

15-16- Netanya
16-19 - Tiberias
19 -20 - Dead Sea
20-25 - Jerusalem
25-28 - Petra and Jerash

Jen Wilson Tour:

Sunday, Jan 14th – Depart from Chicago (Flights available Mar 2023)

Monday, Jan 15th – Arrival in ISR (Flight TBA). Upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, you will be met by your guide and driver. Time permitting, tour Tel Aviv and Old Jaffa. Dinner and overnight in hotel in Netanya (D)

Tuesday, Jan 16th - After breakfast, we travel by private motor coach along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea to Caesarea, where Gentiles first heard the Good News from Peter and were baptized. We'll see the Roman Amphitheatre and aqueduct, and then journey on to Mt. Carmel, where Elijah challenged King Ahab and the prophets of Baal. Next, we travel through the Jezreel Valley to Megiddo, the Armageddon Battlefield, where archaeologists have unearthed 20 levels of civilization. We drive through the area of Cana and Nazareth, the boyhood home of Jesus, and arrive in Zippori. Once the capital of the Galilee, this ancient city was once the home of the parents of Mary, mother of Jesus. Zippori is now known for its dozens of outstanding mosaics and spectacular treasures from its glorious past. Dinner and overnight in hotel in Tiberias (B,D)

Wednesday, Jan 17th - Today we explore Northern Israel, one of the most beautiful regions of the country. We will seek to understand what the Jewish people of 2,000 years ago expected of the Messiah, and how that was fulfilled in Jesus. We will travel along the lower slopes of Mount Hermon – Israel's highest mountain, and the most likely site of the Transfiguration. Our next stop is Caesarea Philippi, in the region where Peter made his famous confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Along the way we will pass Druze Villages before coming to Mt. Bental, a lookout spot near the border with Syria and the area of the road to Damascus where the Apostle Paul met the Lord. Travel to the Valley of Tears observation point and hear of the heroic battle that took place there in the Yom Kippur war in 1973. Our final stop is the Dan Nature Reserve, where we see the incredible archaeological remains of the OT city of Dan, including the city gate from the time of Abraham, and consider ancient Israel's apostasy. We will also enjoy a pleasant walk by a stream and discuss the meaning of "living water" in the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' teaching. Dinner and overnight in hotel in Tiberias (B,D)

Thursday, Jan 18th - Our day will be spent visiting various sites around the Sea of Galilee as we try to picture daily life and religion in the First Century and seek to better understand the miracles and teachings of Jesus in His original Jewish context. We will start the day at Magdala and continue to Chorazin, the well-preserved ruins of a typical Galilean village, where we study village life, Jewish religion, and the Pharisees. Our next stop will be the Mount of Beatitudes, traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, where we will consider the Kingdom of God in Jesus' teachings. After a short walk or drive down the hill we will arrive at Capernaum, the town where Jesus lived during the majority of His ministry. At lovely Tabgha, which commemorates the multiplication of loaves and fish, and where Jesus met the disciples after the resurrection, we will enjoy a contemplative time on the shore of the Lake. Later in the afternoon

we will visit Kibbutz Ginosar to see the “Jesus Boat”, a Galilean fishing boat from the First Century. From here we will set sail for a boat ride on the Lake to enjoy the views and some worship, prayer and reflective time. Dinner and overnight in hotel in Tiberias (B,D)

Friday Jan 19th - After breakfast, check out of the hotel and head to the Biblical city of Beit Shean. After defeating Saul and his sons on Mt. Gilboa, the Philistines hanged their bodies on the walls of Beit-Shean. During the time of Jesus, Scythopolis was one of the chief cities of the Decapolis - a league of ten cities sharing Greek culture and government. Following the fertile Jordan Valley southward, your guide will point out the agricultural restoration of the “Land of Milk and Honey” and Israel’s intricate irrigation development. We pass ancient Jericho and view from a distance this city famed as the oldest in the world. To the east of Jericho along the Jordan River Valley (Qeser El Yehud) is the Israeli side of Bethany Beyond the Jordan. Arrive at the Dead Sea in the early afternoon. Spend the evening at the hotel spa or enjoy a float in the Dead Sea. Dinner and overnight at the Dead Sea (B,D)

