen. The IDF took over local Ramallah television stations, and social and economic conditions deteriorated. Many expatriates left, as did many other Palestinians who complained that the

living conditions had become intolerable. The Israeli West Bank barrier has furthered Ramallah's isolation.

Ramallah is generally considered the most affluent and cultural as well as the most liberal, of all Palestinian cities, and is home to a number of popular Palestinian activists, poets, artists, and musicians. A variety of mosques and churches of different denominations dot the landscape. International music and dance troupes occasionally make a stop in Ramallah, and renowned Israeli pianist Daniel Barenboim performs there often. The Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center, founded in 1996, is a popular venue for such events. The Al-Kasaba Theatre is a venue for plays and movies. In 2004, the state-of-the-art Ramallah Cultural Palace opened in the city. The only cultural center of its kind in the Palestinian territories, it houses a 736-seat auditorium, as well as conference rooms, exhibit halls, and movie-screening rooms. It was a joint venture of the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Japanese government. Ramallah hosted its first annual international film festival in 2004.

Arab Evangelical Episcopal Home and School--This co-educational school located 10 miles north of Jerusalem in Ramallah serves 700 students -- about 40 percent Muslim and 60 percent Christian from kindergarten through high school. The school, which receives the highest educational ratings, includes the empowerment of women as an important component in the curriculum. Most students go on to universities and prepare to be the future leaders of Palestine.

For the past 20 years, the children of the Ramallah community have been significantly affected by the conflict. Many children cry themselves to sleep as the sounds of war are constant. The school has provided programs to help children cope with the distressing socio-political conditions they live with. Youngsters are in need of more attention and programs that will help them forget the Israeli occupation, the imprisonment by the Israeli wall and the general lack of normal activities.

Since its founding 51 years ago, the school and its board have worked to find the funding to support students from needy families. Tuition and other costs are about \$1,400 a year. While the school has discounted tuition for those who cannot pay the full price, many students come from families who cannot pay anything, because their fathers aren't working. The school has refused to abandon students for economic reasons, and this has strained the already tight operating budget. Teacher's salaries have declined dramatically, and most maintenance has been set aside. This has put the school in an untenable situation.

Another part of the school, the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center, established in 2001, welcomes students from five schools throughout Ramallah for various programs that include an evangelical school, music school, cooking classes, hotel management, a dancing program and summer camps. In the future, the center hopes to offer a certificate for hotel management and music tuition for the blind.

St. Andrew's Church in Ramallah is the parish where present Bishop Dawani served as priest for 18 years before being consecrated Anglican bishop in Jerusalem. An adjacent building currently under construction will provide a daycare clinic to the community with an emphasis on deaf ministries. The project will require an additional \$100,000 to complete.

Taybeh is a Palestinian village located 30 kilometres north-east of Jerusalem, inside the occupied territories of the West Bank, and 60 kilometres from Amman in Jordan. The village has an overall population of around 1300 inhabitants, all Christian, with Latin, Orthodox and Greek Catholic rites. Located on one of the highest places of the country above the Jordan valley, at the boundary between

Samaria and Judea, you can spot from distance its square houses, its 3 Church towers and the ruins of the Boniface de Montferrat's crusader castle. Tradition, confirmed by recent works identifies Taybeh as biblical Ofrah (Efron or Efraim). However the word "Ofrah" did not sound good ("afrit" meaning in arabic : "demon"). Under the reign of Salah El-Din, the name was changed into the more reassuring "Taybeh", "Good name".

Jesus, after Lazarus' resurrection, retired with his disciples to this town. John says, "Since that day on, they (the Pharisees) made the decision to kill him. Jesus did not walk in public among the Jews anymore. He went away to a region near the desert, to a city called Aphram, and it was there that he and his disciples dwelt" (H, 53-56). This happened during the first days of Nissan in the year 30. It was at this point that Jesus retired on a rocky hill which was situated 8km from Taybeh towards the Jordan, in order to fortify his spirit, pray, fast, and expose himself to temptation. That is why this rocky hill is known as (Qarantal), from the Latin root "Quarenta" (forty), which alludes to the forty days Jesus fasted. According to the Evangelist, Taybeh-Aphram is the isolated place where Jesus found the diaphanous quietness to prepare himself and his disciples for the great sacrifice.

In the fifth century, a church was built in the eastern part of the town, probably in memory of the Master's passing. Today this church is known as St. George's Church. In the 12th century, the Crusaders built another church affixed to the first one. In 1185, Balduinus IV, King of Jerusalem, gave Boniface de Montferrat the castle of St. Elias, placed in the higher part of the city.

