

SHORTER COLLEGE 2009

MON MAY 11: THE BEGINNING OF OUR STUDY TOUR Depart JFK International Airport to Tel Aviv.

TUE MAY 12: THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE Upon arrival IN Tel Aviv you will be met and transferred to your hotel in Nazareth.

WED MAY 13/ THU MAY 14/ FRI MAY 15: KURSI EXCAVATIONS

SAT MAY 16: JESUS MINISTRY AROUND THE KINNERET We begin the day with a visit to Hatzor (Hazor), the largest Canaanite city conquered by Joshua and the invading Israelites. Drive to the top of the Mount of Beatitudes overlooking the Sea and surrounding area. Drive to the top of the Mount of Beatitudes overlooking the Sea and surrounding area. Continue to Tabgha, the site of the Multiplication of Loaves and Fish. See the 4th century mosaics. We continue to Capernaum and visit the site, which served as the central headquarters for Jesus' public ministry. Preserved in Capernaum are the ruins of the traditional house of Peter and the 4th century synagogue built on the foundations of the 1st century synagogue where Jesus taught and prayed. We will work our way south and stop at the ruins of New Testament Bethsaida, the home village of Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Philip, all disciples of Jesus. Later in the day we will visit the hot baths found at Hammat Tiberias and then return to your hotel in Nazareth or dinner and overnight.

SUN MAY 17: AROUND THE KINNERET We will enjoy an early morning boat ride of the Kinneret from Tiberias to Kibbutz Nof Ginosar. Visit Jesus Boat. Proceed to visit the caves of Arbel that hang over the sea of Galilee, and its natural caves were used as shelters for rebels against Herod, fortress during the revolt against the Romans and was fortified again in later periods. The ruins of a Greek, Roman and Byzantine village (Arbela) lies below the cliffs and they stand over Mary Magdalene's village, today a town called Migdal. In the afternoon we will bus to the Jordan River the drive to Beit Shean, an ancient city with extensive excavations. Here twenty layers of habitation have been found. The Roman Amphitheater is one of the best-preserved in Israel. Following our visit in Beth Shean we will travel to Beit Alpha and learn how ancient mosaic floors were built in Bible times. After Beit Alpha we will visit Tel Jezreel, where the evil queen Jezebel died. The view of the valleys around Tel Jezreel is stunning. Return to your hotel in Nazareth or dinner and overnight

MON MAY 18/ TUE MAY 19/ WED MAY 20/ THU MAY 21/ FRI MAY 22: KURSI EXCAVATIONS

SAT MAY 23: JESUS MINISTRY IN UPPER GALILEE Drive early morning to Gamla The city of Gamla is mentioned in Talmudic sources as a walled city dating back to the time of Joshua Bin-Nun. These passages apparently refer to a fortified settlement from the Early Bronze Age, whose remains were found here. Gamla was destroyed in ancient times and rebuilt during the Hellenistic period when Jews returning from exile in Babylon populated this area. Proceed to Nimrod's Forteress, one of the largest fortresses from the Middle Ages sits majestically on a mountain peak in the upper Golan Heights just a shadow below the impressive Mount Hermon and a stones throw from the Banias Nature reserve. The fortress was named after the mighty warrior of the bible, Nimrod, but was not built by him. It commands a strategic command of the Hula Valley and overlooked one of the main highways that ran from the coast to Damascus. Continue to Caesarea Philippi, this abundant water supply has made the area very fertile and attractive for religious worship. Numerous temples were built at this city in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Apparently known as Baal Hermon and Baal Gad in the Old Testament period, this site later was named Panias after the Greek god Pan who was worshiped here. There is no record of Jesus entering the city, but the great confession and the transfiguration both occurred in the vicinity of the city (Matt 16:13), then known as Caesarea Philippi. End the day with a visit to Tel Dan the largest of four sources of the Jordan River. View the Middle Bronze Gate Built about 1800 B.C., this mud brick gate was in use approximately 50 years before it was covered (and thus preserved) by an earthen rampart. The style of the gate is typical for this period; it is a "Syrian gate" with three pairs of piers and four chambers, like those found at Megiddo, Shechem and Gezer. . Return to your hotel in Nazareth or dinner and overnight

SUN MAY 24: MT. CARMEL Drive to Haifa after Sunday worship service . Visit the Bahá'í World Centre, the spiritual and administrative heart of the Bahá'í community, is located in the twin cities of 'Akká and Haifa in northern Israel. It comprises the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, other holy sites of the

Bahá'í Faith in the area, and the buildings on the slope of Mt. Carmel. Enjoy the balance of the day at leisure to swim and relax at the Mediterranean. Return to your hotel in Nazareth or dinner and overnight

MON MAY 25/ TUE MAY 26/ WED MAY 27/ THU MAY 28/ FRI MAY 29: KURSI EXCAVATIONS

SAT MAY 30: LOWER GALILEE Drive to Haifa and visit Mt. Carmel which, is referenced most often as a symbol of beauty and fertility. This is probably the best view of the area of Elijah's contest, assuming tradition is correct. The monastery of Muhraqa is at the top of the hill, but tradition places the contest slightly lower near a spring. The crowds of Israelites would have filled the spacious territory around to see whose God would win. While there we will be introduced to the Druze religion and culture. Return to your hotel in Nazareth or dinner and overnight.

