

## **Introduction to Suggested Itineraries**

The goal of these materials is to maximize the exposure to the lands and culture of the biblical events. Because God chose to reveal himself by entering human history, his revelation is played out in a certain real-life context. To understand its events and their meaning accurately or as deeply as we can, we must understand them in the setting in which they occurred. A good study tour to Israel exposes the traveler to the reality of those settings and the culture in which they happened. Then it is possible to understand accurately what the events reveal to us about God so that we can apply them to our lives.

The land of Israel is relatively small. For the most part, while the country of Israel is larger than this, the Biblical events happen in a space that is only 150 miles from North to South and 50 miles from West to East. As a result, in a relatively short period of time you can see quite a bit of the land of the biblical story *if you plan well*.

Some tour companies create wonderful itineraries. Many trips, however, are based primarily on “pilgrimage” itineraries, often taking in sites that have more tradition than validity. These suggested itineraries are designed to maximize exposure to the sites and settings of the Biblical events, immersing the traveler into the story whenever possible. Because of this, there will be several sites in these itineraries that you will not normally see in a traditional trip itinerary. With every itinerary there is an explanation of why it is designed the way it is.

Each of these sites is chosen because of its biblical value. Information about each site and the personal and Biblical connections are discussed in the Study Tour Leader’s Manual. As you use the Study Tour Leader’s Manual – an invaluable resource! -- you will get a comprehensive understanding of the rationale for the sites and a better understanding for the order in which the tour is suggested to take place.

Groups travelling to Israel are quite diverse. Some travel quickly, others more slowly. Some expect each day to be as full as possible; others prefer an earlier ending to a day of touring. In addition, some are experienced Bible students; others are less familiar with their Bible. For these reasons, the following suggested itineraries have a basic itinerary with optional, suggested additional sites. With each itinerary there is also an explanation for why the tour is set up the way it is.

When you travel from the United States you arrive one day later than you depart. Based on arrival and departure time, itineraries need to be adjusted. These itineraries cover the full days that you will be in Israel and available for touring and do not take into account the travel time. (That means, for example, that a seven-day itinerary is actually a ten-day trip with the first two days and the last day for travel.)

Be aware that the days of the week and time of the year in which you travel make a difference and any itinerary needs to be adjusted accordingly. Jewish sites close early on Fridays and often have shorter hours on Saturday. Muslim areas are off-limits on Fridays. Muslim holidays (e.g., Ramadan) and Jewish holidays (e.g., Yom Kippur, Sukkoth, Pesach) must be taken into account. From November through April the National Parks close earlier.

My personal itinerary preference is to explore the southern arenas while staying in Jerusalem, then travel north to Galilee via the coast, tour Galilee, then return down the Rift Valley to Jerusalem for your final days in this amazing city. In tours less than ten days in-country, you are not able to tour as much of the southern arenas, so those itineraries travel north first before going to Jerusalem.

*A word about working with tour agencies:* Agencies have stock tours. They include the most commonly used tour sites. Unfortunately, often these include the myths or misunderstandings of various eras of Christianity beginning with the Byzantine Era. Agencies will adjust their itineraries at your request, but sometimes you have to be persistent. Sometimes Israeli guides or bus drivers will not know much about some of the sites listed in the more extensive or optional itineraries listed below. Use the Study Tour Leader’s Manual to provide information as you teach the Scripture from these well-chosen sites.

### Seven-Day in-country itinerary

This is a basic, short itinerary, travelling first to the north via the coast, taking in parts of Galilee, then travelling down the Rift Valley and finishing in Jerusalem.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and stay there overnight	If the flight arrives early, and your group is hardy travellers, they could tour ancient Joppa or Tel Aphek before going to a hotel.
<p><b>Day One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• <i>Option instead of Megiddo is Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Nazareth</li> </ul>	<p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Antipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armegeddon. It has one of Solomon’s gates (the only you will see in this itinerary) and a great water system.</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with it’s incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus’ preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus’ day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the “precipice”) allows for a great view in the morning</p>
<p><b>Day Two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• <i>Option: Magdala</i></li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus’ stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>See day one for comments on Sepphoris or the Leader’s Manual.</p> <p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus’ teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katzrin Talmudic Village</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus’ home base. It provides a great beginning to a day focused on Jesus’ ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p> <p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus’ home town and base of operations.</p>

	<p>I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see the first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21. Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hasheloshah</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> <li>• Jericho</li> <li>• Judean Wilderness overlook (by St. George Koziba)</li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome. Gan Hasheloshah is fun and chance to talk Gideon. People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous. Time allowing there are several easy-access great lookouts over the Judean Wilderness which allows for good biblical connections.</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• Ein Gedi</li> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> <li>• <i>Option: Add Mizpah Jericho lookout.</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tombs</li> </ul>	<p>Masada is a must</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It's a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus' ministry.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly.</p> <p>The Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful for people to understand the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Six: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> <li>• Hezekiah's Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod's retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder. Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne's Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus' trial.</p>

**Day Seven:**

- Bethphage
- Dominus Flavit
- Garden of Gethsemane
- *Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the location related to "the house" in John and Acts.*
- *Option: Bethlehem, either/both Christmas Lutheran Church and the cave beneath it or the Church of the Nativity*
- *Option: Israel Museum, Jerusalem*
- The Haas Promenade

Bethphage is where Jesus' got the donkey for Palm Sunday.

From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).

Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.

Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane.

The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus.

See the Leader's Manual for the value of the Cenacle.

The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum.

Finish our trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Haas Promenade. It is a good place to end.

### Eight-Day In-Country Itinerary

This itinerary follows the same pattern as the seven-day itinerary, adding a day going further north in Galilee on day four.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and stay there overnight	If the flight arrives early, and your group is hardy travellers, they could tour ancient Joppa or Tel Aphek before going to a hotel.
<p><b>Day One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• <i>Option instead of Megiddo is Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Nazareth</li> </ul>	<p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Anipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armegeddon. It has one of Solomon’s gates and a great water system.</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with it’s incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus’ preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus’ day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the “precipice”) allows for a great view in the morning</p>
<p><b>Day Two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• <i>Option: Magdala</i></li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus’ stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>See day one for comments on Sepphoris or the Leader’s Manual.</p> <p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus’ teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katzrin Talmudic Village</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus’ home base. It provides a great beginning to a day focused on Jesus’ ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p> <p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus’ home town and base of operations.</p>