Taybeh Brewery is a Palestinian brewery founded in 1994 by Nadim Khoury. The brewery is situated 20 miles from Jerusalem in the West Bank village of Taybeh, and produced the first beer in 1995. The company was co-founded by Nadim and Dawud Khoury, and their father Canaan the year after the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993. In 1997, Taybeh beer became the first Palestinian product to be franchised in Germany, where it was brewed and bottled in Belgium for sale in Europe. By 2005 the company was only able to produce 300 cases a week locally due to conflict with Israel.

In 2005, an Oktoberfest style Taybeh Beer Festival was launched. The annual two-day Beer Festival starts in the beginning of October. A percentage of profits go to aid Palestinians and Israelis who refuse to fight.

There are four varieties of Taybeh Beer: *Golden*, *Light*, *Amber*, and *Dark*. In 2007, a new non-alcoholic beer variety is to be launched specifically for the local Palestinian market. The original brand was *Taybeh Beer Golden*. The *Taybeh Beer Dark* and *Taybeh Beer Light* were introduced for the 2000 celebrations in the Holy Land. It follows a classic style of the way monks brewed beer in the Middle Ages in order to fortify themselves during their fasting. "Taybeh" (pronounced Tie-bay) is the name of the Palestinian Christian village in the West Bank where the microbrewery is located and also means *delicious* in Arabic.

Taybeh "Lamps for Peace in the Holy Land" initiative was officially launched on November 16th 2004, in a ceremony during which it received the blessing of the Cardinal of Florence, H.E Ennio Antonelli as well as the one of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, H.B. Michel Sabbah. Our hope can be summed up like this: With 100 000 churches united in a prayer for Peace in the Holy Land, the Lord will hear his congregation. He won't have the choice!!

Friday, SEP 19, DAY 11: [JUDEAN DESERT / DEAD SEA SCROLLS / FREE DAY IN JERUSALEM](#)

(Morning) Got up early and visited the Wadi Qelt at sunrise for a service and reflection. Then we drove to the Dead Sea Scrolls site and museum.

Wadi Qelt, *Wadi al-Qult* *Wadi el-Qult* or **Wadi Qult** is a wadi or valley within the Jordan Valley, one mile south of Jericho, and near the Dead Sea in the West Bank, part of the Palestinian territories. It is home to a variety of fauna including hyraxes to gazelles and also to the Greek Orthodox Monastery Saint George. It was said to be the winter home of King Herod and part of it was declared a nature reserve by the Israeli army and given the name Nahal Prat. It is visited by Israelis and Palestinians alike, however frequent movement restrictions imposed on Palestinians by the Israeli army severely restrict their access. The wadi itself is good for travel only for those out for a pleasant day hike. In ancient times, people made their way on the route above. Some of the biblical events which likely occurred on this route include: David's flight from Absalom (2 Sam 15-16), Zedekiah's flight from the Babylonians (2 Ki 25:4), the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), and Jesus' travels from Jericho to Jerusalem (e.g., Luke 19:28).

St. George's Monastery in the Wadi Qelt was built in the late 5th century A.D. by John of Thebes. He became a hermit and moved here from Egypt in 480 A.D. The monastery was named St. George after the most famous monk who lived at the site – Gorgias of Coziba. Destroyed in 614 A.D. by the Persians, the monastery was rebuilt in the Crusader Period. It fell into disuse after the expulsion of the Crusaders. In 1878 a Greek monk, Kalinikos, settled here and restored the monastery, finishing it in 1901.

Qumran is located on a dry plateau about a mile inland from the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea in the West Bank, just next to the Israeli kibbutz of Kalia. The site was most likely constructed sometime during or before the reign of John Hyrcanus, 134-104 BC and saw various phases of occupation until, probably after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Titus and his X *Fretensis* destroyed it. It is best known as the settlement nearest to the hiding place of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the caves of the sheer desert cliffs.

Since the discovery in 1947 of nearly 900 scrolls in various states of completeness, mostly written on parchment, extensive excavations of the settlement have been undertaken. Cisterns, possibly a few Jewish ritual baths, and cemeteries have been found, along with a dining or assembly room and debris from an upper story alleged by some to have been a scriptorium as well as pottery kilns and a tower.