SUN MAY 31: CROSS CULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN GALILEE **Worship Service in Ibilin.** Today we will spend the afternoon visiting with students and faculty of the Mar Elias College. Return to your hotel in Nazareth for dinner and overnight.

MON JUN 01: ALL THE PAST YEARS WITH HISTORY. Drive to Caesarea to visit the ruins of the Crusader's City.

This site was insignificant until Herod the Great began to develop it into a magnificent harbor befitting his kingdom. The harbor was built using materials that would allow the concrete to harden underwater. The forty-acre harbor would accommodate 300 ships, much larger than the modern harbor existing today. We will also see the harbor from which Paul sailed to Rome during his final voyage. Visit the Roman Theater that Herod the Great also constructed with a seating capacity of 3500. According to Josephus, this is where the death of Herod Agrippa occurred, as recounted in Acts 12. The theater was covered with a skin covering (vellum), and visitors probably brought cushions with them to soften the stone seats. After Lunch drive to Megiddo to visit the city that has been Inhabited from the Chalcolithic period, Megiddo has approximately 26 levels of occupation. American excavators from the Oriental Institute worked from 1925 with the ambitious goal of excavating every level in its entirety. They made it through the first three levels before concentrating the work on certain areas. From the earliest times (EB) to the earliest historical records of the area (Thutmose III) to the future (Revelation 16), Megiddo assumes a prominent role. This is largely owing to its strategic location astride the Megiddo Pass (Wadi Ara) and inside the busy Jezreel Valley. Return to your hotel in Nazareth for dinner and overnight.

TUE JUN 02: THEME: INTRODUCTION TO RABBINIC JUDAISM We will spend most of the day in special studies at Kibbutz Lavi. This historic site is the location of the deliberations between rabbis from Tzippori and Tiberias, which led to the codification of the Talmud. Continue to the Tel of Sepphoris (Tzippori), the capital city of Galilee and home of Herod Antipas. Both Joseph and Jesus (and the brothers of Jesus) worked as builders in the Galilean capital city found here. Proceed to Nazareth to visit Mary's Well and the Church of the Annunciation, built in 1960-68 enclosing the crypt, which is one of the largest Christian sanctuaries in the Middle East Return to your hotel in Nazareth for dinner and overnight.

WED JUN 03: THE JORDAN VALLEY JUDEA AND JERUSALEM Leave Nazareth and we will travel south, visit Jericho, the world's oldest city, The Old Testament site of Tell el-Sultan is in the distance and is the city Joshua destroyed. Jericho is one of the most excavated sites in Israel. View the Mount of Temptation the site where Jesus fasted for Forty days. Continue to Qumran, the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in a cave by a shepherd boy. The site was excavated by Catholic priest Roland deVaux from 1953-56. More recent excavations of the site have taken place under several directions. Ascend to Jerusalem via the Roman road with a stop at Wadi El Qilt that travels from west to east, draining a significant part of the northern Judean wilderness. This Greek Orthodox monastery 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. Transfer to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

THU JUN 04: THE REIGN OF HEROD THE GREAT Drive to Bethlehem for a visit to the Church of Nativity, Enclosing the cave where the site of Jesus' birth. About 338 CE Constantine, the Roman emperor and his mother, Helena, built a church over the grotto and In 527 Justinian the Emperor of the Byzantine Empire

resettled in Bethlehem, his reign was one of great prosperity and expansion of churches. The site of the Nativity is a central pilgrimage destination for Christians from all over the world.

This building is the oldest standing church in the Holy Land. Originally built by Constantine's mother in the 4th century, Emperor Justinian rebuilt the current structure in the 530s. It was spared destruction from the Persians in 614 A.D. Drive to visit the Shepherd's Fields, traditionally believed to be the area of the fields of the shepherds "keeping watch of their flocks by night. Several churches have been built to commemorate this event. Even today local shepherds can be seen tending their flocks in this same area. Continue to Herodium, Herod's summer palace constructed over a small pre-existing hill, the fortress was built for Herod to quickly flee to from Jerusalem and a luxurious palace for his enjoyment. He chose to be buried here and the mountain is the shape of a tumulus. Herod's tomb has not been discovered in the recent excavations. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

FRI JUN 05: THE DEAD SEA AND MASADA This morning we will drive to Masada where you will ascend by cable car to visit the remarkable ruins of the Fortress, built by Herod the Great, and where from 70 to 73 A.D., Jewish Zealots made their last stand in the Judean Revolt against the Roman Legions. See the remains of Herod's Palace; the Apartments, Baths, Storehouses and cisterns - all used by the Jewish Defenders who took refuge here. Drive back on a beautiful road along the Dead Sea, which takes you along the shores to Ein Gedi where a precipitous cliff, filled with caves, rises some 2,000 feet. Continue for a visit to the Dead Sea and with time allowed for a swim. Ascend to Jerusalem and proceed to the Western Wall for the beginning of Shabbat. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

