



Gospel Travel invites you to visit Turkey and Greece

March 22-April 01, 2020

**Sunday March 22:- Departure from US**

Today we embark on our Journey to the lands of ancient treasures and Christian history with an overnight flight to Turkey. Prepare yourself for a life-changing experience.

**Monday March 23- Arrival Istanbul**

We transfer to our hotel in Istanbul the largest city in Turkey is a thriving seaport and commerce center. Dinner and overnight

**Tuesday March 24 - Istanbul**

Breakfast at Hotel, Full Day city Tour of Istanbul including visits to: Ancient Byzantine Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, St Sophia Church (Now Museum), **TRANSFER TO THE AIRPORT FOR OUR FLIGHT TO IZMIR**, Transfer to hotel Dinner and overnight in Kusadasi

**Wednesday March 25-Pergamum-Thyatira-Izmir-Kusadasi**

Our first visit of the day is Pergamum. Once a busy trading center and famous as a "seller of purple," the most favored of the Seven Churches, the church of Pergamum was praised for its forbearance (Rev. 2:12-17). It was here that the first Christians were executed by Rome. We'll visit the fabled Acropolis, pass through the Royal Gates, view the foundations of the Temple of Zeus and visit the ruins of the library, which once held 200,000 volumes. We continue south to Izmir the third largest city in Turkey and a long-time center for Jews and Christians. In Paul's day, Izmir was known as Smyrna and was another of the Seven Churches (Rev. 2:8-11). A stop will be made in Thyatira to view the ancient roadway also; Here we'll see the church of Polycarp's and the ancient agora. Our lodging this evening will be in Izmir.

**Thursday March 26: Sardis, Philadelphia, Pamukkale**

After breakfast, we depart to visit Sardis was berated by John for its facade of strength when in reality; it was weak (Rev. 3:1-6). Here coins were minted and the dyeing of wood originated. We'll visit the gymnasium and synagogue. Our next stop is nearby Philadelphia which was referred to as the "New Jerusalem" (Rev. 3:7-13) in the Book of Revelation. Not much is left of the city except for the ancient wall and the remains of a Byzantine basilica in the modern city of Alasehir. Continue to Laodicea contains many acres of ruins to visit including a stadium and remnants of a sophisticated water system. Our lodging this evening will be in a lovely spa hotel in Pamukkale.

**Friday March 27: Ephesus**

After breakfast, check out to depart to Ephesus, the city of the Bible and one of the largest restorations still in progress with miles of ancient treasures. Ephesus was once a thriving port town of 250,000 people. Today you

can still see the spectacular excavations of the major streets in this ancient city where we view the Library, Agora, Temple of Artemis, theatre, colorful mosaics, a panoramic view of the surrounding ancient port area including a wealth of church history and cultural insight. This afternoon will gather together to Welcome the Sabbath in this marvelous city. Dinner and overnight in Kusadasi

### **Saturday March 28: Isle of Patmos**

This afternoon we embark our cruise ship and sail for a visit to the beautiful Isle of Patmos, under statutory protection as a historic monument. Here we have a **tour** to see the fortified monastery of St. John and the cave claimed to be where John received the Revelation. Back on the ship; enjoy dinner before settling in to your cabin for the night.

### **Sunday March 29: Crete and Santorini**

Crete is the largest and the most rugged of the Greek islands. Take a **tour** to Heraklion and the fantastic ruins of the Palace of Knossos. Discovered in 1899 and partially reconstructed, the elaborate Palace is believed to be the mythical Labyrinth of King Minos and the seat of ancient Minoan culture. This afternoon visit the island of Santorini which is perhaps the most breathtaking of all the Greek Islands. The town of Thira where white-washed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes and glittering boutiques cling to steep cliffs, is accessible by foot path, cable-car or mule. You may choose to take an optional tour of sailing around an active volcano crater and swimming in the water heated by hot springs or enjoy this lovely island on foot. Again we return to the ship for dinner and evening entertainment.

### **Monday March 30: Disembark Cruise – Corinth, Mycenae**

We disembark the cruise this morning and travel west with a rest stop and photos at the Corinth Canal. We then travel to the ancient city of Corinth, other treats for the New Testament scholar. Corinth is the city that inspired many of Paul's most familiar letters. See the Archaeological Museum, the Market Place, the Bema, and the Temples. To enjoy a devotional in the midst of the ruins of the church of Corinth and see the pillars, steps, and public worship place where Paul preached will enhance your understanding and love of I & II Corinthians. The ruins of this important cultural center are fascinating as we walk along the stone path that the Apostle Paul walked. The engineering skill and intellect of these people are evident in the water systems that still flow from ancient to modern day. Our guide will be sure to show you the room dedicated to the medical care of that period. After the visit to ancient Corinth we travel to Mycenae where the remains of the ancient city date back to the Bronze Age to see the famous Lioness Gate, the Tomb of Agamemnon in the shape of a Beehive, and many other sites before we return east to Athens for check in at our hotel followed by dinner.

### **Tuesday March 31-Athens**

Following breakfast this morning we tour Athens, the foundation of democracy. We visit the Acropolis, the Parthenon, before viewing Athens atop Mars Hill where Paul stood and preached the truth to the Gentile nation. From atop Mars Hill we view the Agora below, the ancient marketplace and center of Athenian public life. Additional sites viewed during our panoramic bus tour are, the House of Parliament, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Olympic Stadium, and Presidential Palace. An option later this afternoon is a visit to the famous Plaka with a multitude of shops and cafes.

**Wednesday April 01, Flight Back Home.** Transfer to the Athens APT for homebound flight.