	<p>I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see the first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21. Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazor</li> <li>• Tel Dan</li> <li>• Caesarea Philippi</li> <li>• Nimrod's Castle</li> <li>• <i>Option: insert Omrit</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Tel Kedesh</i></li> </ul>	<p>Hazor is good to talk about the book of Joshua. Solomon's gates were a very good as well.</p> <p>The Triangle of Darkness starts with time at Dan. The first part of the walk is beautiful and surprises people. Then it allows you to teach on the apostasy of Dan and Jeroboam's choices. The gate is good to relive Ruth.</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi is a powerful site because how it is the site of both great depravity and the confession of who Jesus is.</p> <p>Nimrod's Castle parking lot is great to depict Jesus Gentile travels and the Hulah Basin.</p> <p>Omrit is the site of Herod's temple to Caesar (more recently found). It requires clever bus navigation and a bit of a walk, so think hard before you add this stop.</p> <p>Tel Kedesh allows you to go up in the Naphtali Heights for a great view. The pagan temple in the necropolis provides entrance into talking about demons in the days of Jesus.</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hasheloshah</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> <li>• Jericho</li> <li>• Judean Wilderness overlook (by St. George Koziba)</li> <li>• <i>Option: If you hurry back to Jerusalem, you can do David's City, the movie, and Hezekiah's Tunnel.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome.</p> <p>Gan Hasheloshah is fun and chance to talk Gideon.</p> <p>People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous.</p> <p>Time allowing there are several easy-access great lookouts over the Judean Wilderness which allows for good biblical connections.</p> <p>Time is short; this is a plausible way to squeeze in David's City.</p>
<p><b>Day Six:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• Ein Gedi</li> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> <li>• <i>Option: Add Mizpah Jericho lookout.</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tombs</li> </ul>	<p>Masada is a must</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It's a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus' ministry.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly.</p>

	<p>The Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful for people to understand the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Seven: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> <li>• Hezekiah's Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod's retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder.</p> <p>Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne's Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus' trial.</p>
<p><b>Day Eight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethphage</li> <li>• Dominus Flavit</li> <li>• Garden of Gethsemane</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the location related to "the house" in John and Acts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Bethlehem, either/both Christmas Lutheran Church and the cave beneath it or the Church of the Nativity</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Israel Museum, Jerusalem</i></li> <li>• The Haas Promenade</li> </ul>	<p>Bethphage is where Jesus' got the donkey for Palm Sunday. From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).</p> <p>Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.</p> <p>Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane.</p> <p>The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus. See the Leader's Manual for the value of the Cenacle.</p> <p>The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum.</p> <p>Finish our trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Haas Promenade. It is a good place to end.</p>

## Nine-Day in-Country Itinerary

This itinerary again follows pattern of the previous one, but adds one day touring the southern arena of Shephelah, an area so critical to better understanding Joshua, Judges, and the period of the kings.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and stay there overnight	If the flight arrives early, and your group is hardy travellers, they could tour ancient Joppa or Tel Aphek before going to a hotel.
<p><b>Day One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• <i>Option instead of Megiddo is Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Nazareth (hotel)</li> </ul>	<p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Anipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armegeddon. It has one of Solomon’s gates and a great water system.</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with it’s incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus’ preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus’ day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the “precipice”) allows for a great view in the morning.</p>
<p><b>Day Two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• <i>Option: Magdala</i></li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus’ stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>See day one for comments on Sepphoris or the Leader’s Manual.</p> <p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus’ teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katzrin Talmudic Village</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus’ home base. It provides a great beginning to a day focused on Jesus’ ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p> <p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus’ home town and base of operations.</p>



	<p>I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see the first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21. Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazor</li> <li>• Tel Dan</li> <li>• Caesarea Philippi</li> <li>• Nimrod's Castle</li> <li>• <i>Option: insert Omrit</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Tel Kedesh</i></li> </ul>	<p>Hazor is good to talk about the book of Joshua. Solomon's gates were a very good as well.</p> <p>The Triangle of Darkness starts with time at Dan. The first part of the walk is beautiful and surprises people. Then it allows you to teach on the apostasy of Dan and Jeroboam's choices. The gate is good to relive Ruth.</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi is a powerful site because how it is the site of both great depravity and the confession of who Jesus is. Nimrod's Castle parking lot is great to depict Jesus Gentile travels and the Hulah Basin.</p> <p>Omrit is the site of Herod's temple to Caesar (more recently found). It requires clever bus navigation and a bit of a walk, so think hard before you add this stop.</p> <p>Tel Kedesh allows you to go up in the Naphtali Heights for a great view. The pagan temple in the necropolis provides entrance into talking about demons in the days of Jesus.</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hasheloshah</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> <li>• Jericho</li> <li>• Judean Wilderness overlook (by St. George Koziba)</li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome.</p> <p>Gan Hasheloshah is fun and chance to talk Gideon.</p> <p>People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous.</p> <p>Time allowing there are several easy-access great lookouts over the Judean Wilderness which allows for good biblical connections.</p>
<p><b>Day Six</b></p> <p><b><i>Option One (Shephelah)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon lookout (through Canada Park)</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Bet Shemesh</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> <li>• Tel Lachish</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Option Two (Shephelah and Biblical Negev)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Beerseva</li> </ul>	<p>This day has the most options. You can spend it entirely in the Shephelah, or combine the Shephelah with the Negev or with Bethlehem. Most tours do not go to the Shephelah, but so much in the Old Testament happened there that it provides great biblical connections. If you want to get to Beersheva and the biblical Negev, it is fastest by Highway 6, closer to Tel Gezer, but that does not leave time to fully explore the Shephelah. The other option is to do a little bit of the Shephelah, then head to Bethlehem. In terms of biblical value, unless you are visiting Christmas Lutheran Church and its cave beneath it, a more extensive time in the Shephelah or going to the Negev is more valuable.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Option: Tel Lachish )</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> </ul> <p><b>Option Three (Shephelah and Bethlehem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Christmas Lutheran Church and the cave beneath it</li> <li>• Church of the Nativity</li> <li>• Olive wood shopping</li> </ul>	<p>The Aijalon is the gateway to the highlands. This site allows for a great visual of the Joshua story.</p> <p>Tel Gezer is the perfect spot to talk about Solomon’s choices and the trajectory of the Old Testament from Solomon through Ezra.</p> <p>If you don’t mind the longer bus ride, Beersheva is an option to get to the biblical Negev, the land of the patriarchs.</p> <p>The site of Bet Shemesh is not the big value; instead, it provides a good view of the five stories of Samson’s life and what God did through it.</p> <p>Tel Azekah in British Park is a good place to depict the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the battle of David and Goliath. You can look east over the battlefield and west to Gath.</p> <p>Lachish is a moving site, especially looking at Isaiah and Hezekiah</p>
<p><b>Day Seven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• Ein Gedi</li> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> <li>• <i>Option: Add Mizpah Jericho lookout.</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tombs</li> </ul>	<p>Masada is a must</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It s a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus’ ministry.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly.</p> <p>The Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful for people to understand the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Eight: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> <li>• Hezekiah’s Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod’s retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder.</p> <p>Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne’s Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The Broad Wall is a quick stop, on the way to the Wohl.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus’ trial.</p>
<p><b>Day Nine:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethphage</li> <li>• Dominus Flavit</li> <li>• Garden of Gethsemane</li> </ul>	<p>Bethphage is where Jesus’ got the donkey for Palm Sunday. From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the location related to “the house” in John and Acts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: If you did not choose the Bethlehem option on day six, you can to Bethlehem after the Garden of Gethsemane.</i></li> <li>• Israel Museum, Jerusalem</li> <li>• The Haas Promenade</li> </ul>	<p>Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.</p> <p>Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane.</p> <p>The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus.</p> <p>See the Leader’s Manual for the value of the Cenacle.</p> <p>Bethlehem is an option, but the greater value there is if you can see the cave beneath Christmas Lutheran Church on a visit there.</p> <p>The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum.</p> <p>Finish the trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Haas Promenade. It is a good place to end.</p>
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## Ten-day In-country Itinerary