Saturday, Jan 20th- Our day begins with a cable car ride to the mountain top fortress of Masada. Here our guide will treat us to the history of the famous zealot stand. Afterwards we proceed to Ein Gedi, "Spring of the Goat," an oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea. Because of its warm climate and abundant supply of water, the site developed a reputation for its fragrant plants and date palm groves. This is where King David hid from Saul, and where God defeated the enemies of the Israelites by praise and worship led by King Jehoshaphat. Enjoy a lovely Shabbat lunch before entering our next site. The Qumran Caves - where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered by a lonely shepherd in 1947. Return to Dead Sea Hotel for Dinner and overnight. (B,D)

Sunday, Jan 21st – This morning we will make the final ascent – to Jerusalem – the City of the Great King. Conditions permitting we will visit the Temple Mount, with commentary on the Temple Periods, and the variety of belief systems past and present that make this area so valuable. Next we will visit the Wailing Wall and then the fascinating Rabbinical Tunnels leading us through the Second Temple era. The tunnel and exhibit give a clear understanding of the amazing construction of the Temple Mount, giant stones, water supply and Roman street where our Lord was led to judgment. Before exiting the tunnel we see the immense cornerstone rejected by the builders. We move on to the Judgment Hall of Pilate, hear of those who conspired against Him and are reminded of His brutal beating and humiliation. From here we will also be able to see the Pool of Bethesda, Stephen's Gate and St. Ann’s Church. This afternoon we visit the Southern Wall Excavations. This southern side of The Temple was the main entrance for the common folk, whereas the Priests and Levites had their own entrance from the higher eastern side. Parts of the giant stairs, which led to the Temple Mount from the courtyard have been unearthed along with the purification pools. From here Jesus entered the Temple Mount and drove out the vendors and money exchangers who were exploiting the people. It is also likely that this is the place that Peter stood and preached and where thousands were saved and baptized on the Day of Pentecost. We spend the remainder of the day surrounding the birth of Christ with a visit to Bethlehem. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem (B,D)

Monday, Jan 22nd - Today we walk where Jesus walked; beginning the day with a panoramic view of the city, Mount Moriah and the Dome of the Rock from atop the Mount of Olives and then the Garden of Gethsemane. How many have wished to be whisked back in time to get a glimpse of our Lord or hear His voice if only for a moment? To walk between the ancient olive trees, read the scriptures of Jesus' prayer and take time for personal reflection is important here. Passing by the Protestant

Cemetery, we visit the "Upper Room" just outside the Zion Gate where the disciple whom Jesus loved laid his head on His breast and where later Thomas cried, "my Lord & my God." While walking along the Via Dolorosa, we are reminded of His way of suffering along with a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Our guide will explain the differing opinions on the route that Christ was led and the actual place of crucifixion and burial is a very interesting study. The climax of the day is the area of Golgotha (place of the skull) and the Garden Tomb, where we celebrate the resurrection with communion and a time of praise. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem (B,D)

Tuesday, Jan 23rd An interesting and educational time awaits us today at the Israeli Museum. Walk through collections of century's old Israeli artifacts including the Dead Sea Scrolls, and then a guided walk through an accurately detailed model of Biblical Jerusalem. This model will help put into perspective all that you have seen over the previous days touring. We then visit the Friends of Zion Museum to learn of the 19th and 20th century heroes of the Jewish people. Next we spend time at the House of Caiaphas where Jesus was beaten and spit upon. See a pit where he may have been held for the evening and the ancient hillside steps he walked as he was taken to be condemned. We conclude the day with a visit to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum, for a needed reminder of what the Jews have suffered as a people. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem (B,D)