SAT JUN 06: DIVERSITY OF SAMARIA: (IF POSSIBLE) Drive North to Shilo, the portable shrine that Moses built in the wilderness was stationed at Shiloh from the time of the Conquest until the city's apparent destruction by the Philistines in 1104 B.C. Nablus, located between Mt. Gerazim (left) and Mt. Ebal (right) Shechem is preeminent in the biblical record, beginning with God's promise of the land to Abraham. Visit Jacob's Well, where Jesus, wearied from his journey, was sitting beside the well, when came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus asked her for a drink. Jews and Samaritans had nothing to do with each other. Continue to Sebastia where four ancient cities were destined to rise successively on this hill. The first was for 160 years (880-721 B.C.E.) the royal citadel and city of the kings of Israel. In this city reigned Ahab and Jezebel. Archaeology has brought to light the splendor of their court.

In 721 B.C.E. "...the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria. Thereafter Samaria became the residence of the Assyrian, Persian and Hellenistic governors, who twice rebuilt the city. With the destruction of Samaria in the Maccabean wars, Herod the Great, in about 25 B.C.E., built a new, magnificent city and called it Sebastia (Sebastos is the Greek equivalent of Augustus) in honor of Augustus Caesar.

SUN JUN 07: THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT: FLEETING DREAM OR POSSIBLE DREAM **Worship Service** balance of the day we will spend most of the afternoon visiting with residents in an Israeli settlement located inside the West Bank. In the afternoon we will visit a Palestinian refugee camp and have a briefing from a representative of the Palestinian government.

MON JUN 08: HOLY WEEK: THE JOURNEY TO THE CROSS Early morning drive to the Mount of Olives with its outstanding view of the city. Our first stop for the day is the Palm Sunday Church in Bethphage. We will visit Church of Pater Noster, the Garden of Gethsemane and Church of All Nations and view the Kidron Valley. In the afternoon we will drive to visit Mount Zion. Here we will visit the traditional site of the Last Supper and the Dormition Abbey, a possible site for the burial of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Then visit the Tomb of King David and the St. Peter's Church. Return to your hotel.

TUE JUN 09: JERUSALEM THE HOLY CITY Proceed towards the city walls built by Suliman the Magnificent enclosing the most Holy sites. Walk into the city through the Dung Gate and visit the Ophel Excavations and Rabbi's Teaching Steps at the southern end of the Temple Mount. Walk on to Mount Moriah and visit the Dome of the Rock enclosing the Rock of Sacrifice; the Mosque of Al Aqsa, further south, and the Western Wall or the Wailing Wall. In the afternoon, start at Saint Stephen's Gate and into the Old City to visit the Church of Saint Anne, the Pool of Bethesda, the Lithostrotos, where Jesus was beaten by Roman soldiers and began his walk to the cross. Then walk through the bazaar to the Holy Sepulchre Church which is built over the site of Jesus' execution, burial and resurrection. Then take the bus from Jaffa Gate back to the hotel

WED JUN 10: THE PATRIARCHS AND THE EXODUS Beersheva (Genesis 21:14, 33; 26:23-33); Its location on the main trading roads junction between East and West, and the availability of water had contributed a great deal to the importance and the development of Beer Sheva through the history. Abraham arrived here on the second millennium B.C., He dug water, fought with the local tribes and then settled down in the region. Several archeological sites can be visited one is near the outer gate of the city is a well and a tamarisk tree. Both are later than the time of the patriarchs, but they remind one of the well Abraham dug and the tree he planted (Gen 21). The tamarisk tree is well suited to life in the Negev with its deep root system and its ability to survive on brackish water. It secretes salt on its leaves and drips water in the morning. Continue to the wilderness of Zin; Avdat; En Avdat nature hike; Arad (Numbers 21:1-3; Joshua 12:14; 2 Kings 18) The city of Avdat (Oboda) was founded by the Nabateans in the 2nd century B.C. Avdat was named after King Obodas III after he was buried here. In 106 A.D. the city became subject to Roman rule along with the rest of the Nabatean empire. The peak of Avdat's prosperity was during the Byzantine period. The Nabateans converted to Christianity following Constantine's conversion in the 4th century. Two churches were built at Avdat during the Byzantine period. The North Church was built in the 4th century and the Church of St. Theodore was built in the 5th century. Return to your hotel for dinner and Overnight.

THU JUN 11: CONTEMPORARY ISRAEL/CONTEMPORARY JUDAISM After Breakfast a briefing from Israeli representative. Drive to visit Israel Museum and 2nd Temple Period Model of Jerusalem. This afternoon visit Yad Vashem before your return to your hotel for dinner and Overnight

FRI JUN 12: TEL AVIV/ NEW YORK Transfer to the Airport for your return flight to JFK, arrival in the afternoon local time.