In comparison with the previous itineraries, this one begins and ends in Jerusalem. There are several reasons for this. First, starting in Jerusalem allows you time to tour the southern arenas of the Shephelah, the central ridge, and the Rift Valley before heading north up the coast to Galilee. It provides a strong contrast to the Galilee region as you travel north, aiding a better understanding of the dynamics of the divided kingdom and the struggle of Galilee which is reflected in the prophets and, later, in Jesus' ministry. On a practical level, it also allows people to feel comfortable in Jerusalem for when they return and travel in the closer quarters of the Old City.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and travel to Jerusalem for a three-night stay	If the flight arrives early, go to the lookout in front of the Seven Arches Hotel on the Mount of Olives for an overview of the Old City of Jerusalem.
<p><b>Day One:</b></p> <p><b>Option One (Shephelah)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon lookout (through Canada Park)</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Bet Shemesh</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> <li>• Tel Lachish</li> </ul> <p><b>Option Two (Shephelah and Biblical Negev)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Beerhseva</li> <li>• (Option: Tel Lachish )</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> </ul>	<p>This day has two options. You can spend it entirely in the Shephelah, or combine the Shephelah with the biblical Negev. Most tours do not go to the Shephelah, but so much in the Old Testament happened there that it provides great biblical connections. If you want to get to Beersheva and the biblical Negev, it is fastest by Highway 6, closer to Tel Gezer, but that will eliminate some of the locations in the Shephelah due to time constraints.</p> <p>The Aijalon is the gateway to the highlands. This site allows for a great visual of the Joshua story.</p> <p>Tel Gezer is the perfect spot to talk about Solomon's choices and the trajectory of the Old Testament from Solomon through Ezra.</p> <p>The site of Bet Shemesh is not the big value; instead, it provides a good view of the five stories of Samson's life and what God did through it.</p> <p>Tel Azekah in British Park is a good place to depict the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the battle of David and Goliath. You can look east over the battlefield and west to Gath. An option is to replace Tel Azekah with Tel Shaarayim (also called Khirbet Qeiyafa), but the road in is often not good for buses and the walk from the end of the road adds about an 45 minutes. It is, however, a great site to depict the dynamics of the David and Goliath event.</p> <p>Lachish is a moving site, especially looking at Isaiah and Hezekiah</p> <p>If you don't mind the longer bus ride, Beersheva is an option to get to the biblical Negev, the land of the patriarchs.</p>
<p><b>Day Two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nabi Samwel / Mizpah</li> <li>• Herodion</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Christmas Lutheran Church</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity</li> <li>• Olive wood shopping</li> </ul>	<p>The roof of the mosque at Nabi Samwel is a tremendous place to make many biblical connections. See the Leader's Manual.</p> <p>The Herodion is one of eight huge building projects of Herod the Great and the place of his burial. It is a good place to introduce him and see Jesus' humble birth and his kingdom as a contrast.</p> <p>The cave beneath Christmas Lutheran Church is a unique place, often very moving, and helpful to understand the Church of the Nativity.</p>

	<p>If the line is long to go to the grotto beneath the church of the Nativity, save time, skip it and go to Jerome's cave under the Franciscan Church. It is the same cave complex . . . and you can talk about how we got the translations.</p> <p>Olive wood factories and shops in Bethlehem are (almost) an expectation of travellers.</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• Ein Gedi</li> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> <li>• Judean Wilderness lookout(s)</li> </ul>	<p>Masada is a must and starting there avoids longer lines and heat.</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It's a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus' ministry.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly.</p> <p>There are three options for lookouts at the Judean Wilderness all of which provide great biblical connections. If there is time for just one, pick the lookout over St George Koziba. If there is time for two, Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• <i>Option instead of Megiddo is Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Nazareth (hotel)</li> </ul>	<p>Today begins the trip north to Galilee, travelling up the coast. You will not have time for all the options and if you do not select any of the options you will still have a long day. Read the Leader's Manual to make your selections.</p> <p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Anipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armageddon. It has one of Solomon's gates and a great water system.</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with its incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus' preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus' day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the "precipice") allows for a great view in the morning.</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Sepphoris</i></li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• <i>Option: Magdala</i></li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus' stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>See day one for comments on Sepphoris or the Leader's Manual.</p>

