



LIMITED SPACE – RESERVE EARLY!

Expanded Holy Land Tour

*First Class 12 Day Package May 21-June 1, 2025
Jordan, Southern Israel, Egypt*

Day 1, Wed. May 21: Departure from home for an overnight flight to Israel or Jordan

Day 2, Thu. May 22: Tel Aviv, Israel or Amman, Jordan

Tour members arrive at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel, or Queen Alia Airport in Amman, Jordan. In Israel, our transportation takes us north thru the Biblical Sharon Valley to our hotel in Netanya, perched on beach sand cliffs overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. In Jordan, our transportation takes us to our hotel in Amman. There we enjoy dinner and overnight stay.

Jordan

Day 3, Fri. May 23: Pella, Gadara, Jerash, Jabbok River, Amman, Dead Sea

An early departure from our hotel takes us to the Sheikh Hussein Bridge. After meeting our guide and completing passport formalities, we enter the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. By motor coach we travel to a scenic overlook of Pella, where the Jerusalem Church fled in 65 A.D. We then continue to Jordan's northern border driving thru the picturesque Yarmouk River Valley as we ascend to visit the ancient ruins of Gadara, the mountain top city center of the Gadarene Demoniacs. From there we will be able to view the nearby Sea of Galilee where Jesus had His encounter with them. We head back south to Jerash, 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. We arrive at our luxurious hotel by the Dead Sea with an optional swim in its pools or the Sea.

Day 4, Sat. May 24: Bethany Beyond the Jordan, Sodom, Mt Nebo, Medeba, Macaerus, Arnon River, Moses' Spring

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. We stop to see Moses' Spring and then arrive at our Petra hotel.

Day 5, Sun. May 25: Petra, Wadi Rum, Aqaba, Eilat

This morning we make a complete visit of Petra where we walk or take optional carts 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. We arrive near the Red Sea or Gulf of Aqaba at the outskirts of Aqaba, Biblical Ezion Geber, where King Solomon based his fleet of ships. We cross the Arava Border into Israel and drive to Eilat on the Red Sea shore, which is Biblical Elath, for a one night stay at our hotel.

Southern Israel / Egypt

Day 6, Mon. May 26: Eilat, Red Sea, Tabernacle, Taba

Today we visit the National Park Fish Observatory to see aquatic fish in their natural habitat among coral reefs. Next, we drive north to visit a life-size Biblical Tabernacle model and see colorful rock formations in the area of closed copper mines from the times of King Solomon and the ancient Egyptians. We then drive to Ktura to see Herodian ancient date palm trees. We travel either by bus to the late afternoon border crossing for the Egypt Tour or by air to Tel Aviv to return home. After crossing the border at Taba, we meet our Egyptian guide and then travel a short distance to our seaside

resort hotel for a relaxing time on the beach and optional swim in the Biblical Red Sea. Many call Egypt part of the Holy Land as Abraham, Joseph, Jacob, Israelites, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Jeroboam, Joahaz, Jeremiah, Joseph, Mary and Jesus all lived there.

Egypt

Day 7, Tue. May 27: Nuweiba Red Sea Crossing, Egyptian Mount Sinai, St. Catherine Monastery

By bus we drive south along the shores of the Red Sea and arrive at Nuweiba. The Israelites possibly crossed the Red Sea from this large sandbar beach and where Pharaoh's army drowned over three millennia ago. We view the Wadi Watir canyon road where the Israelites might have traveled as they fled Egypt, where the pillar of fire protected them from the Egyptians held back in the canyon, the large sandbar where they camped and were boxed in by the Red Sea, and the granite column believed to have been placed by King Solomon to commemorate the Red Sea crossing from here. We continue driving a short distance to the traditional Mount Sinai or Mount Horeb, the Mountain of God, where Moses received the Ten Commandments, Jewish Laws, and Tabernacle Plans. Elijah fled from Jezebel and King Ahab to a cave there. At its base our tour begins with St. Catherine Monastery that has a live unburnt bush and stores some of the oldest manuscript copies of the Greek New Testament in existence today. For those who are able, the group will ascend to the 7,500-foot summit of the second highest mountain in Egypt either by camel or by walking. We get a panoramic view of the mountains that have changing shades of colors as the sun crosses the sky. After a terrific view of the Sinai desert and hidden patches of grass used by grazing flocks, we descend by walking back down the conquered mountain and retire to our nearby hotel.

