

The Faith Script

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“Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”” Luke 18:31-33 (NKJV)

[Prayer Wall](#)

A Dream Comes True

As an early hymn goes: “I walked today where Jesus walked, and felt his presence there.” I did this—not today, but on a recent 11 day trip to the Holy Land with a tour led by Jennifer Sands, Pharm. D., and CPFI member. Other CPFI members on the tour were Megan Lunberry, and Fred Eckel. The comprehensive tour of Israel began when the plane landed in Tel Aviv, then to Galilee where Jesus spent most of his ministry, on to the Dead Sea, and then Jerusalem where Jesus spent his final days as a man on earth. What a trip and what a powerful spiritual experience for the 18 members of the group. An added blessing was our Israeli tour guide, Yehuda Ashkenazi, who was well versed in the Bible as well as being steeped in the history of the land.

Israel is a beautiful country today—whether in the green northern region of Galilee or in the dry southern region of the Dead Sea. Each area has its unique qualities, and each was rife with explorations and excavations of long ago cultures. Israel is a land that has lasted, but it’s also a land where wars and fighting have seemingly been a way of life. Shortly after we arrived, Yehuda, our Israeli guide, received word that his son who was in the army had been transferred from a relatively safe area to a spot on the Syrian border where trouble had flared. The son, as other young Israelis, is serving his time in the service.

Jennifer Sands had devotionals and Bible verses picked out for each stop and the verses I reference are those she selected. Each of us had a chance to read the Bible verses as we toured the country. In addition as our Israeli guide, Yuhuda, explained where we were he, too, would refer to the Bible verses that pertained to that site. It made the Bible come alive as the verses were read in the actual places they occurred.

Our first stop was in Jaffa, an ancient city dating back at least 3500 years. It was the major seaport used to float the cedars of Lebanon for building the Temple in Jerusalem. It was also where Peter had the vision to take the Gospel to the Gentiles - read Acts 9:36-43 and Acts 10:8-23.

Caesarea Maritime was next. In 22 BC, Herod the Great built an extravagant seaport and the large city became famous for its palace, theatre, hippodrome, and aqueducts. The aqueducts are still in good shape - read Acts 10:1-8 and 24-48.

Ein Harod or “Gideon’s Spring” is where God instructed Gideon to reduce the number of men in the army from 32,000 down to 300 so that the victory would be from God’s power, not from the might of Gideon’s army. Then we saw Megiddo, located on the southern edge of the Jezreel Valley, where Gideon and the 300 soldiers defeated the Midianites (See Judges 6:33 and 7:1-25) through the power of God. This is most famous battlefield is believed to be the place where the battle of Armageddon, the end time battle, will one day be fought. (See Revelation 16:13-16)

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Nazareth was a small, obscure village that is no longer there, but we did see a reconstructed Nazareth village. Nazareth is where Jesus grew up and where he preached his first sermon. (See Luke 4:13-30)

Kursi is where Jesus healed a demoniac and allowed the evil spirits to enter a herd of pigs grazing nearby. The pigs then raced down the mountain side and into the Sea of Galilee where they drowned. We were right there between the mountain and the Sea of Galilee at the place where the pigs are said to have come down and drowned.

The “Evangelical Triangle” (the towns of Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin) is where Jesus spent most of his ministry. Capernaum was where Jesus frequently preached and where Jesus performed most of His miracles. Peter lived in this town. Jesus condemned all three towns because the people refused to repent of their sins. Although the three towns are now in ruins, we walked down what was left of the original road in Bethsaida, walking exactly where Jesus walked.

In the town of Tiberias, located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, we got in a boat and went for a cruise on the Sea of Galilee. We saw some fishermen but could not tell whether they were catching any fish. The sea was nice and calm. I am glad the winds did not howl, nor did the storm arise.

The Jordan River runs through the Sea of Galilee and on down to the Dead Sea. From the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is a distance of about 65 miles. The Jordan River with its twists and turns is about 200 miles long between the two seas. The Yardenit is the traditional Christian Baptismal site on the Jordan River. This is where John baptized Jesus. A lot of people today go there and get baptized. We witnessed several baptisms while we were there.

On to southern Israel and to the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea, about 35% sodium chloride plus other minerals, is 50 miles long and 10 miles wide, and is 1300 feet below sea level and 1300 feet deep. We went into the Dead Sea for a swim and floated around. After a few minutes we all went to the hotel swimming pool which was heated and the same salt content as the Dead Sea. We all had fun trying to keep our legs under the water.

The next few days were spent in and around Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives – Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, Jesus was betrayed and arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, it was here that Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection and where, according to Zechariah, is where Jesus will one day return. (See Zechariah 14:4) I didn’t get to go in but we passed by the Mount of Olives Pharmacy. The Garden of Gethsemane – where Jesus went alone or with His disciples for prayer, rest, and fellowship. The Western Wall (aka The Wailing Wall) – the holiest place of prayer in the Jewish world. It is divided into sections – men and women. Cracks and crevices in the wall are crammed with small pieces of paper which are prayers of the people visiting the wall. We prayed and left our written prayers there. Via Dolorosa – The traditional road where Jesus carried His Cross on the way to Calvary. The Garden Tomb – this is a rock-cut tomb dating back to the 1st century. It is believed this is where Jesus was buried. We ended with a communion service here as we realized the great gift of Jesus’s sacrifice, our unworthiness as recipients of this great gift, and our gratitude for what He did then and continues to do in our lives.

We departed Israel from Ben Gurion airport. Thanks to Jennifer Sands for all of the Bible verses that were used and for the lessons she taught. It all seems like a dream – to have been where Jesus walked and lived and we were there. What magnificent memories of history and right out of the Bible. AMEN!

Herb Hames, CPF Board Member
Chapin, SC

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