	<p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus' teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Six:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katzrin Talmudic Village</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus' home base. It provides a great beginning to a day focused on Jesus' ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p> <p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus' home town and base of operations. I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see t he first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21.</p> <p>Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Seven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazor</li> <li>• Tel Dan</li> <li>• Caesarea Philippi</li> <li>• Nimrod's Castle</li> <li>• <i>Option: insert Omrit</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Tel Kedesh</i></li> </ul>	<p>Hazor is good to talk about the book of Joshua. Solomon's gates were a very good as well.</p> <p>The Triangle of Darkness starts with time at Dan. The first part of the walk is beautiful and surprises people. Then it allows you to teach on the apostasy of Dan and Jeroboam's choices. The gate is good to relive Ruth.</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi is a powerful site because how it is the site of both great depravity and the confession of who Jesus is.</p> <p>Nimrod's Castle parking lot is great to depict Jesus Gentile travels and the Hulah Basin.</p> <p>Omrit is the site of Herod's temple to Caesar (more recently found). It requires clever bus navigation and a bit of a walk, so think hard before you add this stop.</p> <p>Tel Kedesh allows you to go up in the Naphtali Heights for a great view. The pagan temple in the necropolis provides entre into talking about demons in the days of Jesus.</p>
<p><b>Day Eight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hashelosh</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> <li>• Jericho</li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome.</p> <p>Gan Hashelosh is fun and chance to talk Gideon.</p> <p>People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Judean Wilderness overlook (by St. George Koziba)</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Mount of Olives lookout</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tomb</li> </ul>	<p>work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous.</p> <p>If you did not get the Judean Wilderness overlooks on day three, make at least one of them on the way up to Jerusalem.</p> <p>If you were not able to do the overview of Jerusalem when you first arrived, this is a good place to do the introduction and outline the next two days touring.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful to place Jesus' burial and resurrection in its context and to understand the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Nine: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> <li>• Hezekiah's Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod's retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder.</p> <p>Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne's Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The Broad Wall is a quick stop, on the way to the Wohl.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus' trial.</p>
<p><b>Day Ten:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethphage</li> <li>• Dominus Flavit</li> <li>• Garden of Gethsemane</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the location related to "the house" in John and Acts.</i></li> <li>• Israel Museum, Jerusalem</li> <li>• The Haas Promenade</li> </ul>	<p>Bethphage is where Jesus' got the donkey for Palm Sunday.</p> <p>From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).</p> <p>Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.</p> <p>Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane.</p> <p>The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus.</p> <p>See the Leader's Manual for the value of the Cenacle.</p> <p>The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum.</p> <p>Finish the trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Haas Promenade. It is a good place to end.</p>

### Eleven-day In-country itinerary

This itinerary adds exploring the Rift Valley and the southern area of the Biblical Negev, the land of the patriarchs on day four. It requires two additional hotel changes, but provides some unique opportunities such as a sunrise at Masada and Beersheva, home of so much in Genesis.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and travel to Jerusalem for a three-night stay	If the flight arrives early, go to the lookout in front of the Seven Arches Hotel on the Mount of Olives for an overview of the Old City of Jerusalem.
<p><b>Day One:</b>  <b>Option One (Shephelah)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon lookout (through Canada Park)</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Bet Shemesh</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> <li>• Tel Lachish</li> </ul>	<p>This day has two options. You can spend it entirely in the Shephelah, or combine the Shephelah with the biblical Negev. Most tours do not go to the Shephelah, but so much in the Old Testament happened there that it provides great biblical connections.</p> <p>The Aijalon is the gateway to the highlands. This site allows for a great visual of the Joshua story.</p> <p>Tel Gezer is the perfect spot to talk about Solomon's choices and the trajectory of the Old Testament from Solomon through Ezra.</p> <p>The site of Bet Shemesh is not the big value; instead, it provides a good view of the five stories of Samson's life and what God did through it.</p> <p>Tel Azekah in British Park is a good place to depict the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the battle of David and Goliath. You can look east over the battlefield and west to Gath. An option is to replace Tel Azekah with Tel Shaarayim (also called Khirbet Qeiyafa), but the road in is often not good for buses and the walk from the end of the road adds about an 45 minutes. It is, however, a great site to depict the dynamics of the David and Goliath event.</p> <p>Lachish is a moving site, especially looking at Isaiah and Hezekiah</p>
<p><b>Day Two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nabi Samwel / Mizpah</li> <li>• Herodion</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Christmas Lutheran Church</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity</li> <li>• Olive wood shopping</li> </ul>	<p>The roof of the mosque at Nabi Samwel is a tremendous place to make many biblical connections. See the Leader's Manual.</p> <p>The Herodion is one of eight huge building projects of Herod the Great and the place of his burial. It is a good place to introduce him and see Jesus' humble birth and his kingdom as a contrast.</p> <p>The cave beneath Christmas Lutheran Church is a unique place, often very moving, and helpful to understand the Church of the Nativity.</p> <p>If the line is long to go to the grotto beneath the church of the Nativity, save time, skip it and go to Jerome's cave under the Franciscan Church. It is the same cave complex . . . and you can talk about how we got the translations.</p> <p>Olive wood factories and shops in Bethlehem are (almost) an expectation of travelers.</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judean Wilderness overlooks</li> </ul>	Leaving our hotel in Jerusalem, you will begin a southern swing via the Rift Valley.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mizpah Jericho overlook</li> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• En Gedi</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> </ul>	<p>Since you will be staying near Masada, you can spend more time exploring the Judean Wilderness. As you head east on highway 1, exit at the St George Kosiba overlook, stopping at two different spots to allow for longer conversations about the events in the wilderness. Then head on to Mizpah Jericho's overlook. Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations. Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus' ministry.</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It's a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly. If you are staying at the Masada Youth Hostel, be sure to stop for a swim in the Dead Sea before you go there. If you are staying at a hotel near Ein Boqeq, you can go swim from your hotel. There are three options for lookouts at the Judean Wilderness all of which provide great biblical connections. If there is time for just one, pick the lookout over St George Koziba.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• The Salt Caves (Lot's Wife)</li> <li>• Tel Arad</li> <li>• Tel Beersheva</li> </ul>	<p>If you are staying at the Masada Youth Hostel and the weather is clear, a sunrise hike up the Snake Trail provides an unbelievable memory as you witness the sunrise. You can return to the hostel, eat, clean up, then join the others from the group to ascend via the cable car. Masada is a must. The Salt Caves by what is labelled "Lot's Wife" and the unusual dolomite vaulting provide the chance to talk about that story, which Jesus quotes. See the leader's Manual for a full explanation.</p> <p>Tel Arad is rarely visited, but provides a good visual for the eastern biblical Negev and the spy events, plus the beginning of the forty years.</p> <p>Tel Beersheva and its lookout tower provides a great place to talk about the patriarchs.</p> <p>Hotels in the south are less prevalent; Beersheva has some possibilities but it is also possible to begin the trip north up the coast and stay in the Tel Aviv area.</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• Nazareth (hotel)</li> </ul>	<p>You cover quite a bit of territory as you travel north to Galilee via the coast. Read the Leader's Manual to make your selections.</p> <p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Anipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long. It is good to get out of the bus for a little bit as well.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western</p>