Many scholars believe the location to have been home to a Jewish sect, perhaps the Essenes; others have proposed that it was a villa for a wealthy family, or even that it was a Jewish fort and at times a pottery factory. A large cemetery was discovered to the north of the site. While most of the graves contain the remains of males, some women were also discovered, suggesting to some that the site may not have been home to a celibate sect of Essenes living in the Dead Sea region and described by Pliny. Only a small portion of the graves were excavated, because under Jewish law excavating cemeteries is forbidden. Over a thousand bodies are buried at Qumran cemetery. One theory is that bodies were brought to Qumran because burial was easier there than in rockier surrounding areas.

The scrolls were found in a series of eleven caves just to the west of the settlement. Some scholars have claimed that the caves were the permanent libraries of the sect, due to the presence of the remains of a shelving system. Other scholars believe that some caves also served as domestic shelters for those living in the area. Many of the texts found in the caves appear to represent widely accepted Jewish beliefs and practices, while other texts appear to speak of divergent, unique, or minority interpretations and practices. Some scholars believe that some of these texts describe the beliefs of the inhabitants of Qumran, which, may have been the Essenes, or the asylum for supporters of the traditional priestly family of the Zadokites against the Hasmonean priest/kings. A literary epistle published in the 1990s expresses reasons for creating a community, some of which mirror Sadducean arguments in the Talmud. Most (perhaps all) of the scrolls seem to have been hidden in the caves during the turmoil of the First Jewish Revolt.

The **Dead Sea** (Hebrew: "Sea of Salt"; Arabic: "Dead Sea") is a salt lake between Israel and the West Bank to the west, and Jordan to the east. It is 420 metres (1,378 ft) below sea level, and its shores are the lowest point on the surface of the Earth on dry land. The Dead Sea is 330 m (1,083 ft) deep, the deepest hypersaline lake in the world. It is also the world's second saltiest body of water, after Lake Asal in Djibouti, with 30 percent salinity. It is 8.6 times saltier than the ocean. Experts say that it is nine times saltier than the Mediterranean Sea (31.5% salt versus 3.5% for the Mediterranean). This salinity makes for a harsh environment where animals cannot flourish and boats cannot sail. The Dead Sea is 67 kilometres (42 mi) long and 18 kilometres (11 mi) wide at its widest point. It lies in the Jordan Rift Valley, and its main tributary is the Jordan River.

The Dead Sea has attracted visitors from around the Mediterranean basin for thousands of years. Biblically, it was a place of refuge for King David. It was one of the world's first health resorts (for Herod the Great), and it has been the supplier of a wide variety of products, from balms for Egyptian mummification to potash for fertilizers.

During the last several thousand years the lake has fluctuated approximately 400 m (1,310 ft) with some significant drops and rises. Current theories as to the cause of this dramatic drop in levels rule out volcanic activity, therefore it may have been a seismic event. The Jordan River is the only major water source flowing into the Dead Sea, although there are small perennial springs under and around the Dead Sea, creating pools and quicksand pits along the edges. There are no outlet streams. The northern part of the Dead Sea receives scarcely 100 mm (4 in) of rain a year; the southern section barely 50 mm (2 in). The Dead Sea zone's aridity is due to the rainshadow effect of the Judean Hills. The highlands east of the Dead Sea receive more rainfall than the Dead Sea itself.

Saturday, SEP 20, DAY 12: [THE WAY OF SORROWS \(VIA DOLOROSA\) / EMMAUS ABU-GHOSH](#)

(Morning) We walked The Way/Stations of the Cross. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama sabachtani" which means "My God My God Why have you forsaken me" (Mark 15.34). Our journey took us on the traditional Stations of the Cross, ending at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre - the site of both Golgotha and the empty tomb. Then we visited and had Eucharist at Abu Ghosh in the Crusader Church chapel by the tomb.

Stations of the Cross (or **Way of the Cross**; in Latin, **Via Crucis**; also called the **Via Dolorosa** or **Way of Sorrows**, or simply, **The Way**) refers to the depiction of the final hours (or Passion) of Jesus, and the devotion commemorating the Passion. The tradition as chapel devotion began with St. Francis of Assisi and extended throughout the Roman Catholic Church in the medieval period. It is less often observed in the Anglican and Lutheran churches. It may be done at any time, but is most commonly done during the Season of Lent, especially on Good Friday and on Friday evenings during Lent.

The object of the Stations is to help the faithful to make a spiritual pilgrimage of prayer, through meditating upon the chief scenes of Christ's sufferings and death. It has become one of the most popular devotions for Roman Catholics, as well as featuring in the worship and devotion of other Christian denominations.

