Summer Semester A, 2015

ISRAEL ITINERARY

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1  Saturday 27  Fly Emirates to Amman

2  Sunday 28  Meet group at Dubai, or Amman airport. Transfer to Petra for dinner and overnight.
Brief stop at Arnon gorge lookout.

3  Monday 29  Petra; UNESCO has described Petra as “one of the most precious cultural properties of our cultural heritage.” In 1985, Petra was designated a World Heritage Site.

4  Tuesday 30  Jordan; Petra; King’s Highway; Madaba; Mt Nebo; Amman Museum (including artefacts from Qumran [writing bench; 4Q175; 4Q22; 1Q5a; 4Q109; 4Q162; 1Q17-20; Copper Scroll]; Earliest manmade statue from Jericho; Ammonite Citadel Inscription; Tell Siran Inscription; Balaam Son of Beor Inscription; limestone sarcophagi).

5  Wednesday 31  Jordan/Israel. Tour ancient Amman, Bethany beyond Jordan. Cross into Israel via Allenby bridge. Jericho (including Kenyon’s bulk and storejars); St George’s monastery; Wadi Kelt.

6  Thursday 1  Jerusalem; Sections/Walls of Jerusalem. Start with the Ramparts Walk from the Jaffa Gate – a walkway atop the Old City walls offers a unique panoramic view of the Old City and its surroundings and is a shutterbug’s delight. Continue to the Western Wall, Judaism’s most sacred site with its bar mitzvahs on Thursdays. Then on to the Citadel and the Tower of David Museum dedicated to the history of Jerusalem from its founding to modern times with remains said to go back to Hasmonean times.

7  Friday 2  Jerusalem; Begin the day at The Jewish Quarter to visit the Broad Wall, a 2,700-year-old fortification built by King Hezekiah to save Jerusalem from the Assyrians (Isa. 22:10) and which finally fell to the Babylonians. The Cardo - Jerusalem’s main street in the Byzantine and medieval eras, its colonnades and arched chambers now restored as a commercial centre and archaeological display. The Herodian Mansions – restored as a living museum beneath contemporary buildings, with remnants of the fine homes, mosaics, implements of daily life and architecture of the city’s wealthy class before the destruction of the Temple. And The Burnt House – the basement of a Jerusalem home revealing dramatic evidence of the Katros family who probably lived and worked here, and of Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 CE. An audio-visual presentation offers a powerful version of the family’s story. King David’s Tomb, The Coenaculum – or Room of the Last Supper, built over the traditional site where Jesus and the disciples celebrated the first Eucharist (Mark 14:24). In the afternoon: Exploring four quarters in small groups. Friday Evening, beginning of Sabbath at the Western Wall.

8  Saturday 3  Shepherd’s fields; Bethlehem; Church of the Nativity; Grotto of Nativity; Monastery of St Jerome; Herodion.

9  Sunday 4  Jerusalem; The Western Wall Tunnel - the original Western Wall of Herod’s Temple Mount over which Jerusalem of later eras was constructed, walking along 1,445 feet of the original, enormous 2,000-year-old Herodian stones, seeing the lofty Warren’s Gate, a street and other finds. Visit the Southern Wall Excavations, walking on the original two thousand-year old street and climbing the ancient steps. Robinson’s Arch and the Davidson Center. Israel Museum in pm: Dead Sea Scrolls at the Shrine of the Book. The original Aleppo Codex of the Masoretic Text is also on display. You can also see the famous 1:50 Model of ancient Jerusalem in its new home here. Optional extra: continue to the Bible Lands Museum, next door, with its priceless exhibits of artifacts that bring the biblical cultures of the region alive.
Monday 5
Jerusalem; Mt. Olives. Dominus Flevit, Getsemane, Bethany. After lunch, Abu Ghosh/Emmaus, the site of biblical Kiryat Ye’arim, where the Holy Ark of the Covenant was kept by the Israelites after its return from Philistine captivity and before David brought it to Jerusalem.

Tuesday 6
Jerusalem; Start out with a visit to the Temple Mount, site of the sacrifice of Isaac, the Jerusalem Temples, and the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque. Visit the Pool of Bethesda - site of the miraculous healing of a paralyzed man by Jesus, and the Church of St. Anne. Ecce Homo. Lunch at Zion Sisters (Ecce Homo). Via Dolorosa – following the Stations of the Cross from the Chapel of the Flagellation, and the Sisters of Zion Convent, through the streets of Old Jerusalem to the Judgment Gate and the Tomb of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Wednesday 7
Visit to the City of David; King David’s “fortress of Zion” (2 Sam. 5:7), where Jerusalem started, includes exploring Warren’s Shaft and Hezekiah’s Tunnel, through which water has flowed since the days of King Hezekiah some 2,700 years ago. See the “water fortress” of the Gihon (1 Kings 1:33), the Second Temple-era Pool of Siloam (John 9:7) and a 2,000-year-old street that once led up to the Temple. Afternoon. Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial.

Thursday 8
Get an early start today and drive south to the Dead Sea and Masada. Cable Car (or with pre-approval, hike) to the top of Masada to view the ruins of King Herod’s mountaintop fortress and the last stronghold of the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 73 CE, which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visit the new museum in the Visitor Centre, which illustrates the daily life of the rebels, the story of the excavations, and understand how the site became one of Israel’s most important symbols. Visit Qumran (get up close and personal with Cave 1), and the community behind the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Friday 9
Church of the Holy Sepulchre – Golgotha; Tomb of the Resurrection; The Church of the Holy Sepulchre; Day off. Recommended options include: The Rockefeller Museum – an architectural monument in its own right, this grand 1930s-era complex houses finds from some of the great early excavations – Gezer, Megiddo, Jericho, Jerusalem and many others. “Zedekiah’s cave; Saturday night Eucharist at Notre Dame.