	<p>Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armegeddon. It has one of Solomon's gates and a great water system.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus' day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the "precipice") allows for a great view in the morning.</p>
<p><b>Day Six:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• Sepphoris</li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• Magdala</li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus' stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with its incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus' preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus' teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Seven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazor</li> <li>• Tel Dan</li> <li>• Caesarea Philippi</li> <li>• Nimrod's Castle</li> <li>• <i>Option: insert Omrit</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Tel Kedesh</i></li> </ul>	<p>Hazor is good to talk about the book of Joshua. Solomon's gates were a very good as well.</p> <p>The Triangle of Darkness starts with time at Dan. The first part of the walk is beautiful and surprises people. Then it allows you to teach on the apostasy of Dan and Jeroboam's choices. The gate is good to relive Ruth.</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi is a powerful site because how it is the site of both great depravity and the confession of who Jesus is.</p> <p>Nimrod's Castle parking lot is great to depict Jesus Gentile travels and the Hulah Basin.</p> <p>Omrit is the site of Herod's temple to Caesar (more recently found). It requires clever bus navigation and a bit of a walk, so think hard before you add this stop.</p> <p>Tel Kedesh allows you to go up in the Naphtali Heights for a great view. The pagan temple in the necropolis provides entre into talking about demons in the days of Jesus.</p>
<p><b>Day Eight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katzrin Talmudic Village</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus' home base. It provides a great beginning to a day focused on Jesus' ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p> <p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus' home town and base of operations.</p>

	<p>I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see the first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21. Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Nine:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hasheloshah</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> <li>• Jericho</li> <li>• <i>Option: David's City</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tombs</li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome.</p> <p>Gan Hasheloshah is fun, an enjoyable swim, and chance to talk about Gideon.</p> <p>People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous.</p> <p>If you get back to Jerusalem in the late afternoon, it is an option to go to David's City, see the movie, then walk down and through Hezekiah's Tunnel. Since it's been a bit of a water day, this works out for people as you head back to the hotel.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful to place Jesus' burial and resurrection in its context and to understand the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Ten: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> <li>• Hezekiah's Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod's retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder.</p> <p>Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne's Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The Broad Wall is a quick stop, on the way to the Wohl.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus' trial.</p>
<p><b>Day Eleven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethphage</li> <li>• Dominus Flavit</li> <li>• Garden of Gethsemane</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the</i></li> </ul>	<p>Bethphage is where Jesus' got the donkey for Palm Sunday. From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).</p> <p>Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.</p> <p>Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane. You can reserve a time in the olive grove across the street for study or worship.</p>

<p><i>location related to "the house" in John and Acts.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Option: Walk around to the Herodian steps south of the Jaffa Gate.</i></li><li>• Israel Museum, Jerusalem</li><li>• The Haas Promenade</li></ul>	<p>The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus. See the Leader's Manual for the value of the Cenacle. See the Leader's Manual for the value of seeing the Herodian steps on the west side of the Old City.</p> <p>The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum. Seeing the museum at the end of the trip is helpful because by now people are familiar with some of the sites and artifacts that they will see.</p> <p>Finish the trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Haas Promenade. It is a good place to end.</p>
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### Twelve-day in-country itinerary

This itinerary follows the same pattern as the ten-day itinerary, but extends the tour to the south, an area much less visited but critical to understanding the Patriarchs and the wilderness wanderings of the book of Numbers. (The Hebrew name for the book of Numbers is actually “In the Wilderness!”) The vistas, hikes, and biblical connections made on day five will have tremendous impact.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and travel to Jerusalem for a three-night stay	If the flight arrives early, go to the lookout in front of the Seven Arches Hotel on the Mount of Olives for an overview of the Old City of Jerusalem.
<b>Day One:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon lookout (through Canada Park)</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Bet Shemesh</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> <li>• Tel Lachish</li> </ul>	This day has two options. You can spend it entirely in the Shephelah, or combine the Shephelah with the biblical Negev. Most tours do not go to the Shephelah, but so much in the Old Testament happened there that it provides great biblical connections. The Aijalon is the gateway to the highlands. This site allows for a great visual of the Joshua story. Tel Gezer is the perfect spot to talk about Solomon’s choices and the trajectory of the Old Testament from Solomon through Ezra. The site of Bet Shemesh is not the big value; instead, it provides a good view of the five stories of Samson’s life and what God did through it. Tel Azekah in British Park is a good place to depict the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the battle of David and Goliath. You can look east over the battlefield and west to Gath. An option is to replace Tel Azekah with Tel Shaarayim (also called Khirbet Qeiyafa), but the road in is often not good for buses and the walk from the end of the road adds about an 45 minutes. It is, however, a great site to depict the dynamics of the David and Goliath event. Lachish is a moving site, especially looking at Isaiah and Hezekiah
<b>Day Two:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nabi Samwel / Mizpah</li> <li>• Herodion</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Christmas Lutheran Church</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity</li> <li>• Olive wood shopping</li> </ul>	The roof of the mosque at Nabi Samwel is a tremendous place to make many biblical connections. See the Leader’s Manual. The Herodion is one of eight huge building projects of Herod the Great and the place of his burial. It is a good place to introduce him and see Jesus’ humble birth and his kingdom as a contrast. The cave beneath Christmas Lutheran Church is a unique place, often very moving, and helpful to understand the Church of the Nativity. If the line is long to go to the grotto beneath the church of the Nativity, save time, skip it and go to Jerome’s cave under the Franciscan Church. It is the same cave complex . . . and you can talk about how we got the translations. Olive wood factories and shops in Bethlehem are (almost) an expectation of travellers.
<b>Day Three:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judean Wilderness overlooks</li> </ul>	Leaving our hotel in Jerusalem, you will begin a southern swing via the Rift Valley.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mizpah Jericho overlook</li> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• En Gedi</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> </ul>	<p>Since you will be staying near Masada, you can spend more time exploring the Judean Wilderness. As you head east on highway 1, exit at the St George Kosiba overlook, stopping at two different spots to allow for longer conversations about the events in the wilderness. Then head on to Mizpah Jericho's overlook. Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations. Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus' ministry.</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It's a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly. If you are staying at the Masada Youth Hostel, be sure to stop for a swim in the Dead Sea before you go there. If you are staying at a hotel near Ein Boqeq, you can go swim from your hotel. There are three options for lookouts at the Judean Wilderness all of which provide great biblical connections. If there is time for just one, pick the lookout over St George Koziba.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• The Salt Caves (Lot's Wife)</li> <li>• Tel Arad</li> <li>• Tel Beersheva</li> </ul>	<p>If you are staying at the Masada Youth Hostel and the weather is clear, a sunrise hike up the Snake Trail provides an unbelievable memory as you witness the sunrise. You can return to the hostel, eat, clean up, then join the others from the group to ascend via the cable car. Masada is a must. The Salt Caves by what is labelled "Lot's Wife" and the unusual dolomite vaulting provide the chance to talk about that story, which Jesus quotes. See the leader's Manual for a full explanation.</p> <p>Tel Arad is rarely visited, but provides a good visual for the eastern biblical Negev and the spy events, plus the beginning of the forty years.</p> <p>Tel Beersheva and its lookout tower provides a great place to talk about the patriarchs.</p> <p>Hotels in the south are less prevalent. Beersheva has some possibilities and there are a few wilderness kibbutzim that are interesting experiences (Mashabei Sade, for example).</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maktesh Gadol, Mount Avnon</li> <li>• Ben Gurion's Tomb</li> <li>• Midbar Tzin</li> <li>• Avdat</li> </ul>	<p>This day is a rare treat for travellers. Makteshim are unique geologic structures that are worth seeing. There's no real biblical connection, other than you can point out the location of the first part of the wilderness wanderings, but it's impressive to view.</p> <p>Ben Gurion's Tomb has a fantastic overlook of Midbar (Wilderness) Tzin. It's a great place to talk about the choices Israel had to make as the came from Egypt after the Exodus. After viewing the wilderness from above, descend into it for a unique hike though a small and beautiful canyon to the east,</p>