Wednesday, Jan 24th This morning we travel to the Kidron Valley, where we get the chance to participate in an archeological dig and sifting project. Continue on the City of David. It was during the time of Solomon that the city limits extended past this part of Jerusalem. We visit Gihon Springs, the original water source for Jerusalem, view new excavations including a typical Israelite four-room house, and the lower city wall. A highlight today will be a water walk through the incredible Hezekiah's Tunnel to the pool of Siloam, the place of Jesus' miracle in John 9. Ascending up to the Jewish Quarter we see the gold Menorah built for the next Temple, the Temple Institute, the Burnt House, a wall built by King Hezekiah, and the Roman Cardo. The rest of our day is at Mt. Zion to see David's Tomb, and the first Church Grotto. We then walk to visit David's Citadel and go inside to climb the tower for a view of Old Jerusalem and to see the remains of Herod's palace and possible place of Pilate's trial of Jesus.

Thursday, Jan 25th - An early departure from our hotel in Jerusalem, takes us to the Sheik Hussein Border. After meeting our guide and completing passport formalities, We head to Jerash. Known as ancient Gerasa of Roman Times, the city center of the Gerasenes, one of the best-preserved and most complete provincial Roman cities. Gerasa was one of the cities of the Decapolis, a confederation of 10 Graeco-Roman cities dating from the 1st century BC situated in Jordan, Syria and Israel. Known for its extraordinary state of preservation, the ruins indicate human occupations at this location for more than 2,500 years. The most well-known monuments include the colonnaded street with sewers, the Temple of Zeus, the theatre, the Forum, and Hadrian's Arch. Next, we drive further south thru the area that once was settled by the ancient Ammonites and Amorites, but later became part of ancient Israel where 2½ tribes settled. We cross over the Jabbok River where Jacob wrestled with God, then past the present capital of Amman, which once was the Decapolis city of Philadelphia and Old Testament Ammonite city of Rabbah. Dinner and overnight in Amman (B,D)

Friday, Jan 26th We begin the day with a visit to Bethany Beyond the Jordan, where John The Baptist did some baptizing and likely spot where he baptized Jesus. It was in this vicinity that the Prophets

Elijah and Elisha did some ministry, and where Joshua and the Israelites crossed into the Promised Land thru the parted Jordan River. We take a leisurely walk thru the thickets to see John the Baptist Spring and then we continue to the Jordan River. As we exit we see the hill where tradition says Elijah was taken to Heaven. We then visit Tall el-Hammam which some scholars believe is the destroyed Biblical city of Sodom. By bus we then follow the reverse path of the Israelites on their way from the wilderness to the Promised Land. For a spectacular view of the area we ascend to the top of Mount Nebo where it is believed Moses saw the Promised Land and was buried in the adjacent valley. We see restored mosaics on the floor of the new Basilica. Our drive continues to the town of Madaba, the biblical Medeba, where we see the well preserved ancient mosaic map of the Holy Land. Next we drive south onto the Biblical King's Highway. Soon we leave the main highway for a paid picture stop of the mountain palace of Herod Antipas where tradition says he beheaded John The Baptist. Returning, we make a brief stop at ancient Biblical Tel Dhiban, then continue driving south to the ancient border of Moab for a picture stop at the Arnon River Canyon. We then head east and enter the Desert Highway traveling south thru ancient Edom. Dinner and overnight in Petra (B,D)

Saturday, Jan 27th This morning we make a complete visit of Petra where we walk or take optional carriages thru the "Siq", an immense colorful sandstone canyon, to the city of ancient Petra. Over 2000 years ago the Nabateans carved this city out of the rose red rock. The Treasury or El Khazneh, is one of the most elegant remains of antiquity. The canyon walls on both sides have hundreds of carved and built structures, and further in we see the conquering Romans also added structures to the city. We also offer an optional walk up the 852 steps to the Monastery. As we leave Petra in the afternoon, we make a picturesque stop to see Petra from a distance and Mount Hor where tradition says Aaron, Moses' brother was buried. Our next stop is at Wadi Rum for a tour to see the breath taking beauty in the park. Our time in Jordan soon ends as we head into ancient Midian, where the fugitive Moses settled for forty years. Dinner and overnight in Petra (B,D)

Sunday, Jan 28th – After breakfast, transfer to Queen Aliya Airport in Amman for an early afternoon flight home.