The **Stations** themselves are usually a series of 14* pictures or sculptures depicting the following scenes:

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus receives the cross
3. Jesus falls the first time
4. Jesus meets His Mother

5. Simon of Cyrene carries the cross
6. Veronica wipes Jesus' face with her veil
7. Jesus falls the second time
8. Jesus meets the daughters of Jerusalem
9. Jesus falls the third time
10. Jesus is stripped of His garments
11. Crucifixion: Jesus is nailed to the cross
12. Jesus dies on the cross
13. Jesus' body is removed from the cross (Deposition or Lamentation)
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb and covered in incense.

Via Dolorosa (Latin for "Way of Grief" or "Way of Suffering") is a street in the Old City of Jerusalem. Traditionally, it is held to be the path that Jesus walked on the way to his crucifixion. It is marked by nine of the fourteen Stations of the Cross. The last five stations are inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is a focus of pilgrimage. The traditional route starts just inside the Lions' Gate (St. Stephen's Gate), at the Umariya Elementary School, near the location of the former Antonia Fortress, and makes its way westward through the Old City to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This route is based on a devotional walk organized by the Franciscans in the 14th century AD. Whereas the names of many roads in Jerusalem are translated into English, Hebrew, and Arabic for their signs, the name *Via Dolorosa* is used in all three languages.

Abu Ghosh is an Israeli Arab town located 10 kilometers west of Jerusalem on the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway, 610-720 meters above sea level. Abu Ghosh is named for a Bedouin clan that exacted a toll from pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. Its inhabitants are known for their friendly relations with their Jewish neighbors. During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the residents of Abu Ghosh maintained a neutral stance and did not participate in the fighting. Abu Ghosh had a population of 5,700, predominantly Muslim Arabs, in June 2005.

Abu Ghosh is believed to be the biblical site of Kiryat Ye'arim. It takes its name from a sheikh who settled in the area in the 16th century. Most of the Muslim residents of the village today are descendents of the Abu Ghosh clan. This clan controlled the pilgrimage route from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and exacted tolls from all pilgrims passing through. The churches in Jerusalem also paid a tax to the Abu Ghosh clan. A Greek inscription unearthed in the ruins of a Roman fort show that the Tenth Legion of the Roman army was stationed in Abu Ghosh. The village has also been associated with Anathoth, the birthplace of the prophet Jeremiah. Kiryat Anavim, the first kibbutz in the Judean Hills, was founded near Abu Ghosh in 1914, on land purchased from a resident of Abu Ghosh.

In 1947 and 1948, the road to Jerusalem was blocked by the Arabs and passage through the hills surrounding Jerusalem was crucial for getting supplies to the besieged city. Of the 36 Arab villages nestled in these hills, Abu Ghosh alone remained neutral, and in many cases proved friendly and helped to keep the road open. "From here it is possible to open and close the gates to Jerusalem," said former President Yitzhak Navon. In 1948, when the modern state of Israel became a corporeal reality, many Arab villages were abandoned or destroyed in the ensuing War of Independence. Abu Ghosh was the only one in the area to survive intact and untouched. "That was because the people in Abu Ghosh have always attached great importance to being hospitable," said Mayor Salim Jaber. "We welcome anybody, regardless of religion or race."

Today, Abu Ghosh is held up as a model of Israeli-Arab peaceful coexistence. Town resident Muslim Arab millionaire Jawdat Ibrahim has established a fund that gives scholarships to both Arab and Jewish university students, and has hosted informal peace talks between Israeli and PA leaders at his popular restaurant.¹

The **Crusader Church**, at the entrance to Abu Ghosh is one of the best preserved Crusader remains in the country. It was built about 1142 and destroyed in 1187. It was acquired by the French Government in 1899 and placed under guardianship of the French Benedictine Fathers. Since 1956, it has been run by the Lazarist Fathers. Edward Robinson (1838) described it as “obviously from the time of the crusades, and [...] more perfectly preserved than any other ancient church in Palestine.” Excavations carried out in 1944 confirm the Crusader identification of the site as the biblical Emmaus. **Emmaus** (meaning "warm spring") was an ancient town located approximately 20 miles northwest of present day Jerusalem. According to Christian tradition, Jesus appeared before his disciples in Emmaus after his resurrection.

Sunday, SEP 21, DAY 13: FREE DAY

Transferred to Ben Gurion Airport and departed from Tel Aviv for flight back to Atlanta GA (11:25pm – 5:35am next day)

Monday, SEP 22, DAY 14: RETURN TO WASHINGTON STATE

Arrived in Atlanta, 2 hour 55 minute connection, then on to Seattle (arrive 10:55am)