	Avdat Canyon. After coming out of the canyon, visit the Nabataean city of Avdat.
<p><b>Day Six</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• Nazareth (hotel)</li> </ul>	<p>Starting this far south makes this day long with a lot of territory to cover as you begin the trip north to Galilee, travelling up the coast. You will not have time for all the options and if you do not select any of the options you will still have a long day. Read the Leader's Manual to make your selections.</p> <p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Anipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long. It is good to get out of the bus for a little bit as well.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armageddon. It has one of Solomon's gates and a great water system.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus' day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the "precipice") allows for a great view in the morning.</p>
<p><b>Day Seven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• Sepphoris</li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• Magdala</li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus' stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with its incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus' preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus' teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Eight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katzrin</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus' home base. It provides a great background to Capernaum and Jesus' ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p> <p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples and it was the city of Geshur in the Old Testament. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus' home town and base of operations.</p>

	<p>I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see the first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21. Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Nine:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazor</li> <li>• Tel Dan</li> <li>• Caesarea Philippi</li> <li>• Nimrod's Castle</li> <li>• <i>Option: insert Omrit</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Tel Kedesh</i></li> </ul>	<p>Hazor is good to talk about the book of Joshua. Solomon's gates were a very good as well.</p> <p>The Triangle of Darkness starts with time at Dan. The first part of the walk is beautiful and surprises people. Then it allows you to teach on the apostasy of Dan and Jeroboam's choices. The gate is good to relive Ruth.</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi is a powerful site because how it is the site of both great depravity and the confession of who Jesus is.</p> <p>Nimrod's Castle parking lot is great to depict Jesus Gentile travels and the Hulah Basin.</p> <p>Omrit is the site of Herod's temple to Caesar (more recently found). It requires clever bus navigation and a bit of a walk, so think hard before you add this stop.</p> <p>Tel Kedesh allows you to go up in the Naphtali Heights for a great view. The pagan temple in the necropolis provides entrance into talking about demons in the days of Jesus.</p>
<p><b>Day Ten:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hasheloshah</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> <li>• Jericho</li> <li>• <i>Option: David's City</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tombs</li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome.</p> <p>Gan Hasheloshah is fun, an enjoyable swim, and chance to talk about Gideon.</p> <p>People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous.</p> <p>If you get back to Jerusalem in the late afternoon, it is an option to go to David's City, see the movie, then walk down and through Hezekiah's Tunnel. Since it's been a bit of a water day, this works out for people as you head back to the hotel.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful to place Jesus' burial and resurrection in its context and to understand the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Eleven: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod's retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hezekiah's Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne's Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The Broad Wall is a quick stop, on the way to the Wohl.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus' trial.</p>
<p><b>Day Twelve:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethphage</li> <li>• Dominus Flavit</li> <li>• Garden of Gethsemane</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the location related to "the house" in John and Acts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Walk around to the Herodian steps south of the Jaffa Gate.</i></li> <li>• Israel Museum, Jerusalem</li> <li>• The Haas Promenade</li> </ul>	<p>Bethphage is where Jesus' got the donkey for Palm Sunday. From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).</p> <p>Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.</p> <p>Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane.</p> <p>The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus. See the Leader's Manual for the value of the Cenacle.</p> <p>See the Leader's Manual for the value of seeing the Herodian steps on the west side of the Old City.</p> <p>The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum. Seeing the museum at the end of the trip is helpful because by now people are familiar with some of the sites and artifacts that they will see.</p> <p>Finish the trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Haas Promenade. It is a good place to end.</p>

### Thirteen-day in-country itinerary

Twelve days in country allows you to explore the south, part of the wilderness wanderings (day five), as well as adding a day in the Golan Heights east of Galilee (day eight). It also allows for some unique hiking experiences in beautiful country.