Saturday 10
Day off; Drive to Sepphoris. Josephus called Sepphoris “the ornament of all Galilee.” Herod Antipas chose this site in 4 B.C. as the capital of his government until he built Tiberias in 19 A.D. He most likely built the theatre as well. Josephus said Sepphoris was the largest city in Galilee and an exceptionally strong fortress at the time of the First Revolt in 66 A.D. Sepphoris was about an hour’s walk from Nazareth. Since Herod Antipas rebuilt the city about 4 B.C. and since stone is the main building craft of the area, Joseph, living in the nearby Nazareth, was probably a builder in stone as well as wood.

Nazareth – beautiful churches now grace Jesus’ boyhood home, including Mensa Christi in an old residential quarter, the Synagogue Church in the market, St. Gabriel’s Church over the ancient spring, Mary’s Well; the Church of St. Joseph, and the Basilica of the Annunciation. Excavations under Sisters of Nazareth.

Sunday 11
Early departure to Galilee along the Mediterranean. Arrive at Caesarea, Herod’s port city, where you’ll find the remains of former Roman capital home of Philip the Evangelist, and where Paul was imprisoned and appeared before Festus, Felix and King Agrippa. See magnificent remains of Herod’s city, the Roman capital and port and fortified Crusader town, including multi-coloured frescos and mosaics. New Testament inscription of Romans 13:3b. Tour the Roman theatre, hippodrome, and walk the promenade to the port and Crusader city. Then, it’s on to Muhraka, Mt Carmel, where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. Then the excavations of the ancient city of Megiddo, with Canaanite remains, the city gate of Solomon and the stables and training yard and water system of King Ahab. Megiddo is the site of biblical Armageddon overlooking the Jezreel Valley and the ancient Via Maris. Home to a palace and walls of Solomon, a complex water system built by King Ahab, and believed to be the backdrop for Leon Uris’ novel “The Source.” Megiddo is one of Israel’s most important and impressive archaeological sites, also a World Heritage Site. Accom. Sea of Galilee. Tabgha guest house.

Monday 12
Capernaum, Mount of Beatitudes, Bethsaida, first century boat, Sea of Galilee boat ride and St Peter’s fish lunch on the Sea of Galilee/Tabgha Fish and Loaves; Tabgha Primacy.

Tuesday 13
Upper Galilee; Mt Hermon, Tel Dan, Caesarea Philippi, return via the Golan. Spend the morning at Tel Dan, a treasure-trove of Old Testament history dating back to Abraham (Gen. 14:14) in a magnificent natural setting that brings alive the biblical verse “a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs” (Deut. 8:7). One of the sources of the Jordan River, and the world, said to date back to the time when Abraham came to Dan the Israelite Gate and the High Place of Jero-boam. Caesarea Philippi (Banias) – at the headwaters of the Jordan, where Jesus asked his disciples “Who do men say that I am” (Mark 8:27) and gave St. Peter the keys to Heaven (Matt. 16:19). Banias also features the ruins of temples built by Herod and his son Philip (Luke 3:1), and a thundering waterfall. Continue to Tel Hazor National Park (one of the cities fortified by King Solomon, with archaeological remains of such importance that it has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO). One of the principal cities on the Fertile Crescent, Hazor engaged in trade with cities in Babylon and Syria. The Bible refers to Hazor as “the head of all those kingdoms” (Joshua 11:10).

Wednesday 14
Sepphoris and Nazareth. Drive to Sepphoris. Josephus called Sepphoris “the ornament of all Galilee.” Herod Antipas chose this site in 4 B.C. as the capital of his government until he built Tiberias in 19 A.D. He most likely built the theatre as well. Josephus said Sepphoris was the largest city in Galilee and an exceptionally strong fortress at the time of the First Revolt in 66 A.D. Sepphoris was about an hour’s walk from Nazareth. Since Herod Antipas rebuilt the city about 4 B.C. and since stone is the main building craft of the area, Joseph, living in the nearby Nazareth, was probably a builder in stone as well as wood. Lunch in Nazareth in LaFontana Nazareth – beautiful churches now grace Jesus’ boyhood home, including Mensa Christi in an old residential quarter, the Synagogue Church in the market, St. Gabriel’s Church over the ancient spring, Mary’s Well; the Church of St. Joseph, and the Basilica of the Annunciation. Excavations under Sisters of Nazareth. Time permitting, stop at Arbel National Park for an overview of the Sea of Galilee in the late afternoon. Evening Eucharist by the Sea of Galilee.
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Tiberias. Visit Hamat Tiberias National Park – the remains of a magnificent synagogue mosaic Magdala Centre. Lunch in Tiberias. Afternoon free.</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>Travel to Amman along the Jordan. Excavations at Bet Shean. Visit Bet She'an, and climb the biblical mound where the Philistines hung Saul's body to be rescued by the men of Jabesh Gilead. Below, you can see the magnificent remains of the Talmudic and Byzantine cities of which the sages said &quot;if the Garden of Eden is in the Land of Israel, its gateway is at BetShe'an.&quot; The biblical mound containing remains of the city to which the Philistines brought the bodies of Saul and his three sons (1 Sam. 31:10), and capital of the Greco-Roman alliance of cities known as the Decapolis, Bet Shean boasts colonnaded streets, mosaics, temples, fountains, pools, a theatre, an amphitheatre and more.</td>
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