Day 8, Wed. May 28: Sinai Desert, Suez Canal, Bitter Lakes, Ismailia

We leave Mount Sinai for our long drive in an air conditioned motor coach across the Sinai Desert, Wilderness of Paran, Wilderness of Sin, and Wilderness of Shur, the path the Israelites possibly used when fleeing Egypt during the Exodus. Our visits along the way are at the traditional stops of the Israelites at Rephidim where Moses struck the rock to get water and where they battled the Amalekites, the Oasis of Elim along the Gulf of Suez, the site of many springs and palm trees, and Marah Springs, where bitter waters were turned sweet for Israelite consumption. We turn and cross under the manmade Suez Canal connecting the Gulf of Suez with the Mediterranean Sea. We then head north passing the Canal connected southern Small Bitter Lake and much larger northern Great Bitter Lake

where ships are able to pass each other, park, or turn around. We arrive for an overnight stay in Ismailia which is located on Lake Timsah and the west bank of the Canal at the halfway point for ships passing by.

Day 9, Thu. May 29: Goshen, On, Cairo, Cave Church, Hanging Church, Nile River

This morning we drive thru the fertile Land of Goshen where Joseph settled his family and Hebrew brethren. We stop to see where many believe is Biblical Succoth which was the first staging area of the Exodus for the Israelites after they left Avaris/Pi-Rameses. Next we stop to see remains of the ancient storage city of Biblical Pithom and the island city of Pi-Rameses built by Pharaoh Ramesse II (1279-1213BC) to be his new capital and the third religious capital city of Egypt after Memphis and Thebes. Next we visit the nearby more ancient city of Avaris which was the capital of the invader Hyksos kings (1750-1521BC) until their defeat by native Egyptian Pharaoh Ahmose I. These two ruling groups were the enslavers of the Hebrews until the Exodus (1446BC). We depart on the bus and continue driving thru the green Nile Delta toward Cairo. We arrive at the suburbs of the capital city of Cairo and go to the Old City to take a picture of the red granite obelisk of Biblical On, where Joseph's father-in-law Potiphara was a priest. We then drive into Cairo by Saladin's fortress, Mohammed Ali mosque, and residences of many government officials to visit The Cave Church nearby. From there we drive to visit The Hanging Church. Heading west, we cross the famous Nile River flowing thru the middle of the city, the centerpiece of Egypt's long history. We see busy boat traffic, lush vegetation, palm trees and hearty crops created by millenniums of irrigation practices and methods. Our long distance travel ends at the hotel in Giza for a three nights stay. After dinner we see the Sound and Light Show at the Giza Pyramids.

Day 10, Fri. May 30: El Faiyum, Memphis, Sakkara, Abusir, Dahshur

Our morning drive takes us to Lake Qarun believed to be built by Joseph to prepare for the seven years of famine, then we go to pyramids at Hawara and El Lahun, where we see his water canal and grain storage silos. We return north and drive along Nile fed canals and lush vegetation, farms and farm animals. Our next stop is at the ancient capital of Memphis that dates back to 3100 BC. We see a female Sphinx carved out of Alabaster Stone and the famous Colossus of Ramses. Our bus then takes us to neighboring Sakkara. Suddenly the vegetation stops and is contrasted by totally barren desert and the presence of the majestic pyramids and tombs. These were built as early as 2560 BC and have

intrigued engineers ever since on how they did it. We view the Step Pyramid built in 2650 BC, which is the oldest of the 97 Pyramids found in Egypt. The afternoon is ended with visits or a view to the many Pyramids and tombs at Abusir, Dahshur, Abu Ghauob, El-Lisht, and Maidum.

Day 11, Sat. May 31: Giza Pyramids, Sphinx, Egypt Museum, Pharaonic Village, Nile River

Our final day of touring is spent around Cairo by driving to see the Giza Pyramid Complex and the Great Pyramid of Khufu, or Cheops, originally at 482 feet, was the tallest human structure on the Earth until the 1800's AD. It is the only remaining structure of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Renovations now allow entrance to this ancient tomb in the heart of the Pyramid through original tunnel shafts. Next to the large Giza Pyramids, we visit the famous male Sphinx statue with a lion's body and human face. This mammoth statue was carved out of the original bedrock as early as 2550 BC. Though the Sphinx has been covered numerous times by the desert sand, it is completely exposed today for our enjoyment. We then drive to the world famous Egyptian Museum (or Grand Egyptian Museum if open?) that has the largest collection of Egyptian artifacts in the world. Realistic statues of Pharaohs, queens, and officials are there with eyes that make them look alive. Ancient weapons of war and expensive items laden with gold, gems and ivory are on display, plus many well preserved mummies. Most of the items were recovered from Pyramids and tombs. Our next visit is to the Pharaonic Village for a boat tour seeing displays and actors of ancient Egyptian life. Afterward we end the day with a short relaxing felluca sailboat ride on the Nile River.

Day 12, Sun. June 1: Cairo, return flight home

We leave the ancient sites in our memories as we return to modern times, departing from the Cairo airport for our return flight home.

Additional Information:

For additional information, contact John Hodges at: hodges777@gmail.com or 708- 331- 4440, or cell: 708-606-4441