Sites	Rationale for site selection
Arrive in Tel Aviv and travel to Jerusalem for a three-night stay	If the flight arrives early, go to the lookout in front of the Seven Arches Hotel on the Mount of Olives for an overview of the Old City of Jerusalem.
<p><b>Day One:</b>  <b>Option One (Shephelah)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aijalon lookout (through Canada Park)</li> <li>• Tel Gezer</li> <li>• Bet Shemesh</li> <li>• Tel Azekah</li> <li>• Tel Lachish</li> </ul>	<p>This day has two options. You can spend it entirely in the Shephelah, or combine the Shephelah with the biblical Negev. Most tours do not go to the Shephelah, but so much in the Old Testament happened there that it provides great biblical connections.</p> <p>The Aijalon is the gateway to the highlands. This site allows for a great visual of the Joshua story.</p> <p>Tel Gezer is the perfect spot to talk about Solomon’s choices and the trajectory of the Old Testament from Solomon through Ezra.</p> <p>The site of Bet Shemesh is not the big value; instead, it provides a good view of the five stories of Samson’s life and what God did through it.</p> <p>Tel Azekah in British Park is a good place to depict the battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, the battle of David and Goliath. You can look east over the battlefield and west to Gath. An option is to replace Tel Azekah with Tel Shaarayim (also called Khirbet Qeiyafa), but the road in is often not good for buses and the walk from the end of the road adds about an 45 minutes. It is, however, a great site to depict the dynamics of the David and Goliath event.</p> <p>Lachish is a moving site, especially looking at Isaiah and Hezekiah</p>
<p><b>Day Two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nabi Samwel / Mizpah</li> <li>• Herodion</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Christmas Lutheran Church</li> <li>• Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity</li> <li>• Olive wood shopping</li> </ul>	<p>The roof of the mosque at Nabi Samwel is a tremendous place to make many biblical connections. See the Leader’s Manual.</p> <p>The Herodion is one of eight huge building projects of Herod the Great and the place of his burial. It is a good place to introduce him and see Jesus’ humble birth and his kingdom as a contrast.</p> <p>The cave beneath Christmas Lutheran Church is a unique place, often very moving, and helpful to understand the Church of the Nativity.</p> <p>If the line is long to go to the grotto beneath the church of the Nativity, save time, skip it and go to Jerome’s cave under the Franciscan Church. It is the same cave complex . . . and you can talk about how we got the translations.</p> <p>Olive wood factories and shops in Bethlehem are (almost) an expectation of travellers.</p>
<p><b>Day Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judean Wilderness overlooks</li> <li>• Mizpah Jericho overlook</li> </ul>	Leaving our hotel in Jerusalem, you will begin a southern swing via the Rift Valley.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qumran</li> <li>• En Gedi</li> <li>• Dead Sea Swim</li> </ul>	<p>Since you will be staying near Masada, you can spend more time exploring the Judean Wilderness. As you head east on highway 1, exit at the St George Kosiba overlook, stopping at two different spots to allow for longer conversations about the events in the wilderness. Then head on to Mizpah Jericho's overlook. Mizpah Jericho lookout is fantastic and is a great place to talk about Joshua, Saul, and the temptations. Qumran is the source of the Dead Sea Scrolls and allows for talking about the scrolls and the first century Judean spiritual setting of Jesus' ministry.</p> <p>Ein Gedi has a short hike or a longer one up to the falls. It's a good place to talk about David and Saul, and the imagery of the Psalms.</p> <p>A swim in the Dead Sea is a standard. Doing it late in the day means people will get to the hotel and shower more thoroughly. If you are staying at the Masada Youth Hostel, be sure to stop for a swim in the Dead Sea before you go there. If you are staying at a hotel near Ein Boqeq, you can go swim from your hotel. There are three options for lookouts at the Judean Wilderness all of which provide great biblical connections. If there is time for just one, pick the lookout over St George Koziba.</p>
<p><b>Day Four:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masada</li> <li>• The Salt Caves (Lot's Wife)</li> <li>• Tel Arad</li> <li>• Tel Beersheva</li> </ul>	<p>If you are staying at the Masada Youth Hostel and the weather is clear, a sunrise hike up the Snake Trail provides an unbelievable memory as you witness the sunrise. You can return to the hostel, eat, clean up, then join the others from the group to ascend via the cable car. Masada is a must. The Salt Caves by what is labelled "Lot's Wife" and the unusual dolomite vaulting provide the chance to talk about that story, which Jesus quotes. See the leader's Manual for a full explanation.</p> <p>Tel Arad is rarely visited, but provides a good visual for the eastern biblical Negev and the spy events, plus the beginning of the forty years.</p> <p>Tel Beersheva and its lookout tower provides a great place to talk about the patriarchs.</p> <p>Hotels in the south are less prevalent. Beersheva has some possibilities and there are a few wilderness kibbutzim that are interesting experiences (Mashabei Sade, for example).</p>
<p><b>Day Five:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maktesh Gadol, Mount Avnon</li> <li>• Ben Gurion's Tomb</li> <li>• Midbar Tzin</li> <li>• Avdat</li> </ul>	<p>This day is a rare treat for travellers. Makteshim are unique geologic structures that are worth seeing. There's no real biblical connection, other than you can point out the location of the first part of the wilderness wanderings, but it's impressive to view.</p> <p>Ben Gurion's Tomb has a fantastic overlook of Midbar (Wilderness) Tzin. It's a great place to talk about the choices Israel had to make as the came from Egypt after the Exodus. After viewing the wilderness from above, descend into it for a unique hike though a small and beautiful canyon to the east,</p>

	Avdat Canyon. After coming out of the canyon, visit the Nabataean city of Avdat.
<p><b>Day Six</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Tel Aphek</i></li> <li>• Caesarea Maritima</li> <li>• Mount Carmel, Muhraqa</li> <li>• Megiddo</li> <li>• Nazareth (hotel)</li> </ul>	<p>Starting this far south makes this day long with a lot of territory to cover as you begin the trip north to Galilee, travelling up the coast. You will not have time for all the options and if you do not select any of the options you will still have a long day. Read the Leader's Manual to make your selections.</p> <p>If your group moves well, you can add Tel Aphek/Anipatris to the start of the day, but it can make the day long. It is good to get out of the bus for a little bit as well.</p> <p>Caesarea is a must, key to understanding Herod the Great and the interaction of the West with Palestine.</p> <p>The view from the top of the Carmelite Monastery (Muhraqa) is fantastic and provides a great orientation to lower western Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, as well as the setting of the Elijah story.</p> <p>Megiddo is probably the most famous tel, the great theater box of the wars in the Jezreel Valley and allowing for teaching about Armageddon. It has one of Solomon's gates and a great water system.</p> <p>Nazareth is a crowded city that is nothing like Jesus' day. There is little to see here, but the lookout (the "precipice") allows for a great view in the morning.</p>
<p><b>Day Seven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nazareth lookout</li> <li>• Sepphoris</li> <li>• Mount Arbel</li> <li>• Magdala</li> </ul>	<p>The Nazareth lookout is great for Deborah, Gideon, Saul, Elijah, and Jesus' stories. (It is definitely not the precipice from which they tried to throw Jesus.)</p> <p>Sepphoris is an option with its incredible mosaics. The roof of the Turkish building allows you to see to biblical Cana and the land of Jesus' preaching tours. There are less biblical connections with Sepphoris, but it is still a great stop.</p> <p>Mount Arbel is a must. The view it provides of the Evangelical Triangle cannot be beat and sets a great stage for talking about Jesus. (If our group is more adventuresome, you can take the cables down the cliffs and hike to the bottom of the hill where the bus will pick you up. This adds 90 minutes to this stop.)</p> <p>Magdala is one corner of the Evangelical Triangle. The synagogue can help people depict Jesus' teaching there. The modern church is quite nice and dedicated to the women of the Bible.</p>
<p><b>Day Eight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Kursi</i></li> <li>• Katzrin Talmudic Village</li> <li>• Katzrin Golan Archaeological Museum</li> <li>• Gamla</li> <li>• Ofir's lookout</li> <li>• Hippus overlook</li> <li>• Wadi Yarmuk</li> </ul>	<p>The traditional explanation of Kursi needs to be re-examined as to this location's role in the life of Jesus' ministry. See the Leader's Manual. It does provide a short stop to talk about the Decapolis and the Jewish areas around Galilee.</p> <p>Katzrin is a gem. It is a partially rebuilt excavation that is very similar to Capernaum, Jesus' home base. It provides a great background to Capernaum and Jesus' ministry in the Evangelical Triangle. (There are rarely any tourists here.)</p>

	<p>The Golan Archaeological Museum is small, but its close to the Talmudic Village so it does not take much time. The exorcist amulets are very helpful to understand Jesus' dealing with the demons.</p> <p>Gamla is dramatic and similar to the cliffs of Arbel, but thirty years after Jesus; it is good to talk about the kingdom of God and Jesus' teaching.</p> <p>Ofir's lookout has the best overlook of the Evangelical Triangle from the eastern side of the lake – and it's not used much.</p> <p>Hippus is a city set on a hill, not accessible except by car or hike, so the lookout is an easy, quick, helpful stop to discuss the Decapolis.</p> <p>Wadi Yarmuk is a fun, dramatic ride and, timed right, provides insight into Jacob's struggle and wrestling with God.</p>
<p><b>Day Nine:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Bethsaida</i></li> <li>• Capernaum</li> <li>• Boat ride on Galilee</li> <li>• Allon Museum / Ginnosaur</li> <li>• Tabgha (Primacy Chapel side)</li> <li>• Mount of Beatitudes</li> </ul>	<p>Bethsaida is not a national park, but an archaeological site that was home for at least four of the disciples and it was the city of Geshur in the Old Testament. Not an essential stop, but a nice add.</p> <p>Capernaum is Jesus' home town and base of operations.</p> <p>I prefer the boat ride from the Greek Orthodox dock along the north shore to take in Capernaum, this shoreline of many Jesus' stories, and Tabgha. You have to push to get it this direction and it must happen in the morning before the afternoon winds pick up.</p> <p>The boat docks at the Allon Museum to see t he first century boat.</p> <p>Because of the warm springs, Tabgha is a fishing spot and a good place to talk about the fishing stories and John 21.</p> <p>Finishing the day with the Mount of Beatitudes overlook is a good place to walk through Matthew 5-7.</p>
<p><b>Day Ten:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazor</li> <li>• Tel Dan</li> <li>• Caesarea Philippi</li> <li>• Nimrod's Castle</li> <li>• <i>Option: insert Omrit</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert Tel Kedesh</i></li> </ul>	<p>Hazor is good to talk about the book of Joshua. Solomon's gates were a very good as well.</p> <p>The Triangle of Darkness starts with time at Dan. The first part of the walk is beautiful and surprises people. Then it allows you to teach on the apostasy of Dan and Jeroboam's choices. The gate is good to relive Ruth.</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi is a powerful site because how it is the site of both great depravity and the confession of who Jesus is.</p> <p>Nimrod's Castle parking lot is great to depict Jesus Gentile travels and the Hulah Basin.</p> <p>Omrit is the site of Herod's temple to Caesar (more recently found). It requires clever bus navigation and a bit of a walk, so think hard before you add this stop.</p> <p>Tel Kedesh allows you to go up in the Naphtali Heights for a great view. The pagan temple in the necropolis provides entre into talking about demons in the days of Jesus.</p>
<p><b>Day Eleven:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scythopolis / Bet Shean</li> <li>• Gan Hashelosh</li> <li>• Beth Abara</li> </ul>	<p>Scythopolis is a must to see the influence of Rome.</p> <p>Gan Hashelosh is fun, an enjoyable swim, and chance to talk about Gideon.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jericho</li> <li>• <i>Option: David's City</i></li> <li>• Sanhedria Tombs</li> </ul>	<p>People want to get to the Jordan River and this site is by Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John baptized. It's a great place to connect with Elijah's departure, Joshua's arrival, the work of John the Baptist, and start talking about the last days of Jesus.</p> <p>Jericho is not much to see, but famous.</p> <p>If you get back to Jerusalem in the late afternoon, it is an option to go to David's City, see the movie, then walk down and through Hezekiah's Tunnel. Since it's been a bit of a water day, this works out for people as you head back to the hotel.</p> <p>The Sanhedria Tomb is incredibly helpful to place Jesus' burial and resurrection in its context and to understand the Church of he Holy Sepulcher.</p>
<p><b>Day Twelve: (in Jerusalem)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haram esh Sharif</li> <li>• Western Wall</li> <li>• Western Wall Tunnels</li> <li>• Bethesda</li> <li>• Chapel of Holy Sepulcher</li> <li>• (Shopping in the Muristan area)</li> <li>• Hezekiah's Broad Wall</li> <li>• The Wohl Museum</li> </ul>	<p>The Haram is the Temple Mount and experiencing the platform and space is a must.</p> <p>The Western Wall is the remnant of Herod's retaining wall for the temple and sacred to the Jews.</p> <p>The Tunnels reveal how incredible Herod was as a builder.</p> <p>Bethesda is a confusing site, but singing in St. Anne's Church is memorable. The site is good to teach on John 5, Mikvah, and John 3.</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is ground zero of our faith and is a must.</p> <p>Shopping time is always wanted in the Old City bazaar and the Muristan area by the Holy Sepulcher works well.</p> <p>The Broad Wall is a quick stop, on the way to the Wohl.</p> <p>The excavated large house in the Wohl Museum is a gem for talking about Jesus' trial.</p>
<p><b>Day Thirteen:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethphage</li> <li>• Dominus Flavit</li> <li>• Garden of Gethsemane</li> <li>• <i>Option: Insert walking through the Kidron Valley and meeting near the Zion Gate. You could visit the Cenacle, but not for the buildings; only for the location related to "the house" in John and Acts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Option: Walk around to the Herodian steps south of the Jaffa Gate.</i></li> <li>• Israel Museum, Jerusalem</li> <li>• The Haas Promenade</li> </ul>	<p>Bethphage is where Jesus' got the donkey for Palm Sunday. From behind the church you can see Bethany (and visit a first century tomb if you are so inclined).</p> <p>Dominus Flavit is good for talking about Palm Sunday, Matthew 24, and the compassion of Jesus.</p> <p>Church of All Nations is the Garden of Gethsemane.</p> <p>The Kidron Valley walk is a nice experience, reliving Jesus.</p> <p>See the Leader's Manual for the value of the Cenacle.</p> <p>See the Leader's Manual for the value of seeing the Herodian steps on the west side of the Old City.</p> <p>The Israel Museum has a great model of Jerusalem in the first century, a Dead Sea scrolls exhibit, and a fantastic biblical archaeological museum. Seeing the museum at the end of the trip is helpful because by now people are familiar with some of the sites and artifacts that they will see.</p> <p>Finish the trip with the fantastic overlook of Jerusalem from the Hass Promenade. It is a good place to end.</p>